



Funding research into childhood cancers for over forty years

Contents

Committee of Management

Meet our Committee of Management Team who are the driving force behind the directions we take.

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 - the 2022/2023 financial year.
- 6 Funding of Grants Read about the research projects funded by CCRF in 2022/2023 financial year.
- CLCRF Lab Report Scientific reports direct from our CCRF Funded Scientists in the Telethon Kids Insitute Laboratory.
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A message from The Foundation

As we reflect on the past year, we are deeply thankful for the unwavering support from our incredible community of donors, local groups, State Government and businesses. Your steadfast commitment has driven our ability to support our mission, to fund research until a cure is found and to support children diagnosed with cancer and we thank you.

The Foundation raised/received revenue totalling \$1,976,843 during the year under review. The main sources of these funds were:

- Raffles & DMC campaigns \$702,010
- Back on Track WA program \$451,448 (grants received + donations)
- Community Activities \$351,282

Despite financial challenges, support from our donors has allowed us to allocate funds to critical areas.

Expenditure for the year totalled \$2,075,746. Main areas of expenditure being:

- Administration running costs \$1,024,128
- Raffles & DMC campaigns \$627,584
- Promotions and events \$131,009

This resulted in a deficit of \$98,903 before research expenditure. However, our commitment to childhood cancer research remains steadfast.

Research commitments of \$1,294,580 were met in full, leaving a deficit of \$1,393,483, which we funded through accumulated reserves, ensuring our vital work continues.

In addition to our ongoing initiatives, we are thrilled to share a new development. The Foundation has strategically invested in securing another commercial property, a step forward in our commitment to sustainability and long-term impact.

In celebrating our partnerships, we extend heartfelt gratitude to the Telethon Kids Institute and extend our appreciation to Professor Jonathan Carapetis AM, the Institute's Director, and Ms Julie Bishop, the Institute's Chairperson. Their collaboration has been invaluable to our mission.

We also acknowledge the dedication of the researchers and their teams, particularly Assoc Professor Joost Lesterhuis, Head of the Cancer Centre. Their tireless efforts in advancing childhood cancer research are truly commendable.

The Back on Track program commenced in January 2023. This first of its kind, education advocacy program supports any child cancer patient, parents and their siblings whenever the need arises, during and/or after treatment. An Impact Report is available at backontrack.org.au.

The Foundation received funding from Lotterywest to create the a child cancer podcast 'Little People, Big C'series. The podcast shines a light on the world of childhood cancer. They're the stories of courage and strength as told by Australian families, as they look back on their battle with childhood cancer and into the future. Thank you to the eleven families who shared their journeys in the podcasts and to Cassie Silver for her production of the series.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the possibilities for the coming year. With the continued support of our Foundation family and new supporters, we are determined to ensure that childhood cancer research in WA continues to be world-class, ensuring our children receive the best care and treatments available.

On behalf of the Foundation, we express sincere thanks for standing by us on this journey. Together, we are making a difference – one donation at a time.

With heartfelt gratitude.



Geoffrey Cattach, AM



Andrea Alexander
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
& BOARD SECRETARY

Committee of Management AS AT 30/06/2023



Geoffrey Cattach, AM CHAIRMAN



Philip Bruce VICE CHAIRMAN



Justin Bruce **TREASURER**



Andrea Alexander SECRETARY



Professor Ursula Kees



Allan Godfrey



Keir Williams

Founder Mr Peter Harper

Life Members

Mr Philip Bruce | Mr Geoffrey Cattach, AM | Mr Peter Falconer, OAM Mr Peter Harper | Professor Ursula Kees | Mr Kim Williamson

Foundation Staff



Andrea Alexander CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Kylie Dalton CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



Scott Ballem CORPRATE PARTNERSHIP MANAGER



Sophie Galati COMMUNICATIONS TEAM LEADER



Tony Le DIGITAL PROJECT LEAD



Mara Alexander RECEPTIONIST / ADMIN



Wendy Kearns COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER (until September 2022)



Tegan Connolly MARKETING & EVENTS COORDINATOR (until October 2023)

Back on Track Program



Louise Shedden PROGRAM MANAGER



Caroline Crofton SENIOR EDUCATION ADVOCATE



Michele Dalton SENIOR DESIGNER

Stats & Achievements



| Subscriptions | \$3,386 |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Donations & Promotions | \$75,836 |
| Community Activities | \$351,282 |
| Fed. & WA Govt. Assistance | \$12,853 |
| Georgia Lowry Project | \$2,550 |
| Back on Track WA Program | \$451,448 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns | \$702,010 |
| Schools & Associations | \$11,068 |
| Social Enterprise | \$81,033 |
| Commercial Support: | \$8,930 |
| Grants & Bequests: | \$245,967 |

Scientists Supported

Total research funded

More than

Schools & Associations FY 2023

11,875



HONOURS STUDENT)

10 Sébastien's team

(2 PHD STUDENTS, 3 HONOURS STUDENTS)

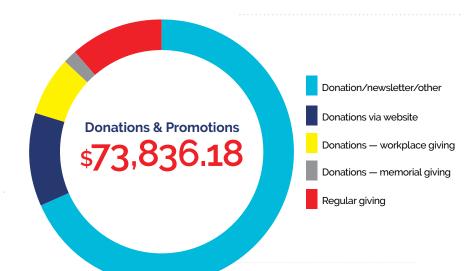
Joost's team (1 PHD STUDENT)

Senior Program Manager



Student **Graduations** 2 PHD STUDENTS, 2 HONOURS STUDENTS

Pet Dog



356 New

1,105 Existing

Average gift \$449

Funding of Grants

Leukaemia Translational Research

Triennial Block Grant (2022-2024)

Researchers: Associate Professor Rishi S Kotecha and Dr Laurence C Cheung

Title: Module 1 - Novel Therapeutic Agents for Infant Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia.

Title: Module 2 - Elucidating and Targeting the Crosstalk Between Fat and Leukaemia Cells as a Novel Therapeutic

Strategy for Children with High Risk Leukaemia

CLCRF Ursula Kees Fellow (2022–2024)

Researcher: Dr Sébastien Malinge

Title: Towards Improving Prevention, Treatments and Outcomes in Childhood Leukaemia.

Sarcoma Research Program (12 months)

Co-funded by CLCRF and others

Researcher: Associate Professor Joost Lesterhuis

Title: A new treatment to Prevent Sarcoma Relapse After Surgery

Senior Program Manager - Telethon Kids Cancer Centre

Recipient: Ms Emma Stone

Ms Stone works closely with the Head of the Telethon Kids Cancer Centre (TKCC). The position manages and supports the TKCC's large, multidisciplinary research team working on a diverse portfolio of paediatric cancer research. The position has been funded for a period of five years.

Total Research Funded: \$1,294,580

Up by \$137,084 **○11.84**%

Total Expenditure: \$735,076

Total Expenditure: \$346,831

Total Expenditure: \$88,431

Total Expenditure: \$124,242

Total research funded

More than

Scientists Supported

4 Rishi/Laurence's team (3 PHD STUDENTS, 1 MASTERS STUDENT & 1 HONOURS STUDENT)

Sébastien's team

 $oldsymbol{1}$ Senior Program Manager

Pet Doa

Community Activities & Events

The WA community and businesses continued to be generous during the year with over \$351,282 raised from activities.

