



# Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Wednesday, 20 November 2013

#### **\$3.5 MILLION EQUIPMENT BOOST FOR CANCER RESEARCH**

Medical Research Minister Jillian Skinner today announced \$3.5 million in funding for equipment to enable NSW cancer researchers to better understand cancer cells and discover new, targeted treatments.

Mrs Skinner said the 11 successful grant applicants will bolster cancer research, including brain cancer in children, advanced lung cancer, melanoma, profiling the DNA of cancer patients and mobile breast cancer imaging.

"NSW is home to some of the best cancer researchers in the world and arming them with innovative technologies is vital to further our efforts to fight and beat this terrible disease," Mrs Skinner said.

"This \$3.5 million investment in equipment and infrastructure will assist our cancer researchers to enhance the quality and scope of their work.

"By 2021, almost 51,000 people in NSW per year will be told 'you have cancer'. There really is no time to waste when it comes to supporting our researchers to undertake their life-changing and potentially life-saving work.

"As the state's first Minister for Medical Research I believe medical research is not just an after-thought - it is at the very heart of modern health care and has potential to profoundly impact lives for the better."

Mrs Skinner said four of the 11 research grant recipients have received close to \$1.5 million for projects which will allow greater understanding of cancer at cellular and genetic levels.

The new technology includes a storage facility for the Garvan Institute, which will house tens of thousands of patient genomes, allowing new patients to be compared with other patients who have similar genome profiles and for whom information exists, such as how they responded to different therapies.

Also being funded is a cutting-edge mass cytometry device at the University of Sydney which will allow researchers to simultaneously measure more than 40 characteristics of individual cells, greatly increasing their ability to understand and identify cancer cells and discover new targets for cancer treatment.

Professor David Currow, Chief Cancer Officer and CEO of the Cancer Institute NSW said investing in new technologies will have a significant impact on the way we understand and treat cancer.

“The availability of research infrastructure is critical for expanding cancer research capacity and improving quality,” Professor Currow said.

“There are few of us who can say we have not been touched by the effects of cancer and this funding will go a long way to supporting our talented researchers on their journey to find a cure.”