



## **New treatments for prostate cancer on the horizon after \$12 million funding boost**

**PRESS RELEASE – Wednesday April 3, 2019**

**New and innovative ways of treating prostate cancer could be available to patients within five years**, following an announcement today that scientists will receive a \$12 million funding boost from the Australian Government and the Movember Foundation.

Under the pioneering three-year-project, which is due to start mid-2019, researchers from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney and the University of Melbourne will each head up Australia's first Prostate Cancer Research Alliance (PCRA) teams.

The teams will bring together world-leading experts to focus on the most promising ways of predicting the risk of future progression of prostate cancer at the time of diagnosis, reducing the progression of prostate cancer and improving treatments for men with advanced forms of the disease.

It is hoped that the research findings could be incorporated into clinical practice as early as 2023.

Movember Foundation CEO Owen Sharp says: "This is an incredibly exciting investment as these research endeavours have the potential to extend the lives of thousands of men in Australia, particularly those living with, or at risk of developing, advanced disease.

"A panel of independent experts have selected the most promising research proposals with the greatest potential to improve the way that prostate cancer is managed and treated. The newly appointed PCRA teams will take potentially life-saving tests and treatments and fast-track them from the lab to the clinic – making them available to more men, more quickly."

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt said health and medical research can fundamentally change people's lives by providing new cancer treatments and improving quality of life.

"The Government is committed to improving men's health. Men experience worse longer-term health than women and die on average six years earlier. Health and medical research is a key pillar supporting Australia's world-class health system and is critical to improving healthcare and improving the health of our nation.

"Since 2013, the Government has contributed over \$41 million towards prostate focused research initiatives and combined under the National Health and Medical Research Council and Cancer Australia provided \$49 million in research investment," Minister Hunt said.

At the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne, Associate Professor Arun Azad and Professor Michael Hofman will run two trials into Lu-PSMA, a radioactive molecule that is purpose made to kill prostate cancer cells.

To date, this treatment has only been studied as a "last line" of therapy after standard options have been exhausted but this new funding will enable the game-changing treatment to be used as an upfront therapy and hopefully extend the lives of men with prostate cancer.

At St Vincent's Hospital Sydney, Associate Professor Louise Emmett will lead ENZA-P, a randomised trial which looks at whether combining Lu-PSMA technology with hormone therapy drug enzalutamide will prolong the lives of men with metastatic prostate cancer.

At the University of Melbourne, a team led by Associate Professor Niall Corcoran, will study prostate cancer prognosis and treatment, including ground-breaking new tests to identify which patients are most at risk of progressing to more advanced disease and which patients will likely respond best to different treatments.



Teams were chosen following a robust peer-review process with a panel of leading Australian and international prostate cancer experts, with input from an Australian patient advocate.

As a leading global funder of prostate cancer research, the Movember Foundation has invested more than \$92 million in Australia across biomedical research, treatment quality and supporting men and their families better manage the side effects of treatment since 2004.

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in Australia, claiming the lives of around 3,500 men in 2018. It is a complex disease that can also cause a range of health problems including bladder or bowel incontinence, sexual dysfunction and mental health issues.

The research program is managed by the Movember Foundation and co-governed by the foundation and Cancer Australia.

***Comments from lead investigators available on request.***

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#### **About the Movember Foundation**

The Movember Foundation is the leading charity dedicated to changing the face of men's health around the world. With a singular goal to stop men dying too young, the foundation supports the following causes: prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health and suicide prevention. By funding projects such as the PCRA teams, Movember is working towards its goal to halve the number of deaths from prostate cancer by 2030. Since 2003, the support of more than 5 million participants has funded over 1,200 innovative projects across more than 20 countries. To donate or learn more, please visit [movember.com](http://movember.com).