The WA community and businesses continued to be generous during the year with over \$351,282 raised from activites such as the 2022 Quiz Night, Entertainment Book sales, 2023 Giving Day, Boar Swamp NYE campdraft, Consulate Court Christmas Lights, NIBA (WA) gala lunch, Shop for A Cure Op Shop, Containers for Change, Mandurah Over 55's Kayak Club, Containers for Change, the last Nambungs Country Music Muster, schools and support from Rotary, Lions and other service clubs. Many of these have been reported on in our newsletters, EDM's and social media posts during the past 12 months.

One particular event that always needs to be mentioned was the rebranded bike trek - Cycle for A Cure. The ride was run in house by the CCRF team. Various service clubs and many people supported this event. A total of \$56,166 was raised. Regular, workplace and memorial giving to the Foundation raised over \$27,250 during 2022/2023.

Revenue from our raffles and direct mail campaigns continues to remain steady. A net profit of \$119,871 was made from three raffles and the annual Tax and Christmas appeals. This figure excludes the Ruby Club costs which is currently in deficit. It was always acknowledged that the Ruby Club program would be a long term investment for the Foundation. Our thanks to the Royal Life Saving Society of WA for their support with these activities.

It is heartwarming to note that support from schools and associations has significantly increased during the year under review. It is so wonderful to see young people helping other young people, that have been affected by cancer, in this way. The Foundation continues to be committed to growing connections with the many educational institutions not only in WA but around Australia.



\$1,068 =1371.5%









Community Activities & Events

































The Foundation Team

We have had a few changes to our team in the year under review. We said goodbye to Wendy Kearns and welcomed Mara Alexander as Receptionist and Scott Ballem as our Corporate Partnerships Manager.

We also onboarded Louise Shedden and Caroline Crofton for our Back on Track Program as our Program Manager and Senior Education Advocate.

The team continue to do a great job and continue to instigate new campaigns to promote awareness of the Foundation and in due, course, increase financial support.



Our Patron & Our Ambassadors



We are delighted that Justin Langer, our inaugural Patron has agreed to continue his role as Patron of the Foundation for 2024.

Georgia Lowry continues as an Ambassador for the Foundation. With Justin and Georgia's help they provide a public and community awareness of the Foundation.

Cassie Silver continues in her role as CCRF Brand Ambassador.





Gifts in Wills/Endowment Fund

During the year the Foundation received \$225,457 from Gifts in Wills and an Endowment Fund. With the exception of the endowment fund donation, the Foundation was unaware of these gifts until the benefactors had passed.

- + Marjorie F Bowen
- + Beryl S Carpenter
- + Isabel H Hay
- + Margaret Stevenson Endowment Fund

Total gifts More than

\$225k

Back on Track Program







EDUCATION PROGRAM

SUPPORT FOR KIDS WITH CANCER





We have made remarkable strides during our inaugural year at Back on Track. With unwavering dedication and a profound commitment to our mission, we have brought about a tangible and meaningful impact on the lives of children diagnosed with cancer in Western Australia.

Through our meticulously crafted and tailored education program, we have provided support and assistance to children diagnosed with cancer and their siblings and parents. We are fostering a nurturing environment where they can thrive through education despite their challenges. With immense pride, I announce that our efforts have not gone unnoticed, and the transformative outcomes we have witnessed are a testament to the strength of our collective vision.

From empowering educational initiatives to fostering a supportive community, our holistic approach has enabled us to touch the lives of these children in ways that extend beyond the confines of their medical journey. The resilience and courage displayed by these children have inspired us to push the boundaries of what is possible and create a positive, lasting impact on their lives.

Our dedicated team, compassionate volunteers, and generous supporters have played an instrumental role in our journey; through their tireless efforts, we have made a meaningful difference. Together, we have cultivated an atmosphere of hope and optimism, allowing these children to envision a future filled with possibilities and opportunities despite the hurdles they face due to cancer treatment.

Reflecting on the milestones achieved during this first year, we are filled with gratitude and renewed determination to continue our mission with even greater enthusiasm. We remain committed to expanding our reach, enhancing our programs, and ensuring that every child affected by cancer in Western Australia finds the support and resources they need to thrive. However, we recognise that reaching the regional and remote areas of Western Australia remains a challenge, and we believe no child should be disadvantaged by distance.

Our impact in this short period is a testament to the transformative power of collective action. With the incredible financial support of organisations like Cancer Australia and the Telethon 7 Trust, we have made significant strides. However, to ensure no child is left behind, we appeal for continued and increased support from our partners and the corporate community. Only with your unwavering assistance can we build upon this Foundation and continue to pave the way for a brighter, more promising future for these resilient children.

Thank you for being an indispensable part of our journey. Together, let us continue to pave the way forward and make a lasting difference in the lives of these remarkable young individuals.

Kylie Dalton

Program Director, Back on Track

About Back on Track

Imagine a program that empowers children who have battled cancer to reclaim their dreams and education. Back on Track is an education advocacy program for children affected by childhood cancer that understands the importance of holistic support. We believe that children who survive cancer deserve to have their hopes and dreams survive too. Our tailored approach focuses on building confidence and providing the necessary tools to help these children return to the educational path they would have achieved if cancer had not interrupted their lives.

Through personalised support, we work closely with each child, their siblings, their families, and their schools to address their unique needs. To ensure a well-rounded recovery, we offer academic tutoring, mentoring, emotional learning, and social integration programs. Our team of dedicated professionals, including teachers, tutors, and volunteers, are passionate about providing a nurturing and supportive environment where these children can flourish.

Back on Track recognises that education is not just about textbooks and exams but about fostering a sense of normalcy, resilience, and self-belief. We help children



regain their confidence, overcome challenges, and reach their full potential academically, emotionally, and socially. By providing a holistic approach, we aim to ensure these brave children can thrive and pursue their dreams, regardless of obstacles.

Join us in making a difference in the lives of these inspiring young individuals. Together, let's help them get Back on Track and let their hopes and dreams shine again.

"The heart of "Back on Track" lies in its unique and holistic approach."

How we help

The Back on Track WA team works with primary and high school students referred from Perth Children's Hospital Paediatric Oncology, Survivorship Teams, the School of Special Educational Needs: Medical and Mental Health, and several childhood cancer related charities and support groups.

Regardless of where they live, the Back on Track WA program provides the following services to children who have been diagnosed with and treated for cancer and their siblings:

- educational advocacy support during treatment if required;
- communication with the enrolling school and SSEN:MMH;
- mentoring, tutoring, social and emotional learning;
- in partnership with online education providers, such as 3P Learning and IG3 Education solutions, curriculum support for students in K-10;
- support for teachers/class members when the child is ready to return to school.
- support for siblings and parents;
- work with other childhood cancer agencies to create long-term solutions to any educational need for a Back on Track student tailoring individual support.





Ask us for a copy of our Back on Track Impact Report today, and see how you can be involved in making a difference in the lives of children with cancer.

