

Media Release

\$600,000 of grant funding awarded to top researchers to beat one of Australia's most lethal cancers

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The Avner Pancreatic Cancer Foundation has announced it will be awarding \$600,000 in grant funding to six researchers on World Pancreatic Cancer day, on 21 November 2019. The \$600,000 will be shared equally between six talented pancreatic cancer scientists from leading research institutions around Australia.

The grants will be awarded to Associate Professor Shane Grey and Doctor Tatyana Chtanova, both from the Garvan Institute of Medical Research in Sydney, Professor John Hooper from The University of Queensland, Professor Eva Bezak from The University of South Australia, Dr Ying Zhu from UNSW, and Professor John Zalcborg from Monash University in Melbourne.

“We are pleased to award funding to these innovative projects.” said Michelle Stewart, CEO of the Avner Pancreatic Cancer Foundation, “ We are encouraged by the high calibre of the research and believe that investment into projects like these will help us to increase survival for Australians diagnosed with pancreatic cancer”.

Michelle went on to say “Pancreatic cancer is predicted to become the second leading cause of cancer death in Australia in the coming years, and claims as many lives as breast cancer, yet there is an overwhelming lack of public knowledge and funding for the disease. While we applaud the advocates of other top-five cancers who have driven vast improvements to survival rates that now exceed 90%, now is the time to apply the same focus and funding to pancreatic cancer”

Head of the Avner Foundation international Independent Advisory Panel, Prof. Ross McKinnon from Flinders University said “The 2019 round saw a further dramatic increase in the number of grants considered by the Avner Scientific Advisory Panel. The quality of the grants received was clearly the highest yet with remarkable breadth. Most notable was the move of many high-quality cancer groups into the highly challenging pancreatic cancer field”.

Pancreatic cancer is one of the most lethal cancers with a current 5-year survival rate of just 9.8%, and four out of every five patients diagnosed face a median survival of less than 12 months. Over 3,200 people are diagnosed each year, with the disease claiming virtually the same amount of lives as breast cancer in Australia. Most patients will be diagnosed with late stage, metastatic cancer as the disease is extremely difficult to detect in its early stages and with no distinct early warning signs, pancreatic cancer is a debilitating and shocking disease that remains chronically under-funded.

About the Avner Foundation

The Avner Pancreatic Cancer Foundation is the only charity in Australia exclusively dedicated to pancreatic cancer, with a mission to dramatically increase survival rates and quality of life for patients. We aim to achieve this by raising awareness and funding ground-breaking medical research, with \$7m already invested in 22 research projects at leading institutions around Australia.

For more detailed information, regional case studies, interview opportunities and high-resolution imagery contact:

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