



MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia leading the way with cancer research

Executive Director of Children's Cancer Institute Australia for Medical Research (CCIA), Professor Michelle Haber, today welcomed the announcement of the construction of a new world-class cancer research centre which will be an outstanding new focus of Australian adult and childhood cancer research.

CCIA will occupy 50 percent of the new building which, as one of the largest dedicated cancer research centres in the Southern Hemisphere, will house internationally recognised scientists from CCIA and the University of New South Wales.

The announcement comes after the Australian Cancer Research Foundation (ACRF) awarded CCIA \$3.1 million this week to establish a dedicated childhood cancer drug discovery facility at the UNSW-based centre. The state-of-the-art facility will focus on the development of new drugs that will be less toxic and more effective in the treatment of a range of cancers.

“Without the significant support we have received from so many, this exciting new centre simply would not be a reality. Its exceptional facilities and infrastructure will enhance our ability to closely integrate with other outstanding cancer researchers at UNSW and grow our research programs”, said Professor Haber.

“What is most important about the Centre is that it brings us that much closer to our goal of finding a cure for childhood cancer which tragically still claims three Australian lives each week.

“In 2001, when the staff of CCIA numbered barely 50, we launched a Capital Appeal, for construction of a new building estimated to cost \$12.6 million. The appeal was a huge success resulting in the community generously donating \$4 million, with a

further \$6.3 million awarded from the Commonwealth and NSW Governments”, added Professor Haber.

“Since 2001, however CCIA has grown significantly, nearly tripling in size becoming the largest children’s cancer research facility in the country.

“We urgently needed a facility that was substantially larger than we had originally envisioned. With significant additional funding from the Commonwealth Government bringing the total contribution to \$13.3 million, and recently an additional \$15 million awarded to CCIA by New South Wales Government, the new home for CCIA at this Centre is now secure”, said Professor Haber.

With construction due to commence in August this year and be completed by 2009, CCIA will be able to further increase its size to 250 staff and students and attract internationally renowned researchers.

“The advantage of fully amalgamating childhood and adult cancer research expertise at a single site is that it will provide uniquely fertile ground for transferring information from one group of researchers to the other,” said Professor Haber.

The Lowy Cancer Research Centre will be located at the Randwick end of the UNSW campus, within walking distance of Sydney Children’s Hospital, with whom CCIA closely collaborates.

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Media Contact:

Miriam Pollak, Public Relations Executive

Phone: 9662 5663

Email: mpollak@ccia.org.au