Benefactors

+ John & Janet Hughan: \$75,000

+ Stan Perron Charitable Foundation: \$50,000

+ Tate Family Foundation: \$25,000

+ PEACH Trust Fund: \$24,000

+ Patrick Foundation: \$18,045

Our continued thanks to these very generous supporters for their ongoing support of the Foundation over many years.

Corporate **Benefactors**

Support during the year continued to come from a number of corporate benefactors

- + Toolmart via the 2023 Tradies Expo
- + Drillshop Pty Ltd
- + Beyond Bank with their Community Reward **Payment**
- + Woolworths Group Ltd.

Membership

During the past year the Foundation has had a reduction in active members.

Members are critical to the on going success of the Foundation. We intend to look to further developing reasons for people to become financial members of the cause.

Now that we also have developed different levels of corporate membership we hope to inspire more businesses to sign up.

Conclusion

According to the ACNC Australian Charities Report 9th Edition:

As at the 8 Februay 2023, in Australia there are approximately 600,000 registered charities. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia's population was 25,978,935 people at 30 June 2022. This equates to approximately one charity for every 433 Australians. In WA there are 4,247 charities registered.

| State or Territory | # of Charities | Revenue from Government (\$ million) | Revenue from donations & bequests (\$ million) | Revenue from goods or services (\$ million) | Total revenue (\$ million) | Volunteers | Employees |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| ACT | 1,106 | 1,697 | 154 | 1,043 | 3,531 | 48,711 | 26,943 |
| NSW | 15,727 | 24,499 | 5,149 | 13,560 | 49,996 | 1,487,020 | 337,237 |
| NT | 436 | 1,284 | 27 | 571 | 2,206 | 11,053 | 12,547 |
| QLD | 6,898 | 11,424 | 1,639 | 7,782 | 22,510 | 369,673 | 174,778 |
| SA | 3,370 | 5,436 | 391 | 3,395 | 10,238 | 140,989 | 94,936 |
| TAS | 1,053 | 2,074 | 107 | 783 | 3,215 | 48,815 | 29,882 |
| VIC | 11,491 | 24,664 | 2,979 | 12,738 | 44,633 | 521,317 | 300,280 |
| WA | 4,247 | 8,881 | 657 | 7,190 | 17,656 | 200,967 | 143,528 |

- + Charities remain a major employer, accounting for 1.42 million or 10.5% of all Australian employees and employee numbers have increased by over 40,000 since 2020.
- + Volunteers continue to underpin the work of the NFP sector, however this report confirms the widely observed decline in Australian volunteering, with volunteer numbers dropping from 3.2M from 3.4M in 2020. This picture is more sobering when we look at the data from 2018, which shows a loss of more than half a million volunteers (596,000) between then and now.
- Source: Australian Charities Report

 9th edition | Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (acnc.gov.au)

Donations

During the 2022/2023 period, the Foundation received 1,461 donations from 356 new donors and 1,105 established donors with an average gift amount per gift of \$449.





Telethon Kids Cancer Centre

OVERVIEW 2022/2023

It is a great pleasure to provide my first update to the Child Cancer Research Foundation in my new role as Interim Head of the Telethon Kids Cancer Centre. I will be a familiar face to many of you, having been a Team Leader in the Cancer Centre since 2018, and have now taken on the exciting new challenge of Centre Head in October 2022. It is an honour to be leading a team that has such strong community backing from the Child Cancer Research Foundation and their dedicated supporters. The Cancer Centre certainly wouldn't be where we are today, without the remarkable 30+ years of support provided by the CCRF since our inception.

Throughout the year, our team members have continued to make breakthrough scientific discoveries, publish their outcomes in highly respected scientific journals, secure numerous competitive grants and fellowships, win awards, and graduate their PhDs! We have also made the most of lifted pandemic restrictions, getting back out into the world to attend national and international conferences. This travel is so important, allowing us to share our knowledge with peers and build the vital collaborations necessary to tackle childhood cancer on a global scale.

In parallel with undertaking great science, the Telethon Kids Cancer Centre Leadership team, have concentrated on building our research strategy and vision. We are dedicated to maximising and focusing our unique strengths to ensure we can make the biggest possible impact. We know that we can't defeat childhood cancer as individuals, so are committed to ongoing growth of our collaborative efforts internally, across WA, and beyond. We were privileged enough to recently have our science reviewed by one of Australia's leading cancer researchers. We received fantastic feedback and guidance and are excited to continue growing as a Centre. We are thrilled to welcome the CCRF team on this journey to ensure we are meeting the community's needs.

Our research is embedded in clinical care at the Perth Children's Hospital Oncology Unit, with a seamless integration between laboratory discovery research and clinical research and care. The benefits of having



clinicians as key members of our teams can't be underestimated, particularly as Co-Leaders of two of our teams, Associate Professor Rishi Kotecha and Head of PCH Oncology, Professor Nick Gottardo.

In addition to research funding, we are very thankful that CCRF provides support for our Senior Program Manager. This is in recognition of the need for substantial operational, strategic, and leadership support for our researchers. The Senior Program Manager is a core member of the Telethon Kids Cancer Centre Leadership Team, and together with our Project Coordinator, ensures the smooth daily running of the Centre, allowing our researchers to focus on the important work of discovering new treatments for kids with cancer.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the CCRF team for over three decades of loyal dedication and championing of the Telethon Kids Cancer Centre and for all you do for every child and their family in WA faced with the terrible reality of childhood cancer. Our commitment to you is that we will keep fighting to provide better outcomes for the kids of today and kids of tomorrow.

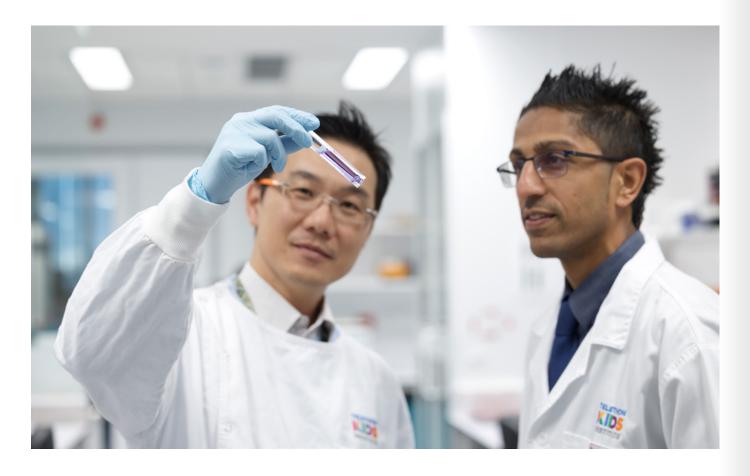


Associate Professor Joost Lesterhuis HEAD, TELETHON KIDS CANCER CENTRE

Leukaemia Translational Research

Triennial Block Grant (2022-2024) **Funding:**

Researchers: Associate Professor Rishi S Kotecha and Dr Laurence C Cheung



Leukaemia is the most frequently occurring type of childhood cancer. International research over the past seventy years has led to massively improved cure rates. However, despite these advances, leukaemia continues to be one of the leading causes of disease-related death in Australian children.

