

Network Update

Thank you for a successful 2024

As we approach the end of another successful year, it is a great opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made and the exciting developments that are shaping the future of cancer research in regional NSW.

I am proud to share that during this period, the [NSW Regional Cancer Research Network](#) has made significant strides in advancing cancer research and capacity building across regional NSW. Key achievements include:

- **\$1.3+ million in funding allocated to regional partners** and cancer services via competitive grant schemes across four Local Health Districts (LHDs).
- **Launch of the 'Research Starter' grant scheme**, supporting six emerging researchers with almost \$200,000 to commence translational cancer research.
- **Clinician Research Fellowships (Round 2)** awarded to three regional clinical staff, totalling \$300,000, to drive local translational cancer research. This brings the total Clinician Research Fellows we have funded to six.
- Completion of a **Research Capacity and Culture Survey** across partner LHDs, with data analysis in the final stages.
- Continued progress on a **collaborative research project** assessing the adherence to Optimal Care Pathways in regional NSW, with initial data collection in the Hunter New England LHD. Initial data analysis is complete, and expansion to other Local Health Districts data sets will commence in 2025.
- Expansion of the **Network's virtual platform**, now with **over 300 members**, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange across the region.
- **Over 100 requests** for [specialised research support](#) processed through the new 'Direct Research Request' [portal](#) since its October 2023 launch.
- Hosted the **NSW Cancer Research Symposium on Data Linkage** at the Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute, which attracted over 100 attendees from across metro and regional NSW. (Presentations can be

accessed on the Cancer Institute NSW Cancer Research Education (CREd) Portal. Email us for access).

- **Regional Cancer Consumer Travel Grants** awarded to six regional cancer research consumers to attend the [2025 National Cancer Survivorship Conference](#) in Melbourne in March next year.

Through the generous support of the [Cancer Institute NSW](#) through a [Translational Cancer Research Capacity Building Grant](#), the Network's continued focus on building research capacity and enhancing regional collaboration is critical in improving outcomes for cancer patients in these communities. Further efforts, including the introduction of new research grant opportunities, will continue to drive innovation and impact in 2025.

Looking forward, we are excited to build on these successes, further enhancing our efforts to build translation research capacity, support emerging researchers, and ultimately improve the outcomes for cancer patients in regional NSW.

The dedication of our team, researchers, and [partners](#) continues to drive forward the vision of improving cancer care and research in regional communities. We're excited about the future and are confident that our collective efforts will lead to even greater achievements in the year ahead.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work together to increase research capacity and capability across northern NSW.

Professor Nikola Bowden
Lead, NSW Regional Cancer Research Network

Please note that the NSW Regional Cancer Research Network will be closed from Monday 16 December 2024 and will reopen Monday 6 January 2025.

APPLICATION WAITLIST | Regional Cancer Consumer Travel Grants to attend the 2025 National Cancer Survivorship Conference

Scheme now at capacity

The NSW Regional Cancer Research Network has received an overwhelming response to our [Regional Cancer Consumer Travel Grants](#) program. As a result, we have awarded funding to six (6) of our cancer consumer members to attend the 2025 National Cancer Survivorship Conference, hosted by the Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) on March 6-7, 2025, at Rydges Melbourne, Victoria.

The conference theme, "Building Capability and Capacity in Survivorship Care and Research," promises to spark bold discussions and inspire meaningful exchanges of ideas between clinicians, researchers, policymakers, and consumers. This exciting event will contribute to advancing survivorship care and enhancing the field's capability and capacity.

Each Travel Grant, valued up to \$1,500, will cover the cost of conference registration, transport (airfares and/or ground transportation), and two nights of accommodation at the conference hotel.

Application Waitlist

While we have reached full capacity for this scheme, we are still accepting applications for a waitlist. Should any successful applicants become unable to attend the conference, we will offer grants to those on the waitlist. To be considered, please review the scheme guidelines and submit your application via the online form on our [website](#).



