

Children's Cancer Centre news

Issue 5 February 2008

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CCC updates

The New Royal Children's Hospital is planned to open in 2011. Outpatient and inpatient facilities will have many advantages over current facilities. This newsletter has information about some of the key features of the hospital including the CCC.

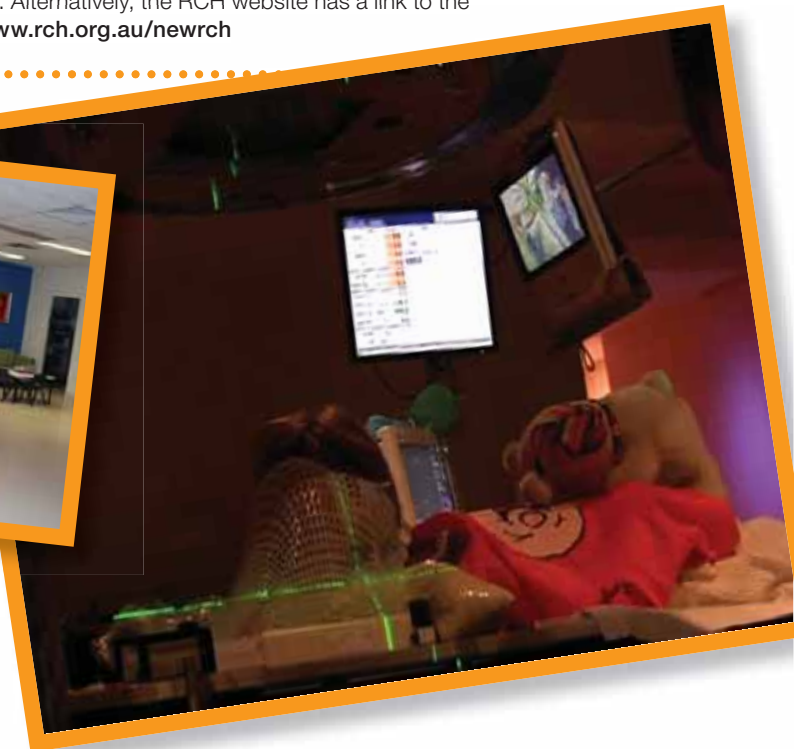
As part of the Paediatric Integrated Cancer Service we have included a section on changes at Southern Health and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

If you would like more information about the redevelopment please contact Marcia Carey, Redevelopment Team on 9345 5164. Alternatively, the RCH website has a link to the Redevelopment web page <http://www.rch.org.au/newrch>



Above: Children's Cancer Centre Reception area at Monash Medical Centre.

Right: A two year old girl in her treatment mask watches a DVD while radiation therapists at Peter Mac check her alignment under the linear accelerator.



The Children's Cancer Centre at Monash Medical Centre (MMC)

The new CCC outpatient facility opened in July 2007. We are here to stay, even if the new paediatric inpatient and outpatient facility proceeds.

The CCC at MMC is a Monday to Friday outpatient facility and caters for approximately 20 patient visits per day. Many of the patients come down to the ward to have their chemo. We have a whole team consisting of doctors, nurses and social workers along with play and music therapists to help and support you and your child through their cancer treatment. One of the best things about the CCC at MMC is that the two treatment rooms are transformed once a week into a mini theatre suite for lumbar punctures and bone marrow tests. The children and their families don't have to go anywhere except the CCC!

Radiotherapy at Peter Mac

Children must be alone in the treatment bunker during delivery of radiation therapy beams. This typically only takes a few minutes, but the resulting separation anxiety can be a big problem for younger kids.

New works at Peter Mac give children the option of seeing their parents during treatment via dedicated CCTV. Alternately, kids can use the system to watch DVDs during treatment.

Other improvements include a dedicated intercom microphone for parents, better CCTV facilities for watching the child as well as a digital music library.

Previous modifications included installation of fibre optics and colour changing lighting along with improvements to children's waiting areas. Peter Mac now has some of the most child-friendly radiation therapy facilities in the world.

The **Royal Children's Hospital** Melbourne

Murdoch Childrens Research Institute
Healthier Kids. Healthier Future.

Peter Mac
EXCELLENCE INNOVATION COMPASSION

Paediatric Integrated Cancer Service
A statewide cancer service for children

Southern Health



The new Royal Children's Hospital

At the RCH, we are entering an exciting stage in our history with the Victorian Government building a brand new hospital, right next door to the current site in Parkville.

The new RCH, which will open in 2011, will combine world-class health care facilities and family-friendly features to ensure we have the facilities to care for children today and into the future.

The RCH has always provided the best care to children from Victoria, around Australia and even internationally. However, since the hospital on the current site was designed over 40 years ago, the way we care for children has changed.

Today families and carers are encouraged to stay and help care for their children. The new RCH will be family-centered and include improved accommodation and facilities for parents.

