

Project Funding 2018 to 2024

The Children's Cancer Foundation together with its funding partners has committed **\$8,700,930** across **29 projects** from 2018 through to 2024. Funding includes salaries for 37 hospital and research staff (30 EFT), laboratory consumables and family resources.



Project 219

Research: Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program (4.0 EFT)
Focus: Brain cancer, central nervous system tumours and Wilm's tumour
Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research and Monash Children's Hospital
Recipient: A/Prof. Ron Firestein

Funding: \$1,263,092 over 2 years (2017-19)

Australia's first paediatric living organoid and functional genomic program utilising individual patient's tumour cells to identify new therapeutic targets and repurpose existing targets. Research into brain cancer, central nervous system tumours and Wilm's tumour will lay the foundation for establishing a systematic pipeline to test and identify personalised cancer therapeutics for paediatric cancer patients with the greatest unmet clinical need. The key outcome will be proof of concept functional diagnostic screens based on each cancer's unique genetic profile using paediatric organoid models. Successful completion of this pilot phase will lead to integration of comprehensive molecular analysis into clinical management by guiding molecular-targeted therapeutics for cancer patients.



Projects 133 & 218

Family: Family Counselling Service

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Children's Hospital

Funding Partner: The Pratt Foundation (\$40,000)

Funding: \$429,000 over 5 years (2017-22)

Funding for face-to-face counselling with a psychologist for children with cancer, their parents or siblings. Recent research has confirmed both the unmet demand for and benefit of psychological support to help families through cancer diagnosis and treatment.



Project 306

Research: Translational Studies Leveraging the SIOOPEN Neuroblastoma Clinical Trial (1.0 EFT)

Focus: Neuroblastoma

Institute: University of New South Wales

Funding: \$671,270 over 3 years (2018-21)

Translational research leveraging patient participation in the SIOOPEN High Risk Neuroblastoma clinical trial also funded by the Foundation. This study aims to understand relapse, improve residual disease detection and develop pre-clinical testing models to identify better therapies for high-risk neuroblastoma patients.



Project 216

Clinical Trials: Clinical Trials Manager (1.0 EFT)

Focus: All childhood cancers

Institute: Monash Children's Hospital

Recipient: Irina Arzhintar

Funding: \$380,507 over 5 years (2016-21)

Salary funding for a Clinical Trials Manager to lead the clinical trials unit. The key outcome is to increase the portfolio of trials open, and the number of children enrolled in clinical trials accessing new treatments and innovative drugs.



Project 134

Research: Children's Cancer Foundation Clinical Research Fellowship (2.0 EFT)

Focus: Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

Institute: Murdoch Children's Research Institute and The Royal Children's Hospital

Recipient: Dr Seong Lin Khaw

Funding Partner: Victorian Cancer Agency (\$400,000)

Funding: \$1,029,000 over 4 years (2017-21), plus \$341,100 from Murdoch Children's. Research project to improve the effectiveness of treatment in children with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia who respond poorly to or relapse following standard-of-care therapy. The key outcome from this research project is to translate biological data to improve treatment precision and effectiveness, particularly with the use of newly developed drugs.



Project 136

Family: Family Connect

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Funding: \$50,000 over 5 years (2017-22)

A weekly morning tea in the Children's Cancer Centre at The Royal Children's Hospital to meet and connect with other families in a relaxed atmosphere. Each week, Family Connect hosts an interactive and creative activity for children and their families, featuring a special presenter.



Project 135

Research: My Room Clinical Research Fellowship program (2.0 EFT)

Focus: Fellow #1: Brain cancer

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital and Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Recipient: Fellow #1: Dr Stacie Wang

Recipient: My Room Clinical Research Fellow

Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Funding: \$495,331 over 3 years (2018-21)

Salary funding for a 2-year clinical research fellowship training program, with a split of 0.8: 0.2 EFT research and clinical time. This program is an investment in training the next generation of oncologists in translational research skills. Two fellowships will be funded under this program.