We thank all those who have applied and look forward to seeing the successful applicants represent our network at this key event.

SAVE THE DATE | NSW Cancer Research Education Statewide Seminar Series returns in 2025!

We're excited to announce that in 2025, the NSW Cancer Research Education Seminar Series will be led by the [Maridulu Budyari Gumal \(SPHERE\) Cancer Clinical Academic Group \(CAG\)](#) in collaboration with [Sydney Cancer Partners](#) and the [NSW Regional Cancer Research Network](#). Supported by the [Cancer Institute NSW](#) through the [Translational Cancer Research Capacity Building Grants](#) scheme, these informative seminars will take place online on the third Tuesday of every month throughout 2025.

Mark your calendars for the first seminar on **Tuesday, February 18, 2025**, from 12.30pm to 1.30pm. This session will be hosted via a Teams webinar and is not to be missed!

More details about the seminars will be shared in the coming weeks, so stay tuned and watch this space for updates!

2024 NSW Premier's Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research

The NSW Regional Cancer Research Network was delighted to attend the [NSW Premier's Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research](#), held on 21 November in Sydney.

The event celebrates the remarkable achievements of individuals and teams within the cancer research community, highlighting their commitment to advancing cancer research, innovation, and the delivery of cutting-edge care.



It was inspiring to research and innovation supported across New South Wales. The event honored exceptional contributions across various domains, including academic research, advancements in cancer clinical outcomes, and the successful integration of innovative practices into world-class care for the people of NSW.

The night was a testament to the dedication and hard work of those striving to improve the lives of cancer patients through research and innovation. We extend our congratulations to the winners in each of the eight award categories. Their groundbreaking work is shaping the future of cancer care, and you can [read more](#) about their research and achievements on the NSW Cancer Institute's [website](#).

The Premier's Awards highlight the continued importance of collaboration and innovation in cancer research and provide a platform to recognise the outstanding contributions of those pushing the boundaries in the fight against cancer.

Member Spotlight: James Miles-Brown, Network PhD Scholarship Holder

James Brown-Miles, a PhD candidate in the Mark Hughes Foundation Centre for Brain Cancer Research celebrated an important milestone in his study on Wednesday November 27 with his first recruited patient undergoing an MRI scan at the HMRI Imaging Centre.

James' scholarship is funded by the Cancer Institute NSW through the NSW Regional Cancer Research Network. He commenced his PhD project in June 2023, and since then he has been methodically putting everything into place before beginning patient recruitment for his clinical study.

It's a complex project, with James aiming to recruit 30 patients suspected of having glioblastoma with the help of Associate Professor Mitchell Hansen and other neurosurgeons, as well as MHF Centre for Brain Cancer Research Brain Cancer Nurses and registrars from the Neurosurgery Unit at the John Hunter Hospital.



James' project aims to study the MRI scans of these patients to look for specific features and patterns that may help to identify markers of key mutations that are known to affect how treatments should be planned.

Read more about James' project [here](#).

James's supervisor, Professor Hubert Hondermarck, has also received Cancer Institute NSW funding through NSW Regional Cancer Research Network to undertake a [project](#) will improve healthcare accessibility and

precision for regional, rural, and remote populations through the identification of a non-invasive imaging techniques that, once established, can be easily reproduced in regional imaging clinics and laboratories.

Join the Cancer Institute NSW Cancer Research Education (CREd) Portal



The Cancer Institute [NSW Cancer Research Education \(CREd\) Portal](#) supports knowledge-sharing and collaboration between cancer researchers across the state and the Cancer Institute NSW. The portal provides a space for coordination of education activities and resources, recordings of the NSW Statewide Cancer Research Education Seminar Series and the 2024 NSW Cancer Research Symposium in Data Linkage.

Please note that access to the CREd Portal requires membership, which is available to you through the NSW Regional Cancer Research network. If you are not

already a member, please let us know via [email](#) and we can assist with establishing your access.