Rooms will feature couches that pull out into overnight parent beds, internet access and storage facilities. Eighty five percent of patient rooms will be single rooms, providing patients and their families with privacy, without compromising staff visibility and patient safety.

A bigger and better Family Resource Centre will support families of sick children. And there's plenty to keep the children happy too, including play areas, a state

- of the art entertainment system at each patient bed, even a two storey coral reef aquarium!

- New interior design will make it easy for families to find their way around the new hospital. There will also be over 2,000 underground car park spaces – almost twice the existing number.

- Park views and access to nature also feature in the design of the new building. Research shows that nature provides a really powerful force to help lift children and their families' morale and assists the healing process. The new hospital will be surrounded by parkland. Eighty percent of all patient rooms will have views of the park and the building will be oriented towards the north, making good use of natural light.

- The building's external façade has also been designed with the hospital's natural setting in mind, reflecting colours from the trees and nature that surround it.

- Once the new hospital opens, we will move into Stage Two of the new hospital project (2012–2014) when most of the existing hospital will be demolished and land reinstated as parkland.

- Stage Two will also include the building of many of the hospital's retail shops, a 3.5 star hotel for extended families to stay, a gymnasium and additional childcare facilities.

- The new RCH will be environmentally friendly and aims to be Australia's first five-star Green Star hospital. An overall 45 percent reduction in greenhouse gases will be achieved through energy efficient lighting, cooling and heating, the inclusion of a gas fired cogeneration plant and solar panels.



CCC-specific information

The Children's Cancer Centre (CCC), including an inpatient unit, day oncology unit, outpatient clinics and the satellite pharmacy will be located on the second floor of the inpatient building in the new RCH (see drawing on opposite page).

The CCC Inpatient Unit will have a larger playroom, adolescent area and family facilities. There will also be new and improved recreational facilities for patients in extended isolation.

Through the feedback process, many of our staff have been involved in the planning and design of the new CCC and their input will help the design team create a fantastic facility for the future.





The new RCH

The new Royal Children's Hospital: North building, Level 2 showing the new Children's Cancer Centre and facility for families.

Drawing courtesy of Billard Leece Bates Smart and Sharp Design.

CCC news

Social Work

The Social Work team is very pleased to welcome Liliانا Melone. Liliانا joined the social work team in December last year. She brings with her a wealth of experience and knowledge.

Look Good...Feel Better for Teens 2009

The LGFB for Teens program is for patients with cancer who are aged 12 years and older.

LGFB provides an opportunity for participants to meet other patients their own age, feel better about themselves and have fun!

The program aims to help build self worth, further develop coping strategies and to meet peers in similar situations. The next workshop is on **Monday 30 March** at the RCH, patients from MMC are welcome.

Siblings Day 2009

Siblings Day is special day just for brothers and sisters. The day is filled with information about what happens when you come to hospital, fun activities and a behind the scenes tour of the hospital. The next Siblings Day will be on **Friday 10 July** at the RCH, patients from MMC are welcome.

For bookings and more information about these groups please contact Debbie Kertesz, Social Worker on 9345 6111.

Long Term Follow Up (LTF)

The Paediatric Integrated Cancer Service (PICS) has been successful in obtaining funding as part of Victoria's Cancer Action Plan 2008–2011 to develop a statewide Long Term Follow Up Program for survivors of childhood cancer. The Cancer Action Plan was announced by the Government on 17 December 2008.

The Victorian Cancer Action Plan outlines the key priorities with regard to cancer prevention and cancer care and includes funding for translational research activities. Long Term Follow Up has been recognised as an area of high importance within the Plan.

The program will be accessible to all survivors of childhood cancer treated at the RCH or Monash Medical Centre and their

families and will provide each individual with a tailored approach to meet their ongoing needs, in the environment best suited to the level of care required. The program will be able to provide interested health and community care providers with comprehensive information about treatments, future health planning and LTF clinics at both Children's Cancer Centre sites, as well as in certain regional areas.

The program is still in the early developmental stage and we will keep you updated with more details in upcoming newsletters.

Information about your medication

Resprim®, Bactrim®, Septrin®

Resprim is usually given to CCC patients to prevent bacterial infections in the lungs. Resprim contains two antibiotics called **trimethoprim** and **sulfamethoxazole**. These medicines work by stopping the growth of the bacteria that is causing the infection. Resprim will not work against infections caused by viruses, such as colds or flu. Resprim is available only with a doctor's prescription. If the medication has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

How to take Resprim

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully. If you do not understand the instructions on the pack, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help. Take Resprim after food as this will lessen the chance of a stomach upset. Resprim may need to be stopped during treatment for short periods. Resprim usually continues for a few months after chemotherapy is completed.

If you forget to give your child's dose ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

While your child is taking Resprim their skin may burn more easily. If outdoors, wear protective clothing and use a SPF 30+ sunscreen.