Project 137

Clinical Care: My Room Oncology Social Worker (1.0 EFT)

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Funding: \$396,154 over 3 years (2018-21). Renewal – funded since 1998

Salary funding for a Social Worker to support families with children undergoing treatment within the Children's Cancer Centre. In addition to salary funding, My Room provides a Patient Amenity Fund of \$16,000 per year supports families of children undergoing transplant for non-malignant conditions.



Project 302

Research: National Clinical Trials Investigating Stem Cell Transplantation and Personalised Medicine (1.0 EFT)

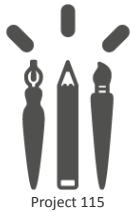
Focus: All childhood cancers

Institute: Sydney Children's Hospital

Recipient: A/Prof. David Ziegler

Funding: \$316,218 over 3 years (2017-20)

Salary funding for a Clinical Trial Associate coordinating two clinical trials: (1) PRISM (PRecision Medicine for Paediatric Oncology Patients) study targeting 300 paediatric and adolescent patients with high-risk malignancies (expected survival < 30%). The key outcome is feasibility of precision medicine in a clinical setting, outcomes of patients treated and review of psychological impact and economic viability; (2) Pαβlo study recruiting >24 patients to test a novel technology that may allow safe and effective stem cell transplant from a patient's parent (when stem cell transplant is the only available cure and a matched sibling or unrelated donor is unavailable).



Project 115

Clinical Care: Art Therapists (1.4 EFT)

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Recipients: Amy McKay and Tilly Dawson

Funding Partner: [The Pratt Foundation](#) (\$40,000 in 2018)

Funding: \$721,745 over 5 years (2017-22). Renewal – funded since 2010

Salary funding to provide art therapy services enabling children under treatment for cancer to process their emotions such as anxiety, depression, hopes and fears through art. Through non-verbal and safe individual and group sessions, children can use creative avenues while socialising with other children sharing similar cancer experiences.



Project 132

Research: Modelling leukaemia using human pluripotent stem cells (1.0 EFT)

Focus: Leukaemia

Institute: Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Recipient: Prof. Andrew Elefanty and Prof. Ed Stanley

Funding: \$461,576 over 3 years (2016-20)

Research project to model the development of blood cells and to understand how fusion oncogenes cause childhood leukaemia. The significant innovation is the ability to study how cancer genes function directly in a human cell model, improving our understanding of how these genes cause cancer, and to identify new targets against which therapy can be directed and tested.



Project 301

Clinical Trials: Acute Myeloid Leukaemia National Clinical Trial (Myechild01)

Focus: Acute myeloid leukaemia

Institute: Led by Dr Andrew Moore, Lady Cilento Hospital, Brisbane; with nine participating hospitals in Australia and New Zealand

Funding Partner: [My Room](#) (100%)

Funding: \$1,055,245 over 5 years (2018-23)

National clinical trial recruiting children with acute myeloid leukaemia across nine participating hospitals. This trial provides access to a new drug currently unavailable to Australian children, even on compassionate grounds. The key outcome is to determine which of the current treatments combined with the new drug will provide the best chance of survival.



Project 129

Family: Family Gym Memberships
Focus: In-hospital family support
Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital
Funding Partner: Inside Out Performance
Funding: \$2,562 per year since 2016

The Foundation secured two in-kind 12-month gym memberships at the independent gym based at The Royal Children's Hospital for parents of children in the Children's Cancer Centre. The key outcome is to support parents in improving their wellbeing while based at the hospital for prolonged periods caring for their children.



Project 215

Research: Clinical research fellowship investigating brain tumours (1.0 EFT)
Focus: Brain cancers: Medulloblastoma and Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma
Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research, with Monash Children's Hospital and Monash University
Recipient: Dr Sara Khan

Funding Partner: Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation (100%)
Funding: \$450,000 over 3 years (2016-19)

Salary funding and laboratory consumables for a paediatric oncologist to investigate new therapeutic options for two of the most prevalent and aggressive paediatric brain tumours – medulloblastoma and Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG). Key outcomes will be the development of a rapid and cost-effective clinical tool to determine the medulloblastoma molecular subtype; new DIPG gene targets for potential therapeutic intervention; and preclinical validation of potential pharmacological epigenetic modifiers of DIPG.



