

Cancer Clinical Trials at The Canberra Hospital

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A clinical trials program in cancer has been operating since 1979 through the Medical Oncology Research Unit. We have participated in clinical trials that have led directly to the registration of important new drugs such as docetaxel (Taxotere) and trastuzumab (Herceptin), lapatinib (Tykerb) for breast cancer, erlotinib (Tarceva) for lung cancer, oxaliplatin (Eloxatin) and cetuximab (Erbix) for colorectal cancer and sorafenib (Nexavar) for renal cell cancer. We are witnessing an important era of rapid developments being made in the area of targeted therapies and the concept of 'personalised medicine' due to progress in the understanding of biological pathways and the conduct of large clinical trials to prove effectiveness. These have made measurable impacts on the survivals of a number of cancers in recent years when improved treatments have come into standard practice.

We would like to be able to participate in more cooperative group clinical trials conducted under the auspices of the ANZ Breast Cancer Trials Group, the Australasian Gastrointestinal Trials Group, the ANZ Gynaecological Oncology Group and the Australian Lung Trials Group. These trials are usually unfunded or have minimal funding for participating sites, but do help to answer important questions regarding cancer treatments and may also allow patients access to new treatments before they are registered or funded. The Cancer Council ACT's financial support will greatly assist our research unit towards this goal.