

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 9.00PM 21 MAY 2009**

## **UNSW RESEARCHER RECEIVES STATE'S TOP CANCER RESEARCH HONOUR**

Director of the University of NSW Cancer Research Centre, Professor Philip Hogg, has been awarded this year's prestigious Cancer Institute NSW Premier's Award for Outstanding Cancer Research, the highest cancer research honour in NSW.

Professor Hogg was presented the \$50,000 honour by Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, Professor Jim Bishop AO, at a black-tie dinner in Sydney tonight.

Professor Philip Hogg is internationally recognised in cancer research for developing a dye that fastens onto dead or dying cancer cells and reveals whether cancer treatments are working just days into the course.

His other breakthrough discovery of a protein that stops cancerous tumours growing by targeting blood cell production could extend the lives of patients.

By gaining a greater understanding of how proteins work within the body, Professor Hogg discovered a protein that inhibits blood cell growth within a tumour rather than attacking the tumour cells. This is a new concept in cancer treatment which aims to prevent tumours from spreading.

A patient with ovarian cancer in the United Kingdom was the first to be treated using Professor Hogg's technique, with promising results; further clinical trials are expected to be conducted in Sydney later this year.

The Cancer Institute NSW Premier's Award for Outstanding Cancer Research recognises the potential for Professor Hogg's research to change cancer treatment and improve the survival chances of patients.

### **Other award recipients at the 2009 Cancer Institute NSW Premier's Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research:**

**Outstanding Cancer Research Fellow: Professor Richard Scolyer**, whose research into melanoma at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital is aimed at improving the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment.

**Outstanding Cancer Research Scholar: Emily Colvin**, of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, for her research into pancreatic cancer.

**Innovation in Cancer Clinical Trials: Border Medical Oncology Clinical Trials Unit, Albury**, for their commitment to providing access to clinical trials by developing an innovative model of clinical research in a regional setting.

**Excellence in Translational Cancer Research: Sydney Melanoma Unit** for their groundbreaking and internationally recognised research into melanoma and translating their findings into clinical practice.

"Professor Hogg and all of the cancer researchers recognised this year are providing the evidence that will drive and guide improvement in cancer prevention, treatment and the subsequent improvements in survival and quality of life of cancer patients," said Laureate Professor, Ron Sanson-Fisher, Acting Chief Cancer Officer and CEO, Cancer Institute NSW.

“Even the smallest advances in cancer research can have a huge impact on the lives of those touched by cancer.

“While the Premier’s Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research are an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our cancer research community, it’s only through the ongoing support of our researchers and in taking their discoveries to the clinic that their achievements in treating, curing and preventing cancer will be celebrated by the entire community,” he said.

**For more information about Professor Hogg’s research and other Award winners, please visit [www.cancerinstitute.org.au](http://www.cancerinstitute.org.au).**

### **About the NSW Premier's Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research**

The NSW Premier's Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research were established in 2006 to recognise outstanding scientists whose commitment and talent has had a significant impact on cancer treatment, clinical trials, prevention and research. An interstate independent panel evaluates the nominees and determines who receives a grant of \$50,000 - awarded to the Outstanding Cancer Researcher of 2009; \$20,000 - awarded to the Outstanding Cancer Research Fellow; and \$10,000 - awarded to the Outstanding Cancer Research Scholar.

This year’s Awards will include two new fields – the Premier's Award for Innovation in Cancer Clinical Trials (\$20,000) and the Premier's Award for Excellence in Translational Cancer Research (\$20,000).

Previous winners of the Outstanding Cancer Researcher of the Year include Professor Simon Chapman (2008), Professor Robyn Ward (2007) and Professor Bruce Armstrong (2006).

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### **About the Cancer Institute NSW:**

The Cancer Institute NSW is Australia's first State-wide Government cancer control agency. It was established in July 2003 through the Cancer Institute NSW Act 2003 to help further reduce the impact of cancer. The Cancer Institute NSW is responsible for reducing cancer incidence, increasing cancer survival, improving the quality of life for cancer patients and their carers and providing expert advice on cancer.