Project 305

Clinical Trials: SIOPEX Neuroblastoma Clinical Trials (0.4 EFT)
Focus: Neuroblastoma
Institute: Sydney Children's Hospital
Recipient: A/Prof. Toby Trahair
Funding: \$602,211 over 5 years (2018-23)

Funding for two international clinical trials and a registry study targeting high risk, low and intermediate risk and infant neuroblastoma opening at hospitals across Australia and New Zealand. The SIOPEX high risk neuroblastoma-2 trial focuses on improving survival for patients with the lowest chance of cure (<50%). The SIOPEX LINES trial is for children with less aggressive tumours and incorporates refined tumour analysis and staging techniques to more easily identify biologically favourable tumours (these patients will receive less intensive treatments) and unfavourable tumours.



Project 209

Clinical Care: Dietitian (0.4 EFT)
Focus: In-hospital patient care
Institute: Monash Children's Hospital
Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Funding: \$137,526 over 3 years (2017-20). Supplement of 0.4 EFT to the 0.3 EFT funded 2010-17 and now embedded in hospital budget.

Salary funding for a Dietitian to provide intensive nutritional support to children with cancer, which is associated with improved survival rates and treatment tolerance. This EFT increase ensures all children have access to a full-time nutritional service to optimise their health during cancer treatment.



Project 220

Research: My Room Clinical Research Training Fellowship (3.0 EFT)

Institute: Monash Children’s Hospital and Hudson Institute of Medical Research

Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Recipient: My Room Foundation Clinical Research Fellow

Funding: \$773,900 over 5 years (2019-23)

Salary funding for a 2-year clinical research fellowship training program, with a 0.8:0.2 EFT split of research and clinical time. This program is an investment in training the next generation of oncologists in translational research skills. Three fellowships will be funded under this program.



Project 117

Clinical Care: Music Therapist (0.6 EFT)

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: The Royal Children’s Hospital

Recipient: Melina Roberts

Funding: \$172,600 over 3 years (2016-19). Renewal – funded since 2007

Salary funding for a Music Therapist to provide clinical music therapy services (song-writing, active music making, therapeutic music lessons, improvisation, relaxation) to children under treatment within the Children’s Cancer Centre. Music therapy improves children’s psychological adjustment to cancer treatment and promotes positive coping skills.



Project 113

Family: Family Resource Coordinator (1.0 EFT)

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children’s Hospital

Recipient: Merridy Justice

Funding Partner: Portland House Foundation (\$85,000 in 2018)

Funding: \$273,397 over 3 years (2018-21). Renewal – funded since 2006

Salary funding for a non-medical staff member providing practical and emotional support for children and families across inpatients, outpatients and day oncology. The Family Resource Coordinator facilitates discussion between staff and families, and provides day-to-day support services through play, social activities and respite.



Project 203

Clinical Care: Music Therapists (0.2 EFT)

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: Monash Children’s Hospital

Funding: \$119,839 over 5 years (2018-23). Renewal – funded since 2009

Salary funding for a Music Therapist to provide clinical musical therapy services to help children across the inpatient, day cancer and outpatient settings of the Monash Children’s Cancer Centre adjust to their diagnosis and treatment. Music Therapy aims to provide positive coping-related behaviours and reduce anxiety for patients and their families during procedures.



Project 202

Family: Family and Community Resource Officer (0.2 EFT)

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: Monash Children’s Hospital

Recipient: Beck Pahl / Liz Virgo

Funding: \$41,483 over 3 years (2017-20). Supplement of 0.2 EFT to 0.4 EFT funded 2007-17 and now embedded in hospital budget.

