

## Media Release

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### **Cutting edge cancer research facility launched at Liverpool Hospital**

A ground-breaking new prostate cancer drug will be one of the first drugs tested in Liverpool Hospital's new fully-integrated Phase 1 Clinical Trials Unit.

The new unit, officially launched today, will provide a permanent space to conduct phase 1 trials of cancer medications, ensuring the hospital's place as an important centre for cancer research.

Head of the unit, Professor Paul de Souza, said the unit was a very exciting development for Liverpool Hospital's involvement in cancer research.

"We have been conducting Phase 1 trials here since 2013, but this is the first time we will have a dedicated space for the convenience and comfort of staff and patients alike," he said.

"The unit will assist us in attracting more trials of the calibre of Associate Professor Kieran Scott's prostate cancer drug as well as allowing us to perform more of the laboratory work in-house."

Associate Professor Kieran Scott will head up a team, supported by Western Sydney University and the Ingham Institute, which will test a compound known as c2 that he has been researching for the past 15 years.

He said what originally started as a possible arthritis medication now had the potential to be a life-saving prostate cancer treatment.

"We found in laboratory trials that c2 not only shrinks tumours but can cause them to disappear completely," he said.

"Importantly, having a unit like the one now opened in Liverpool Hospital means we can quickly evaluate the efficacy of the compound in a relatively small trial and then determine whether it should go on to bigger trials."

As an added bonus for the patients and staff involved, c2 will be administered in the form of a capsule as opposed to intravenously

The trial will be completed within about nine months and the team aims to recruit between 12 and 20 patients to participate.

Phase I trials are clinical studies performed to establish the earliest information about a new drug or a combination of drugs, commonly to find out the maximum tolerated dose of a drug given in a certain schedule.

Since even basic information about a new drug is often unknown, these studies are designed for specific purposes, and are small in size (typically 5-35 patients).

“Our unit is going to focus on testing therapeutic studies in advanced cancer patients along with other biomarker or genomic studies,” Professor de Souza said.

“The patients who will be treated here have generally failed other cancer treatments available, so we will be able to offer them treatments that are not yet available outside of a research setting.”

The unit will provide four treatment rooms with the ability to provide medication to eight patients at a time.

Services will include drug treatments, blood sampling, blood processing, monitoring (eg by ECG, blood pressure), education (patient and staff) and patient review.