Storage

Keep medications where children cannot reach them. A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines. Keep your tablets in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 30°C. Do not store medicine in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it in the car or on window sills. Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

For further information ask your doctor or pharmacist.



CCC-RCH ward update

It has been a busy few months on the ward with many staffing changes. In December Matt Stewart resigned from the Nurse Unit Manager position. Melinda Sharpe is currently acting in this role and will continue to do so until the position is advertised in the coming months. Melinda comes to us with a wealth of paediatric experience and is a welcome addition to the team. Please feel free to pop in and say hello.

Jacqui Williams has returned from maternity leave to the Nurse Program Manager position part time. Sharon De Graves will continue to job share this position with Jacqui. Rochelle Leivers will soon join Sonya Camilleri on maternity leave. We wish Sonya and Rochelle the very best as they prepare for their new additions.

We have 14 new staff commencing over February/March. Education and support for these new staff is a priority over the next few months and our education and senior nursing team have been busy orientating and teaching these nurses.

In what has been a challenging start to the year for many Victorians we wish you and your families the very best.

CCCPAG Children's Cancer Centre Parent Advisory Group

We are a group of parents and staff from the CCC who meet monthly to discuss issues pertinent to families attending the CCC at RCH, MMC and Peter Mac.

The hopes and dreams of CCCPAG are to make the cancer journey as smooth as possible for all families. We can hear directly from the families by joining us at our regular morning teas in the parent/carer facilities on the 6th floor. Soon we will have a web page which families can also use to communicate their concerns etc.

Over the past year we have assisted many families with some of their issues and worked closely with the CCC at RCH, MMC and Peter Mac. in bringing the families' point of view to various initiatives. We intend to continue to closely interact with the families and bring their expectations and suggestions to CCC regularly to support continuous improvement.

We welcome new members to CCCPAG. If you would like to join us then contact our Chairperson, Asanga Lokusooriya on 0402 262 668 or asanga.lokusooriya@ida.com or ask to speak with Mary McGowan at the Children's Cancer Centre.

CBTA Children's Brain Tumour Association

The CBTA held their annual Christmas Party at Knox Indoor Sports Centre. The atmosphere was relaxing and enjoyable. Even the adults joined in some of the games. Santa also paid a visit.

It is important to keep these functions going as it is always a great way to catch up and continue to support families and listen to the challenges they are facing.

Thanks to Jayenne and Terry Clark for the great organisation of this event. Without their enthusiasm and dedication it would not be possible, Thank you. CBTA urgently need new members to continue their work of the past 10 years. Please contact Rosemary Sandalis on 0412 216 443 or contact Mary McGowan at the CCC to see how you can get involved and assist the group.

CIKA Cancer in Kids @ RCH

CIKA consists of parents and friends of children who have been diagnosed with a solid tumour. The hopes and dreams of CIKA are to stop children from ever contracting cancer, but if they do, to ensure that the treatment they receive will be successful. At present the only way to move positively towards these ideals is through research.

The CIKA team work together to raise funds for cancer research and has financially supported projects at RCH for nearly thirty years. We have recently committed \$300,000 over three years for research.

We welcome new members to CIKA. It is a great group of people who work towards a common goal. You can find out more from our website www.cika.org.au If you would like to join us then contact our vice president, Ellen Webb on 0423 767 136 or ellenwebb@optusnet.com.au or speak with Mary McGowan at the Children's Cancer Centre.

LARCH

Leukaemia Auxiliary Royal Children's Hospital

LARCH is thrilled to announce that we recently approved an application to fund a Real Time PCR machine that will be used by the Cord Blood Stem Cell Research Laboratory at RCH to learn more about the genes involved in the diagnosis and treatment of childhood cancer.

The RotorGene6000 Real Time PCR machine is currently being used in a project aimed to improve the safety of cord blood for cord blood transplants, but will also provide invaluable information as to the early events that occur in the development of childhood leukaemia.

The immediate project being undertaken is a collaboration with Dr Elizabeth Algar, CCC and is aimed at improving cord blood transplantation and banking from the BMDI Cord Blood Bank at the RCH. Many of these cord blood units are used to treat children with leukaemia in the CCC.

LARCH is thrilled to be able to fund the cost of this machine and we would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Lotus Dinner Committee without whom this purchase may not have been possible.

We look forward to hearing from the researchers in the future about the results of research conducted with the assistance of this vital piece of equipment.

LARCH meetings for 2009 are 17 February, 19 May and 18 August. Meetings commence at 6.00pm, conclude at 8.00pm and are held in the meeting room at Ronald McDonald House, 22 Gatehouse Street, Parkville (opposite the hospital). New people are always welcome.

Right: Dr Ngaire Elwood and Research assistant Pei Tian with the RotorGene6000 Real Time PCR machine in the lab of the Cord Blood Stem Cell Research Group, MCRI/RCH.

