Cancer Council Western Australia’s Research Funding Program

Terry Slevin Education and Research Director
Strategic Plan 2010 - 2013

Our Mission
Cancer Council Western Australia aims to minimise the incidence and impact of cancer on our community through advocacy, research and education and by providing people affected by cancer with support to enhance their quality of life.

Our Growth and Development Priorities

- Increase cancer research capacity and renown in WA, and help ensure it improves outcomes for cancer patients and their families
Others spend big $ on cancer research – why bother in WA?

“Ultimately, a strong cancer research culture in WA will translate into improved outcomes for cancer patients and better early detection and prevention”

• Quality improvement across all parts of cancer control – from prevention to early detection, treatment, quality of life and palliation
• Faster translation from research findings to practice when local leaders involved in research
• Local expert policy advice
• Take the lead in issues specific to WA (e.g. Mesothelioma)
Preference for the distribution of funds ($100) to the main types of Cancer Council services

A random Digit Dial survey consistently found adults in WA listed the funding of research as the highest priority “between $34 -36 out of a possible $100 when allocating $ to the work of the CCWA”
Operational funds, 2012-2013

How we raised our operational funds in 2012 - 2013

- Community & Corporate Fundraising: $7,300,690
- Donations: $3,755,070
- Bequests: $5,478,468
- Merchandise: $1,126,352
- Cancer Information & Support Services: $2,370,587
- Grants Education & Prevention Programs: $5,315,999
- Investments: $2,470,145
- Research: $98,000
- Other: $376

Total Raised: $16,533,228

How we spent our operational funds in 2012 - 2013

- Community & Corporate Fundraising, Donations and Bequests: $5,103,956
- Merchandise: $699,425
- Cancer Information & Support Services: $6,348,973
- Education & Prevention Programs: $7,247,339
- Investments: $148,748
- Research: $3,011,937
- Administration: $1,993,505
- Cancer Council Australia Contribution: $673,560
- Extraordinary Expense: $1,703

Total Spent: $25,235,166
Research Funding 2009-2014

Year | Funding
-----|--------
2009 | $1,500,000
2010 | $2,000,000
2011 | $2,500,000
2012 | $3,000,000
2013 | $3,500,000
2014 | $4,000,000

Note: The chart shows a steady increase in funding from 2009 to 2014.
Research Funding Program

$3.7 million spent on research funding 2013/14

- Project Grants
  - Early Career Investigator Grants
  - Competitive Project Grants
  - Capacity Building and Collaboration Grant
- People Support
  - Research Fellowships
  - Postdoctoral Fellowships
  - Professorial Chairs
- Scholarships
  - PhD Top Up
  - Honours
  - Vacation
Our research funding program structure:

**the person** and **the project**

**The person**: enabling progress at every career stage for the best researchers

**The project**: grants for talented cancer research teams to DO the work
Research Funding Program

8 scholarships pa
$3k, 6 - 10 weeks

4 scholarships pa
$7,500 pa x 1 year

1 scholarship pa
$12k pa x 3 yrs

1 postdoc pa
$75k pa x 3 yrs

1 fellowship pa
$100k pa x 3 yrs

3 Chairs, ongoing
$125-300k+ pa

Additional Initiatives

Postdoc Fellowship in Translational Cancer Pathology $75k pa x 3 years

A/Prof in Clinical Cancer Research RPH $100k pa for 5 years

Strategic Research Partnership NSWCC $100k pa for 3 - 5 years

National Priority Grants CA $67k pa x 3 years

Capacity Bldg & Collaboration Grant $1.2M total over 3 – 4 years

4 grants pa
$25k pa x 1 year

10 grants pa
$100k pa, 1 or 2 yrs

Funding for more than 20 yrs
More than 5 less than 20 yrs
Funding for 5 years or less
New in 2013
## Research Grants Committee Structure

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Committee</th>
<th>Chairs, Fellowships, Research Project Grants, Consultation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Subcommittee</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellowships and Early Career Investigator Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-doctoral Subcommittee</td>
<td>PhD top up, Honours and Vacation Scholarships</td>
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Committee Membership

- **Research Committee**
  - 11 x Independent, internationally recognised researchers
  - 2 x Consumer representatives
    - Postdoctoral Subcommittee
    - 2 x Members of the Research Committee
    - 1 x Consumer Representative
    - 4 x Additional independent researchers
    - Pre-doctoral Subcommittee
    - 2 x Members of the Research Committee
    - 1 x Consumer Representative
    - 4 x Additional independent Researchers
    - Executive support from Cancer Council WA
Research Committee

• Guiding Principles
  • That all steps are taken to ensure objective external assessment and review is applied to the allocation of research funds. We use national competitive system through NHMRC.
  • That the research community of WA are considered as respected and equal partners in the challenge to learn more about cancer
  • That representation on the committee will come from a wide range of institutions and disciplines involved in cancer research in WA

• Terms of Reference
  • To oversee the competitive research grant program with a view to maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of the program in supporting the highest quality cancer research in WA.
  • To provide a conduit for the involvement of cancer researchers in WA in Cancer Council Western Australia research programs and policies.
  • To make recommendations, on request, to the Cancer Council Board, on Cancer Council Western Australia research programs and policies
What do we want to achieve

... and how do we go about it?

