

Wellness centre for cancer patients now \$2 million closer to reality

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An artist's impression of the wellness centre for local cancer patients. A \$2 million grant has pushed the centre very close to becoming a reality.

A \$2 million grant means the first cancer Wellness Centre in South West Sydney is very close to becoming reality.

The grant was provided by the Australian Cancer Research Foundation (ACRF).

Professor Geoff Delaney, Liverpool's Director of Cancer Services, said the grant was a huge step forward for the innovative Oncology Alliance for the Science of Integrated Survivorship (the ACRF OASIS Centre).

"We are extremely excited, it has taken a lot of effort from the initial idea six or seven years ago and this is good recognition for the treatments and the effort all the staff have put in in this area," he said.

The centre will work in partnership with universities and research institutes including the University of NSW, Western Sydney University, the Ingham Institute and the National Institute of Complementary Medicine.

"The centre will focus on gathering scientific evidence on the use of a wide range of treatments including massage, acupuncture, exercise, Chinese medicine and diet in improving short and long term treatment and quality of life outcomes for cancer patients," Professor Delaney said.

The ACRF OASIS Centre will be one of the few centres in Sydney collecting data for research and evidence purposes in order to further improve the care for future cancer patients.

“UNSW Medicine welcomes this generous grant from the Australian Cancer Research Foundation towards an important initiative for the people of South West Sydney,” said UNSW acting dean of medicine Professor Anthony Kelleher.

“A Wellness Centre would not only benefit cancer patients in the care they receive, and help improve their quality of life; it would also advance our scientific understanding of new approaches to cancer treatment and aligns perfectly with our thematic approach to research and education,” he said.

“It will further strengthen our links and commitment to the South West.”

Professor Ian Brown, the ACRF chief executive, said his organisation was excited to seed fund the development of the facility.

“Research into improving long term health outcomes of cancer patients will benefit all Australian cancer patients,” he said.

“Many times patients are left weakened due to the debilitating impact of their treatment and research into reducing adverse effects of treatment will be welcomed by all.

“ACRF is pleased to support the development and delivery of evidence based models of care, which will significantly improve quality of life for cancer patients.

“Thanks to the generosity of many our supporters from around Australia we are able to award high-impact grants, allowing Australia’s best scientists to embark on ground-breaking research projects.”

The ACRF OASIS Centre is still about \$1.1million from being able to begin construction of the building.

However Prof Delaney said he was confident they would be able to attract the remaining funding, and he welcomed anyone who was interested in being involved in funding the centre and helping to significantly further cancer care research.

Each year ACRF challenges the Australian cancer research community to propose projects that are bold and have the potential to make a significant impact on cancer prevention, detection and treatment.

In 2017, 13 projects were submitted from across the country and evaluated by ACRF's eminent medical research advisory committee.

The committee recommended four grants to the ACRF board for projects that have the greatest potential to change treatment outcomes for all Australian cancer patients.



At the presentation of the \$2m grant for a wellness centre were Anthony Howard, Governor of Victoria Linda Dessau, Prof Geoff Delaney and Tom Dery, ACRF chair.