

Date: 18 November 2011

Royal visitor for Westmead Hospital's Cancer Care Centre

Westmead Hospital staff and patients today welcomed the announcement that the Cancer Care Centre would be re-named after Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark.

The Australian-born Danish Crown Princess will visit the Cancer Care Centre next week during her trip to Australia.

The Centre will be renamed the Crown Princess Mary Cancer Centre Westmead in her honour.

"Staff are very proud of the work we do here and to see it recognised by The Crown Princess is a great honour," said Sydney West Cancer Network Director, Associate Professor Paul Harnett.

"Over the years we've built a strong relationship with the Danish health system having hosted medical oncologists, representatives from the Danish Department of Health, Danish Cancer Society and the Danish Health Minister," A/Prof Harnett said.

"We've also collaborated on research with doctors from the Aarhus University Hospital in Denmark," he said.

"The Crown Princess' visit reinforces Westmead Cancer Care Centre as an international leader in cancer treatment and research, and will put Western Sydney on the map.

"Westmead was the first Cancer Centre in NSW and only the second in Australia to receive international accreditation as a Designated Center of Integrated Oncology and Palliative Care by the European Society for Medical Oncology.

"We look forward to introducing The Crown Princess to our hard-working staff and inspirational patients," he said.

Westmead is linked with cancer care centres in Blacktown and Nepean to form the Sydney West Cancer Network.

A/Prof Paul Harnett said cancer was now the largest cause of disease in Australia, surpassing cardiovascular disease.

"With 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women being diagnosed with cancer, most Australians will have either been affected directly by the disease or know someone who has been diagnosed.

"Even though cancer rates are increasing, with early detection and modern treatments, the survival rates are increasing and are amongst the best in the world," he said.

Some interesting statistics:

- Each day an average of 321 cancer patients attend the Westmead Cancer Care Centre for treatment or consultation.
- In 2010/11 financial year the Sydney West Cancer Network saw almost 5,000 new patients.

- During the last 12 months, Westmead Cancer Care Centre performed 14,936 occasions of service for chemotherapy treatment and 32,222 occasions of service for radiotherapy treatment
- During the last 12 months, the Sydney West Cancer Network performed 28,944 occasions of service for chemotherapy and 48,126 occasions of service for radiotherapy
- The five most common cancers are prostate, bowel, breast, melanoma and lung cancer.
- In 2006 there were 35,342 new cases of cancer in NSW. It is estimated that by 2021, more than 51,000 people will be diagnosed with cancer – an increase of 44 per cent in 15 years.