Network Member Achievements

Mid North Coast Local Health District win Rural Innovation Award

Congratulations to the [Mid North Coast Local Health District](#), who were winners at the **NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation '2024 Rural Innovation Awards'** for their project 'Transforming Cancer Care with AI and Automation'.

Network members awarded Tour de Cure PhD Support Scholarships

We are pleased to congratulate Dr Alex Flynn and James Brown-Miles on securing [Tour de Cure](#) PhD Support Scholarships. [Dr Alex Flynn](#) is a recipient of a NSW Regional Cancer Research Network 'Shovel Ready' Translational Research Project Grant, and is undertaking her PhD at the University of Newcastle. [James Miles-Brown](#) is supported through a NSW Regional Cancer Research Network PhD Scholarship and undertakes his PhD within the [Mark Hughes Foundation Centre for Brain Cancer Research](#) at the University of Newcastle. The 'Shovel Ready' Translational Research Project Grants and a NSW Regional Cancer Research Network PhD Scholarships are both funded by the [Cancer Institute NSW](#) through the NSW Regional Cancer Research Network. Well done, Alex and James!



Sector Opportunities and Events

NOW OPEN | Cancer Australia 'Supporting People with Cancer' grant program

Supporting People with Cancer is an annual program aimed at promoting equity in cancer outcomes and experiences for all Australians. This includes a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other priority population groups identified in the [Australian Cancer Plan](#).

The program provides grants to community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support Australians affected by cancer. Grants of up to \$120,000 are available for projects up to 3 years in length. Funding is available to support a broad range of activities.

Grants are available through two streams: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and community organisations. Organisations must demonstrate ongoing and culturally acceptable connections with community.

This is a targeted grant opportunity, and not all organisations will be eligible to apply as a lead applicant. Please check the eligibility criteria in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines closely and consider applying in partnership with an eligible organisation if you do not meet the criteria. Applications close on 20 February 2024.

For further information visit [here](#).

NOW OPEN | Improving First Nations Cancer Outcomes: Partnerships for Cancer Research | Cancer Australia

Cancer Australia is delivering the Partnerships for Cancer Research grant program to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The program will help to build the capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cancer research sector.

The grant program will facilitate partnerships between mainstream services, research groups and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Applications close on Wednesday, 12 February 2025.

Further information is available on the Cancer Australia [website](#).

SAVE THE DATE | World Cancer Day 2025 (Sydney) 4 February

[Maridulu Budyari Gumal \(SPHERE\) Cancer CAG](#), [Sydney Cancer Partners](#), and Sydney Cancer Research Network are co-hosting World Cancer Day 2025 in Sydney.

Drawing inspiration from the World Cancer Day theme, United by Unique, the day will highlight the importance of person-centered cancer care.

Come together with consumers, clinicians, and researchers to hear stories, gain insights, and support one another in the fight against cancer.

Date: Tuesday, 4th February 2025

Time: 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: Aerial Function Centre, UTS

For more information and to register visit [here](#).

Are you looking for a health consumer for your project or new initiative?

Whether you're a researcher seeking valuable insights, or health staff member looking for consumer participation, [NSW Regional Health Partners'](#) Consumer Connect has consumers ready to support your projects, services or new initiatives. [More info ...](#)

Want to keep up to date?

We're now on [Blue Sky](#). Find us [@nswrcrn.bsky.social](#)

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X \(Twitter\)](#)!

We acknowledge the many Traditional Custodians of Country throughout regional, rural and remote NSW and honour their Elders, families and descendants, past and present. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs, and deep and continuing relationship with the land and waterways. We acknowledge that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

The NSW Regional Cancer Research Network is funded by the [Cancer Institute NSW](#) through a Translational Cancer Research Capacity Building Grant and established through [NSW Regional Health Partners](#).