The main goal of the Child Cancer Research Foundation (CCRF) supported Leukaemia Translational Research laboratory is to identify new therapeutic approaches so that we can continue to improve the outcomes of children suffering from leukaemia worldwide.

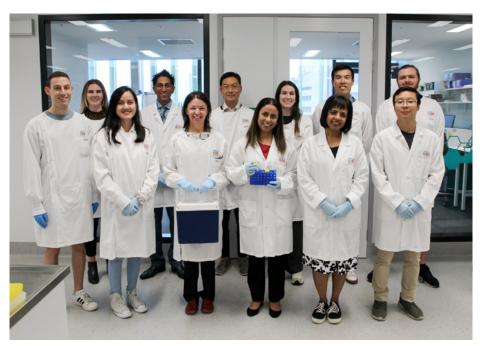
The Leukaemia Translational Research team is co-led by Associate Professor Rishi Kotecha and Dr Laurence Cheung. Dr Vincent Kuek and Dr Sung-Kai Chiu have established themselves as postdoctoral officers within the team, with Joyce Oommen, Sajla Singh, Emanuela Ferrari and Grace-Alyssa Chua maintaining their key roles as research assistants.

Supervision and mentoring of the next generation of researchers continues through the groups' PhD candidates, Taylor Ferguson and Stephen Dymock; Masters student, Rhiannon Panting; and Honours student, James Baker. We welcomed Dr Linda Wijaya, a post-doctoral officer, as the newest addition to the team and are delighted to announce the successful completion of Anastasia Hughes' PhD. The key achievements of the Leukaemia Translational Research team over the year are highlighted on the pages to come.





Module 1: Novel Therapeutic Agents for Infant Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia



Newborns and babies who are diagnosed with B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (B-ALL) at less than 12 months of age face a dismal outlook. Translocations of the KMT2A (MLL) gene are present in up to 80% of ALL cells from infants, with 5-year event-free survival of less than 40%. In an attempt to find better treatment for these infants, international study groups have conducted many therapeutic studies with more intensive therapy. Unfortunately, this led to a large number of toxic deaths and did not improve overall survival. Novel therapies are urgently required to improve outcomes.

The most exciting news for 2023 has been the completion of a pilot clinical trial which demonstrated improved outcomes for infants with B-ALL. The study was conducted in 30 babies with B-ALL around the globe, with Associate Professor Kotecha playing a key part in designing the trial by virtue of his role in the international Interfant study group and implementing the

trial in Australia as the Principal Investigator.

The trial was designed to test the safety, tolerability and efficacy of a novel immunotherapy, blinatumomab, in addition to conventional chemotherapy for infants with B-ALL. Blinatumomab is a 'bispecific T-cell engager' and works by introducing an individual's own T-cells to the leukaemia cells, leading to T-cell mediated destruction of the leukaemia cells.

The study found that the addition of a single cycle blinatumomab following the first cycle of chemotherapy was safe, tolerable and improved 2-year disease-free and overall survival by approximately 30%. The findings had such global significance that they were published in the New England Journal of Medicine, the most prestigious medical journal in the world.

The next stage is to now test the findings from this study in a larger cohort of infants. This will be done

globally within two clinical trials, namely the Interfant-21 study and the Children's Oncology Group AALL2321 study, both of which will plan to open in Australia and New Zealand in the coming months.

Associate Professor Kotecha will continue in his role as the Principal Investigator for Australia and New Zealand for the Interfant-21 study and he has been bestowed the honour of global study Chair for the AALL2321 study. In addition to blinatumomab, the AALL2321 study will also investigate whether the addition of another novel agent, the selective BCL-2 inhibitor venetoclax, will further improve outcomes for babies with B-ALL. This is pertinent as through more than a decade of work, the Leukaemia Translational Research laboratory has developed a preclinical testing pipeline to provide a comprehensive assessment of novel drug candidates that can be readily translated to the clinic.

Our most recent preclinical work, published early 2023 in the journal Leukemia, investigated the therapeutic potential of venetoclax for infants with KMT2A-rearranged B-ALL, demonstrating translation of our laboratory findings into clinical practice.

The achievements within this research module have been accomplished due to the long-standing support of the CCRF.
This has generated a number of research publications and allowed us to leverage additional funding to support the work, the details of which are provided on the next page.

Additional Funding Leveraged

- Medical Research Future Fund Clinical Trials Activity Initiative (2023): Interfant-21: A new international clinical trial for infants diagnosed with KMT2A-rearranged acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (Kotecha RS, \$718,934)
- The Kids' Cancer Project Funding (2023): Interfant-21 International collaborative treatment protocol for infants under one year with KMT2A-rearranged acute lymphoblastic leukemia or mixed phenotype leukemia (Kotecha RS, \$491,193)

Relevant Publications

- van der Sluis IM, de Lorenzo P, Kotecha RS, Attarbaschi A, Escherich G, Nysom K, Stary J, Ferster A, Brethon B, Locatelli F, Schrappe M, Scholte-van Houtem PE, Valsecchi MG, Pieters R. Blinatumomab added to upfront chemotherapy in infant lymphoblastic leukemia. New England Journal of Medicine 2023;388(17):1572-1581.
- Cheung LC, Aya-Bonilla C, Cruickshank MN, Chiu SK, Kuek V, Anderson D, Chua GA, Singh S, Oommen J, Ferrari E, Hughes AM, Ford J, Kunold E, Hesselman MC, Post F, Faulk KE, Breese EH, Guest EM, Brown PA, Loh ML, Lock RB, Kees UR, Jafari R, Malinge S, Kotecha RS. Preclinical efficacy of azacitidine and venetoclax for infant KMT2A-rearranged ALL reveals a new therapeutic strategy. Leukemia 2023;37(1):61-71.
- Kotecha RS. Updates in infant acute lymphoblastic leukemia and the potential for targeted therapy. Hematology 2022(1):611-617.
- Isobe T, Takagi M, Sato-Otsubo A, ...Kotecha RS, Cruickshank MN, ...Aburatani H, Ogawa S, Takita J. Multi-omics analysis defines highly refractory RAS burdened immature subgroup of infant acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Nature Communications 2022;13(1):4501.
- Xiao L, Karsa M, Ronca E, ... Cheung LC, Kotecha RS, ... Norris MD, Henderson MJ, Somers K. The combination of curaxin CBL0137 and histone deacetylase inhibitor panobinostat delays KMT2A-rearranged leukaemia progression. Frontiers in Oncology 2022;12:863329.
- Karsa M, Ronca E, Bongers A, ... Cheung LC, Kotecha RS, ... Henderson MJ, Xiao L, Somers K. Systematic in vitro evaluation of a library of approved and pharmacologically active compounds for the identification of novel candidate drugs for KMT2A-rearranged leukemia. Frontiers in Oncology 2022;11:779859.
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- Symeonidou V, Jakobczyk H, Bashanfer S, Malouf C, Fotopoulou F, Kotecha RS, Anderson RA, Finch AJ, Ottersbach K. Defining the fetal origin of MLL-AF4 infant leukemia highlights specific fatty acid requirements. Cell Reports 2021;37(4):109900.
- Cheung LC, de Kraa R, Oommen J, Chua GA, Singh S, Hughes AM, Ferrari E, Ford J, Chiu SK, Stam RW, Kees UR, Malinge S, Kotecha RS. Preclinical evaluation of carfilzomib for infant KMT2A-rearranged acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Frontiers in Oncology 2021;11:631594.
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- Wander P, Cheung LC, Pinhancos SS, Jones L, Kerstjens M, Arentsen-Peters STCJM, Singh S, Chua GA, Castro PG, Schneider P, Dolman MEM, Koopmans B, Molenaar JJ, Pieters R, Zwaan CM, Kotecha RS,* Stam RW.* Preclinical efficacy of gemcitabine in MLL-rearranged infant acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Leukemia 2020;34(11):2898-2902.
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- Cruickshank MN, Ford J, Cheung LC, Heng J, Singh S, Wells J, Failes TW, Arndt GM, Smithers N, Prinjha RK, Anderson D, Carter KW, Gout AM, Lassmann T, O'Reilly J, Cole CH, Kotecha RS, Kees UR. Systematic chemical and molecular profiling of MLL-rearranged infant acute lymphoblastic leukemia reveals efficacy of romidepsin. Leukemia 2017;31(1):40-50.
- Kotecha RS, Gottardo NG, Kees UR, Cole CH. The evolution of clinical trials for infant acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Blood Cancer Journal 2014;4(4):e200.
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- Kotecha RS, Murch A, Kees U, Cole CH. Pre-natal, clonal origin of t(1;11)(p32;q23) acute lymphoblastic leukemia in monozygotic twins. Leukemia Research 2012;36(1):46-50

