

Translational cancer research at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne

Professor Michael Sullivan is leading a new research program at The Royal Children's Hospital and Murdoch Childrens Research



Institute in Melbourne. Recruited from New Zealand, with a wealth of international experience in both clinical care and cancer research, Professor Sullivan is building team of researchers to improve the care and outcome for children diagnosed with solid tumours

and brain tumours. Using childhood liver cancer as a model for "translational cancer research" his focus is on understanding the biology and genetics of this disease to identify new treatments and decrease the long-term effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.



Professor Sullivan sees research-led care as the cornerstone of modern cancer care for children and young people. Children treated on cancer clinical trials have the best outcomes and have access to new treatments.

Professor Sullivan's

team is opening a portfolio of new international cancer clinical trials at RCH, including two where he is the international trial leader. In one of these new clinical trials he is testing a new agent to protect the hearing of children who are at risk of deafness from chemotherapy. In a second new trial, Professor Sullivan is part of an international consortium of doctors who are developing a new clinical trial using a

novel combination of chemotherapy for children with relapsed cancer.

During 2014, Professor Sullivan will recruit a laboratory team to commence working on related research studies using genomic tools to investigate the biology of hepatoblastoma, one of the most common liver cancers. The aim of these studies is to identify and evaluate new drugs to selectively target hepatoblastoma.

These clinical and laboratory studies in liver cancer will serve as a model for initiating a broader program of research into other solid tumours and brain tumours. The goal is to use advanced genomic tools in the routine care of these cancers, where each child's cancer is molecularly dissected to select the most appropriate treatment, to target specific new therapies and to reduce the long-term toxicity of treatment.



The Children's Cancer Centre Foundation (CCCF) is a philanthropic organisation funding clinical care, research and family resources within Victoria. The CCCF is a strategic partner of the ALCCRF and assists with research programmes in Victoria.