

Victorian Cancer Biobank Fact Sheet

What is the Biobank?

- The Victorian Cancer Biobank (Biobank) is an initiative funded by the Victoria Government to provide ethically obtained, high quality biospecimens to cancer researchers in academia and the biotechnology sector
- The Biobank is a not-for-profit consortium of tissue banks located at Austin Health, Melbourne Health, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and Southern Health, and Central Operations based at the Cancer Council Victoria
- The Biobank combines a co-ordinated system of tissue collection with a centralised application process that streamlines researcher access to biospecimens.
- Biobank staff obtain consent from patients undergoing cancer surgery to bank excess tissue for future research.

Why have a Biobank?

- The Biobank provides researchers with large numbers of high quality clinically annotated tissue samples to facilitate research that will lead to improved patient outcomes through the development of targeted therapies.
- Collaboration with BioGrid Australia will enable clinical follow-up data to be linked to the biospecimen samples.

Some facts and figures

- The Biobank was formed following the successful application to the Victorian Government for \$7 million in funds through the Science Technology and Innovation Grant scheme.
- The Biobank is now one of the largest multi-centre collection facilities of its kind in the world, collecting tissue and blood from donors at 22 public and private hospitals in metropolitan Melbourne and Geelong.
- More than 9000 people have now donated their tissue and blood to the Biobank since October 2006.
- More than 50 cancer research projects have been approved by the Biobank Access Committee and over 10,000 biospecimens supplied to researchers throughout Australia and internationally.

Future Direction

- The Victorian Cancer Agency has recognised the important role of the Biobank in clinical and translational research by committing to support the Biobank through to 2012 as part of the Victorian Cancer Action Plan.
- The funds will be used to maintain operations in metropolitan Melbourne and expand the Biobank collection network to support cancer research and clinical trials in the regional Victoria.
- Access to high quality, ethically obtained human biospecimens is essential for supporting translational research that will lead to the development of targeted therapies for treating cancer.
- Through the Biobank, Victoria has the infrastructure to provide high quality biospecimens required for biomarker discovery that will lead to improvements in cancer diagnosis and treatment.

www.viccancerbiobank.org.au

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