Module 2:

Elucidating and targeting the crosstalk between fat and leukaemia cells as a novel therapeutic strategy for children with high-risk leukaemia



Recognising that the tumour microenvironment (cells that neighbour cancer cells) contributes to treatment failure or success has led to a recent paradigm shift in cancer therapy. The tumour microenvironment is well documented to be a key factor in multiple stages of cancer progression. Over the past 20 years, clinical studies in children diagnosed with ALL have clearly demonstrated defects in the bone marrow microenvironment, e.g., loss of fat cells and bone cells. However, little is known with regards to how these bone marrow cells contribute to leukaemia development and disease progression.

Over the past 12 months, we have continued our investigation into the role of the different types of bone marrow cell during development of B-ALL. The cell types that we have focused on are bone forming cells (osteoblasts), bone eating cells (osteoclasts), fat cells (adipocytes),

blood vessel cells (endothelial cells) and cells that produce fat cells and bone forming cells (mesenchymal stem cells). In 2teh past year, we have achieved the following milestones:

 We discovered the importance of the bone eating cells during development of B-ALL and by therapeutically targeting these cells, we have been able to show a dual clinical benefit in terms of bone health and improved survival in our preclinical disease models.

These findings were accepted for an oral presentation at a prestigious conference, the European School of Hematology - 3rd Translational Research Conference on Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia, which was held in May 2023 in Berlin. Dr Laurence Cheung's presentation was well received by the audience and we are delighted that our research

findings have drawn significant interest at an international level.

- Mesenchymal stem cells are an essential component of the bone marrow microenvironment. We successfully characterised mesenchymal stem cells in B-ALL and provided novel insight into the role of these cells during leukaemia progression. Anastasia Hughes presented these findings as a poster at the end of her PhD candidature at the European School of Hematology - 4th Scientific Workshop on the Haematological Tumour Microenvironment and its Therapeutic Targeting, which was held in February 2023 in London.
- 3. Fat cells account for approximately 70% of the bone marrow volume. Whilst loss of bone marrow fat cells

in children with leukaemia has been observed, the role of bone marrow fat cells in B-ALL development has not been clearly defined. We have successfully developed three preclinical models that faithfully replicate the clinical features of low bone marrow fat cell number in children with high-risk leukaemia at diagnosis. These models will serve as valuable tools for us to further understand the role of bone marrow fat cells during leukaemia development. This research will provide novel insight into how fat cells could serve as an innovative target, providing an exciting opportunity for developing a new armamentarium to treat children with high-risk leukaemia.

Another highlight during the year was the successful completion of Anastasia Hughes' PhD studies. Anastasia completed her Honours degree (co-supervised by Dr Laurence Cheung) at Telethon Kids Institute in 2017. She subsequently joined the Leukaemia Translational Research laboratory as a research assistant. In 2019, she began her PhD studies under the supervision of Dr Laurence Cheung and Associate Professor Rishi Kotecha. Over the last 6 years, it has been a pleasure to watch Anastasia grow and become an independent scientist. She emerged as one of the top graduate research students at Curtin University and her PhD was awarded a Chancellor's Commendation for an exceptional higher degree by research thesis. Congratulations Dr Anastasia Hughes!



The achievements within this research module have been accomplished due to the longstanding support of the CCRF. This has generated a number of research publications and allowed us to leverage additional funding to support the work, the details of which are provided below.

Additional Funding Leveraged

Future Health Research and Innovation Fund WA Near-Miss Award - Ideas Grants (2023): Understanding the role of bone marrow adipocytes in children with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (Cheung LC, \$100,000)

Relevant Publications

- Hughes AM, Kuek V, Oommen J, Chua GA, Van Loenhout M, Malinge S, Kotecha RS, Cheung LC. Characterization of mesenchymal stem cells in pre-B acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology 2023;11:1005494.
- Hughes AM, Kuek V, Kotecha RS, Cheung LC. The bone marrow microenvironment in B-cell development and malignancy. Cancers (Basel) 2022;14(9):2089.
- Kuek V, Hughes AM, Kotecha RS, Cheung LC. Therapeutic targeting of the leukaemia microenvironment. International Journal of Molecular Sciences 2021;22(13):6888.
- Anderson D, Skut P, Hughes AM, Ferrari E, Tickner J, Xu J, Mullin BH, Tang D, Malinge S, Kees UR, Kotecha RS,* Lassmann T,* Cheung LC.* The bone marrow microenvironment of pre-B acute lymphoblastic leukemia at single-cell resolution. Scientific Reports 2020;10(1):19173.
- Kotecha RS, Cheung LC. Targeting the bone marrow microenvironment: a novel therapeutic strategy for pre-B acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Oncotarget 2019;10(19):1756-1757.
- Cheung LC, Tickner J, Hughes AM, Skut P, Howlett M, Foley B, Oommen, J, Wells JE, He B, Singh S, Chua GA, Ford J, Mullighan CG, Kotecha RS,* Kees UR.* New therapeutic opportunities from dissecting the pre-B leukemia bone marrow microenvironment. Leukemia 2018:32(11):2326-2338.
- Wells JE, Howlett M, Halse HM, Heng J, Ford J, Cheung LC, Samuels AL, Crook M, Charles AK, Cole CH, Kees UR. High expression of connective tissue growth factor accelerates dissemination of leukaemia. Oncogene 2016;35(35):4591-4600.
- Wells JE, Howlett M, Cheung LC, Kees UR. The role of CCN family genes in haematological malignancies. Journal of Cell Communication and Signaling 2015;9(3):267-278.
- Cheung LC, Strickland DH, Howlett M, Ford F, Charles AK, Lyons KM, Brigstock DR, Goldschmeding R, Cole CH, Alexander WS, Kees UR. Connective tissue growth factor is expressed in bone marrow stromal cells and promotes interleukin-7-dependent B lymphopoiesis. Haematologica 2014;99(7):1149-1156.