• Ensure that the WA cancer research community can contribute to the international body of knowledge on cancer
• Maximise the WA cancer research communities capacity to compete effectively for national and international research resources
• Attract the best and the brightest researchers to pursue a career in cancer research in WA.
• Provide seed or “pump priming” funds to ensure good ideas can be developed so as to improve the opportunity to attract national and international funding
• The best researchers can develop strong successful careers in cancer research and to contribute to cancer control objectives
And is that strategy working?

*Two reviews have been conducted measuring outcomes of CCWA research funding*

   - Of 71 projects funded, 43 PIs surveyed 34 responded
   - Of those surveyed 81% reported attracting subsequent funding for related research. $ return not measured (Ledger and Tan Nov 2004).

   - Of 68 projects funded and 54 PIs surveyed 40 PIs responded
   - Of those surveyed 56% reported attracting subsequent funding for related research
   - From $5.4M grants awarded, $15.6M grants were attracted (Jalleh and Gucciardi 2009)
NHMRC round 2013 for 2014 $

- Successful researchers from 2013 project grant round who have previously had CCWA $:

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Richard Lake</td>
<td>Prof Jenette Creaney</td>
<td>Prof Prue Hart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Wallace Langdon</td>
<td>Prof Jon Emery</td>
<td>Prof Ruth Ganss</td>
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<tr>
<td>A/Pr Juliana Hamzah</td>
<td>Prof Mariapia Degli-Esposti</td>
<td>Prof Lin Fritschi</td>
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<td>Prof Peter Leedman</td>
<td>Prof Daniel Galvao</td>
<td>A/Pr Steven Mutsaers</td>
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- 32% of all successful WA researchers had previously received CCWA funding
- 75+% of all WA researchers with funding for cancer-related projects had previously received CCWA funding

- Approx. 20% of all NHMRC project grants nationally are cancer related¹

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¹ For project grants commencing in 2012 (most recent data available), 19% (148 out of 771) were for cancer-related research
NHMRC FUNDING
“WA share”
2004-2013

% of total NHMRC grant funding received by state / territory, 2004 - 2013

% of Total NHMRC Cancer Funding by State / Territory, 2004 - 2012
Research Events – “Selling Research”

• Annual Research Lunch
  • Acknowledge successful award recipients
  • Opportunity for researchers to meet with donors
• Cancer Conference/Symposium
  • ‘Singing for your supper’
• Researchers also contribute to Cancer Council WA efforts through:
  • Commenting in the media
  • Presentations
  • Lab visits for donors
  • Expert advice
• We need your help to do this. If you don’t acknowledge CCWA as a source of funds the donors do not SEE where their $ goes
Benchmarking

- We have developed considerably in the last 5 years since the board identified research as a priority.
- To determine what more could or should be done we undertook a benchmarking analysis.
- Assessment of cancer research funding programs by:
  - Cancer Australia
  - Cancer Councils of NSW, Victoria and Queensland
  - Cancer Institute NSW.
Steady Effective Growth

- Feedback from other agencies suggests CCWA Research Funding program has a **broad and diverse investment in both programs and people**
- **Clear consistent application of strategic intent** around “pump priming” and people support at all key career stages
- **Wise progression** of improved investment led by **expert senior researchers**
- **Efficient and lean** administration support for Research funding management (less than one FTE)
- **CCWA Innovations in “selling research”** to be replicated elsewhere
New Program – Capacity Building and Collaboration Grant

• The aim is to make a successful WA Cancer Research Group competitive for an NHMRC or similar program Grant (worth $2 – 3M pa for 5 years)....

• Offer up to a total of $1.2 M over 3 - 4 years to build a strong team and track record in a nominated cancer research field with a strong collaborative team. More publications, attract and retain more qualified staff, win more grants

• 11 groups applied. 3 were short listed. Interviews held this week. Result not yet known.

• Hopefully a number of NHMRC grants will flow from the 11 initial proposals

“Large scale pump priming”
Possible future growth to existing programs…

- Incrementally build – with a focus on early career researchers
- Make WA the place of opportunity for the young researcher
- Possible increase the grants in size and number to retain relative value
- When finances allow – grow the Project grants to increase the size of grant and create greater flexibility for the Research Committee to apply the funds in the best way according to the circumstance of the round.
Plan, monitor and adjust

- Key role of the Cancer Research Planning Committee (2 x board members, Research Committee Chair, CEO, Research Staff)
- Build our evaluation capacity to ensure closer monitoring of outputs of research funding
- Promote collaboration, cooperation, mentoring and consumer engagement
- Consider new developments and opportunities
Possible new development
– Just an example… equipment

- Explore funding Partners e.g. Lotteries West
- Conduct Gap Analysis
- Determine financial capacity to contribute
- Fund raising engagement
- If aligned – determine criteria, process/mechanism, external participation
Exploring External $ Opportunities

- Election campaign
- Exploring WA Health Research funding group – Lotteries, Healthway, Raine Found, DoHWA
Cancer Research Funding... An ongoing task..

• From the beginning....

The Cancer Council Act of Western Australia 1958 provided for the raising of money to stimulate, promote and fund cancer research into the cause, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cancer. The majority of the

From Chandler L, A History of CCWA and CFWA 1998

And into the future....

Supporting Cancer Research will be a core of what we do.

Our challenge is to do it efficiently and effectively to advance our mission

“…. to minimise the incidence and impact of cancer…”