Salary funding for a non-medical staff member providing practical and emotional support services for children and their families. The Family and Community Resource Officer facilitates discussion between staff and families, and provides day-to-day support services through play, recreation, social activities and respite.



Project 126

Clinical Trials: Early Phase Clinical Trial Coordinator (1.0 EFT)

Focus: Clinical trials for all childhood cancer patients

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital and Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Funding: \$191,305 over 2 years (2018-20). Renewal – funded since 2014

Research clinical trials to offer children new treatment options, supporting target of 75% of all patients to be enrolled in a clinical trial. The position facilitates access to drugs unavailable to patients through standard clinical care and access to treatment for patients who would otherwise have no further treatment options.



Project 122

Research: Head of Molecular Diagnostics (0.4 EFT)

Focus: All childhood cancers

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital, with Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Recipient: A/Prof. Paul Ekert

Funding Partner: Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation (\$360,660)

Funding: \$580,205 over 5 years (2014-19)

Salary funding for a leadership position with protected clinical research time to develop new molecular diagnostic tools and build expertise and research capacity. The key outcome will be evidence of the changes that occur in the genes of cancer cells, and how those changes can be used in cancer diagnosis and the selection of appropriate treatments.



Project 116 & 204

Family: The Beaded Journey

Focus: In-hospital patient support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital, Monash Children's Hospital and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Funding: \$79,900 over 5 years (2017-22). Renewal – funded since 2008

The Beaded Journey, a therapeutic program that gives children the opportunity to tell their personal cancer story by marking key medical and non-medical events throughout their treatment with a special bead.



Project 130

Research: Genomics of brain and solid tumours of childhood (1.0 EFT)

Focus: Brain cancer and solid tumours

Institute: Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Recipient: Dr Dong Ahn Khuong Quang

Funding: \$282,133 over 2 years (2019-20). Renewal – funded since 2016

Post-doctoral fellowship for Dr Khuong Quang who is leading efforts to find gene changes in brain and solid cancers, identify potential therapies that target those changes, and explore how these change alter function. This funding supports participation in three major translational precision medicine trials (iPredict, PRISM, AIM Brain) and discovery research of fusion genes identified from patient samples.



Project 303

Research: Project Grant, Priority Driven Collaborative Cancer Research Scheme

Institute: Cancer Australia

Focus: All childhood cancers

Funding: \$100,000 over 1 year (2018-19)

Research project grant investigating childhood cancer using a bioinformatics approach. Bioinformatics is increasingly important for analysing and interpreting genomic data. This project grant is directed towards researchers with 1-7 years' post-doctoral experience.



Project 222

Research: PhD Scholars Program (3.0 EFT)
Focus: All childhood cancers
Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research (50%)
Recipient: PhD Scholar #1 Claire Shi
Funding: \$318,106 over 5 years (2018-23)

Funding for three PhD students in paediatric precision medicine. The key aims are to develop a doctoral training program focused on key research themes of precision medicine, enable hypothesis-driven research that directly arises from the Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program (Project 219), and to strengthen cross-institutional collaborations (local, national, and international).



Project 221

Research: International Collaborations in Paediatric Cancer Research
Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research
Funding: \$49,500 over 3 years (2019-21). Renewal – funded since 2018
Funding of on-site visits during the annual Childhood Cancer Research Symposium for national and international researchers and clinicians from prestigious universities and health services. The aim is to advance the Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program (Project 219) by developing and strengthening collaboration with international experts in paediatric precision medicine and educating and catalysing scientific innovation in childhood cancer research and clinical care.



Project 223

Clinical Care: Physiotherapy Service (0.8 EFT)
Focus: In-hospital patient care
Institute: Monash Children's Hospital
Funding Partner: My Room (100%)
Funding: \$148,341 over 3 years (2018-20).

Salary funding for two physiotherapists to initiate, implement and evaluate a dedicated physiotherapy service for Monash Children's Cancer Centre to provide high quality assessment and intervention to all children and adolescents at diagnosis and throughout their cancer treatment