Funding: CLCRF – Ursula Kees Fellow (2022–2024)

Researcher: Dr Sébastien Malinge

Title: Towards improving prevention, treatments and outcomes in childhood

leukaemia



Blood cancer accounts for about 40% of all paediatric cancers worldwide; with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) being the most common subtype. In Australia, it is estimated that more than 270 children aged 0-19 years will be diagnosed with leukaemia each year; This number is expected to double by 2035. The survival of children with leukaemia has significantly improved over the past few decades with more adapted treatments, with current 5-year overall survival approaching 90% for acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL), Despite this success, leukaemia still remains the second cause of death by cancer for Australian children (23% of cancer related deaths), with disease relapse being a major culprit. Moreover, many kids continue to have a poor prognosis, suffering from life-threatening conditions

due to treatment related toxicity, which necessitate longer hospital admissions and ongoing care. Current therapeutic approaches have now reached their maximum potential, highlighting the need for new, efficacious, more targeted, and less toxic treatments.

Poor clinical features are exemplified in children with Down syndrome (DS), a community of children who have many other health issues that complicate treatment. Notably, 20-30% of children with DS will develop a pre-leukaemia syndrome at birth and about 2-3% of all will develop leukaemia, compared to 0.06% for children without DS.

Since poor prognosis ALL developed by children with DS have many similar features with the leukaemia seen in non-DS kids, we investigate DS-leukaemia to unveil novel features of leukaemia predisposition, development, and response to standard of care treatments, to uncover novel mechanisms and clinically relevant vulnerabilities to better prevent, treat, and cure leukaemia in all children, DS or not.

The overarching goal of the Translational Genomics in Leukaemia team is to develop novel personalised chemotherapies and immunotherapies with increased efficacy and less toxicity, to improve long term outcomes and quality of care for all children with leukaemia. Over this year, we have achieved several key milestones:

1. An extended repository of preclinical models to assess new therapies

We have developed ten new animal models of childhood leukaemia (including seven from human primary samples), thus extending our `repository` to assess efficacy of new targeted therapies. We have also established unique cellular models that we use to investigate the molecular make-up of childhood leukaemia and screen thousands of drugs in test tubes. Together, these tools offer us a platform to target specific weaknesses through chemotherapy and immunotherapy approaches, with the view of selecting the most prominent candidates to be pushed towards clinical trials. This will facilitate a rapid translation of our research that will primarily be beneficial for Western Australian children that develop leukaemia.

2. Identification of new potent inhibitors targeting the kinase DYRK1A

Over the last years, we discovered that the chromosome 21 DYRK1A is a key player in childhood leukaemia, myeloid and lymphoid, associated with Down Syndrome or not, and demonstrated that targeting DYRK1A is a promising therapeutic approach. In a recent collaborative effort with local, national, and international investigators, we tested efficacy of several new family of DYRK1A inhibitors with the view of selecting the best candidate for pre-clinical testing and future clinical use. In brief, we have tested >10 new drugs in the unique Down Syndrome ALL cell lines we established and are now following this up by assessing the efficacy of the best new DYRK1A inhibitors in combination with conventional treatments and in an in vivo setting.

3. Identified leukaemia cells that resist standard of care treatments

Relapse is a main reason for treatment failure. Children with relapsed leukemia suffer from treatment toxicity due to treatment intensification, and only 30-50% of these kids will survive. In most cases, relapse originates from cancer cells that resist standard of care therapy. These resistant cells are usually very rare and well hidden. To characterise these cells and capture their vulnerabilities. we implemented an integrative workflow allowing us to identify key features of every individual leukemic cell that is resistant to treatment. This work enabled us to uncover novel actionable targets, and we are now extending this approach in new clinically relevant models. We strongly believe this will be broadly applicable and will facilitate the development of new personalised therapies for childhood leukaemia.

Additional Funding Leveraged

- Jerome Lejeune Foundation (2023-2024): Towards developing novel targeted therapies for Down syndrome leukemia (Malinge, S, \$77,409)
- Westmead Hospital/Telethon Kids Cancer Centre collaborative grant (2022-2023): Identifying underlying germline alterations contributing to leukaemia onset in children (co-CI Malinge, S., \$35,000)
- Cancer Council Western Australia Project (2022-2023): Towards targeting relapse-initiating cells in Down syndrome lymphoblastic leukaemia, (Malinge, S, \$97,488)
- WA Child Research Fund (2022-2024): Kids are not small adults: identifying age-dependent drug targets in paediatric oncology (co-CI Malinge, S, \$599,746)
- Stan Perron Foundation (2020-2024): Paediatric Cancer Immunotherapy Program (co-CI Malinge, S, \$1,576,882)
- Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation (2020-2023): Paediatric Cancer Immunotherapy for Australia (co-CI Malinge, S, \$1,050,000)
- Cancer Council Western Australia Research Fellowship (2020-2023): Towards targeting treatment-resistant cancer cells to prevent relapse in childhood leukaemia (Malinge, S, \$480,000)

Relevant Publications

- Baruchel A, Bourquin JP, Crispino J, Cuartero S*, Hasle H, Hitzler J, Klusmann JH, Izraeli S, Lane AA, Malinge S*, Rabin K, Roberts I, Ryeom S*, Tasian SK, Wagenblast E. Down syndrome and leukemia: from basic mechanisms to clinical advances. Haematologica. 2023, July 13. *co corresponding.
- Hughes AM, Kuek V, Oommen J, Chua GA, van Loenhout M, Malinge S, Kotecha RS, Cheung LC.
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- Cheung LC, Aya-Bonilla C, Cruickshank MN, Chiu SK, Kuek V, Anderson D, Chua GA, Singh S, Oommen J, Ferrari E, Hughes AM, Ford J, Kunold E, Hesselman MC, Post F, Faulk KE, Breese EH, Guest EM, Brown PA, Loh ML, Lock RB, Kees UR, Jafari R, Malinge S, Kotecha RS. Preclinical efficacy of azacitidine and venetoclax for infant KMT2A-rearranged acute lymphoblastic leukemia reveals a new therapeutic strategy. Leukemia. 2023 Jan;37(1):61-71.
- Malinge S. It is more `unbalanced` than you think. Blood. 2023 Mar 9;141(10):1095-1096.
- Arkoun B, Robert E, Boudia F, Mazzi S, Dufour V, Siret A, Mammasse Y, Aid Z, Vieira M, Aygun I, Aglave M, Cambot M, Petermann R, Souquere S, Rameau P, Catelain C, Diot R, Tachdjian G, Hermine O, Droin N, Debili N, Plo I, Malinge S, Soler E, Raslova H, Mercher T, Vainchenker W. Stepwise GATA1 and SMC3 mutations alter megakaryocyte differentiation in a Down syndrome leukemia model. J Clin Invest. 2022 Jul 15;132(14):e156290.
- Bhansali RS, Rammohan M, Lee P, Laurent AP, Wen Q, Suraneni P, Tsai YC, Jenni S, Bornhauser B, Siret A, Fruit C, Pacheco-Benichou A, Harris E, Besson T, Thompson BJ, Goo YA, Hijiya N, Vilenchik M, Izraeli S, Bourquin JP, Malinge S, and Crispino JD. DYRK1A regulates B-ALL through phosphorylation of FOXO1 and STAT3. Journal of Clinical Investigation. 2021 Jan 4;131(1):e135937.
- Anderson D, Skut P, Hughes AM, Ferrari E, Tickner J, Xu J, Mullin BH, Tang D, Malinge S, Kees UR, Kotecha RS, Lassmann T, Cheung LC. The bone marrow microenvironment of pre-B acute lymphoblastic leukemia at single-cell resolution. Sci Rep. 2020 Nov 5;10(1):19173
- Laurent AP, Kotecha R and Malinge S. Gains of chromosome 21 in hematological malignancies: lessons from studying leukemia in children with down syndrome. Leukemia. 2020 May 20.
- Laurent AP, Siret A, Ignacimouttou C, Diop MB, Jenni S, Tsai YC, Ross-Weil D, Aid Z, Prade N, Plassard D, Pierron G, Daudigeos-Dubus E, Lecluse Y, Droin N, Bornhauser B, Cheung L, Crispino JD, Gaudry M, Bernard OA, Macintyre E, Barin Bonnigal C, Kotecha R, Goeorger B, Ballerini P, Bourquin JP, Delabesse E, Mercher T and Malinge S. Constitutive activation of RAS/MAPK pathway cooperates with trisomy 21 and is therapeutically exploitable in Down syndrome B-cell Leukemia. Clinical Cancer Research. 2020 Jul 1;26(13):3307-3318.
- Malinge S. SNAIL trail in myeloid malignancies. Blood. 2020 Aug 20;136(8):920-921.

Funding: Senior Program Manager

Ms Emma Stone Manager:

Title: **Telethon Kids Cancer Centre Senior Program Manager**







What an exciting year it's been for the Telethon Kids Cancer Centre! I am humbled by the opportunity that the Child Cancer Research Foundation continues to provide by supporting my role. It is incredibly insightful of the CCRF to understand and enable the fact that our very time-poor researchers need logistical, operational, and leadership support to really make an impact. The business lens provided by the Program Manager role complements the scientific expertise within the Centre.

If possible, we have been busier than ever over the past year. The Telethon Kids Cancer Centre Leadership Team has taken the opportunity of a period of change to undertake an in-depth review of our vision and research strategy. It has been incredibly motivating to say the least, and there are certainly exciting times ahead. A core part of my role over the coming year, will be to continue to build and deliver on our impactful new strategy. I look forward to working with the CCRF team to ensure community needs

are incorporated and to sharing more with CCRF supporters as we progress.

On a day-to-day basis, I am committed to ensuring coordinated and streamlined operations of the Cancer Centre. This includes financial management, actively pursuing and coordinating funding opportunities, providing high level administrative support, managing projects, supporting recruitment and retention of team members, assisting with governance and ethics compliance, managing communications, offering mentorship, and importantly, managing stakeholder engagement.

In recognition of the importance of providing support to our researchers, we also have the fantastic assistance of our Project Coordinator, Emma Taylor. We are also offered fantastic support from the broader Telethon Kids Professional Services teams.

One of the major privileges of this role is developing the relationships with our invaluable supporters,

notably the CCRF team. We certainly would not be where we are today without three decades of loyal support. In addition to our supporters, we have a Telethon **Kids Cancer Centre Community** Reference Group, the members of which all have lived experience with childhood cancer. Just like our supporters, this group provides instrumental input from a community perspective.

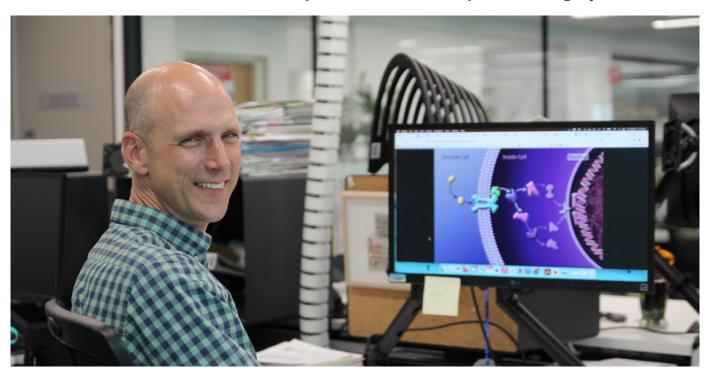
Working alongside our passionate and dedicated laboratory scientists and clinical teams from the Perth Children's Hospital Oncology Unit inspires me every day to provide the best support I can. I would like to personally thank each and every one of the CCRF team and their dedicated supporters for being an integral part of the global fight against childhood cancer.

Funding: Sarcoma Program – Co-funded by CLCRF

Researcher: Dr Joost Lesterhuis, Dr Ben Wylie, Dr Ken Wyatt (Perth Veterinary

Oncology), A/Prof Swaminatha Iyer (UWA)

Title: A new treatment to prevent sarcoma relapse after surgery



Sarcoma is the third most frequent cancer in children and young people. Soft tissue sarcoma is a group of cancers derived from muscle, fat, or connective tissues, characterised by local aggressive growth.

Current treatments of sarcoma can have severe side effects, and large surgical procedures are often required in order to get complete resection of all cancer tissue. For sarcomas in limbs this not infrequently involves amputation. In addition, children will be treated with chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy to prevent relapse. Despite these aggressive treatments, the cancer recurs in approximately one third of the cases in high-risk soft tissue sarcoma in children. Sarcoma is a particularly under-investigated cancer because it is relatively rare in adults (1% of cancers), thus receiving little interest from pharmaceutical companies. In children, however, sarcoma is

the third most common cancer, representing about 15% of all cancers. More research is urgently needed as sarcoma prognosis and treatments have not changed in the last 20 years.

Our aim is to develop a biodegradable material (a gel) that slowly releases immunotherapy drugs, which can be applied in the wound bed after surgical resection of soft tissue sarcoma. These drugs will attract and activate immune cells that can search and destroy remaining cancer cells, thus preventing the cancer from recurring. This is a unique approach that tackles a particular important problem in sarcoma; local recurrence after intensive surgery, despite aggressive treatments with sometimes severe long-term side effects.

Our therapy provides hope for a treatment that is easy to use, that does not require additional treatments (the drug is released locally while the child goes through normal daily activities and after several weeks the biocompatible material is completely degraded) and does not come with severe side effects. The work in this project is the result of a unique collaboration between material scientists and cancer immunologists/oncologists. The results obtained in sarcoma may be translated to other cancers that often relapse after surgery, such as paediatric brain cancer and other solid tumours.

We have continued to make excellent progress over the past year. We tested our gel in multiple preclinical sarcoma models, showing that it indeed was able to prevent cancer relapse when applied during surgery. We also tested its efficacy in combination with currently available immunotherapy antibodies, showing that the gel was able to turn sarcomas from a

non-responsive into a responsive cancer. We published the manuscript describing these studies earlier this year in the prestigious journal Cell Reports Medicine and presented the data at national conferences including the Asia-Pacific Vaccine and Immunotherapy Congress and Australia and New Zealand Child Haematology and Oncology Group Annual Meeting. Building on the success of the gel approach, we are now testing several other immunotherapies to incorporate into the gel, including RNA-based drugs.

We have completed the patient recruitment for our veterinary clinical trial in dogs with soft tissue tumours in collaboration with veterinary oncologist Dr Ken Wyatt from Perth Veterinary Oncology. This is a phase I clinical trial (co-funded by CCRF and Sock it to Sarcoma!), in which we treat canine patients with sarcoma or mast cell tumours with the gel/ immunotherapy intra-operatively, at four increasing dose levels (3 dogs per dose level). We received positive feedback from the vet surgeons in regard to the formulation of

the gel, and its application in the surgical setting. Importantly, we did not observe any adverse effects on wound resolution and healing. This tells us both the gel and the immunotherapy are safe to use during surgery.

We are now analysing the patient blood samples, taken pre- and post-surgery to examine the immunological effects of the therapy. Once these analyses are completed, we will wrap up these exciting findings in a research paper, which we hope to submit by the end of the year. Additionally, we are exploring funding opportunities to go into first-in-human trials, as well as the production of Good Manufacturing Practise-grade therapeutics to use in the trial.

We are now developing nextgeneration drugs to improve the immunotherapy component of the gel, in collaboration with Murdoch University (A/Prof Rakesh Veedu) and UWA (Prof Charlie Bond). We have been successful with a WA

Department of Health seed grant which will fund this work in the next two years. This again, should further speed up the clinical translation, as it will provide us with a uniquely effective and safe immunotherapy drug to add to the gel.

During the year, the following changes to the current team can have occurred; PhD student Francois Rwandamuriye successfully completed his PhD and has now graduated and received his doctorate. He has continued to work with the group this year as a research officer. International Master's student Ms. Juliet Schreurs completed a 6-month project with our group and has now returned to the Netherlands and graduated from her program. We've had two early career researchers join the group this year; Ms. Lizeth Orozco-Morales, previously working in mesothelioma, and Ms Jun Lu, previously working in sarcoma. Both Lizeth and Jun have joined from the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research and have both also recently completed their PhDs.

Additional Funding Leveraged

- Cancer Council WA Fellowship (2022-2025), (Wylie B, \$225,000)
- Cancer Council WA ECR Grant (2022), (Wylie B, \$34,414)
- The Kids Cancer Project (2023), (Wylie B, \$89,330)
- Tour de Cure (2023), (Zemek, \$49,947)
- WA Department of Health Future Health and Research Innovation Seed Fund (2022-2024) "Intraoperative immunotherapy to prevent cancer recurrence after surgery" (Lesterhuis WJ, Rakesh V, Bond C, Wang T, Iyer S, \$497,156)
- WA Department of Health Research Excellence Award (2022-2023), (Lesterhuis WJ, \$110,000)
- NHMRC Investigator Grant (2021-2025): Tipping the balance improving response rates to cancer immunotherapy (Lesterhuis WJ, \$1,562,250)
- Cancer Australia/The Kids' Cancer Project (2020-2022): Intraoperative immunotherapy to prevent relapse in soft tissue sarcoma (Lesterhuis WJ, \$395,050)
- Simon Lee Foundation (2020-2022): Grant for paediatric research (Lesterhuis WJ, \$450,000)
- Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation (2020-2025): Paediatric Cancer Immunotherapy Program (co-CI Lesterhuis WJ, \$1.25m)
- Abbie Basson Sarcoma Research (2019-2022): Scholarship (Rwandamuriye B, Lesterhuis WJ, \$30,000)
- Abbie Basson Sarcoma Research (2020-2023): Scholarship (Weston B, Lesterhuis WJ, \$30,000)
- Cancer Council WA Collaborative Cancer Grant Scheme (2021-2022): Exploiting the healing process to stop cancer coming back after surgery (Zemek R, \$64,600)
- Forrest Research Foundation (2021-2022): Prospect Fellowship (Zemek R, \$142,500)

Relevant Publications

- Rwandamuriye FX, Evans CW, Wylie B, Norret M, Vitali B, Ho D, Nguyen D, Roper EA, Wang T, Hepburn MS, Sanderson RW, Pfirrmann M, Fear VS, Forbes CA, Wyatt K, Ryan AL, Johns TG, Phillips MB, Hodder R, Leslie C, Kennedy BF, Zemek RM, Iyer KS, Lesterhuis WJ. A surgically optimized intraoperative poly(I:C)-releasing hydrogel prevents cancer recurrence. Cell Rep Med. 2023 Jul 18;4(7):101113.*Mentioned in this report*
- Zemek RM, Chin WL, Fear VS, Wylie B, Casey TH, Forbes C, Tilsed CM, Boon L, Guo BB, Bosco A, Forrest ARR, Millward MJ, Nowak AK, Lake RA, Lassmann T, Lesterhuis WJ. Temporally restricted activation of IFNβ signaling underlies response to immune checkpoint therapy in mice. Nat Commun. 2022 Aug 19;13(1):4895.
- Tilsed CM, Fisher SA, Nowak AK, Lake RA, Lesterhuis WJ. Cancer chemotherapy: insights into cellular and tumor microenvironmental mechanisms of action. Front Oncol. 2022 Jul 29:12:960317.
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- Tilsed CM, Casey TH, de Jong E, Bosco A, Zemek RM, Salmons J, Wan G, Millward MJ, Nowak AK, Lake RA, Lesterhuis WJ. Retinoic Acid Induces an IFN-Driven Inflammatory Tumour Microenvironment, Sensitizing to Immune Checkpoint Therapy. Front Oncol. 2022 Mar 24:12:849793.
- Lesterhuis WJ, Mikkelsen H, Tobin J, Bettess M. Early-stage investment in immuno-oncology: riding the waves of hope & hype. Immuno-oncology Insights 2022
- Zemek RM*, Fear F, Forbes C, De Jong E, Boon L, Casey T, Lassman T, Bosco A, Millward MJ, Nowak AK, Lake R, Lesterhuis WJ*. Bilateral murine tumour models for analysis of the cellular and molecular events associated with immune checkpoint blockade. Nature Protocols 2020 May;15(5):1628-1648. (*Corresponding authors)
- Rwandamuriye FX, Weston BJ, Lesterhuis WJ*, Zemek RM*. A Mouse Model of Incompletely Resected Soft Tissue Sarcoma for Testing (Neo)adjuvant Therapies. Journal of Visualized Experiments 2020 Jul 28;(161). doi: 10.3791/60882. (*Corresponding authors)
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- Zemek RM, De Jong E, Chin W, Fear F, Forbes C, Casey T, Hope D, Boon L, Forrest AR, O Muiri D, Millward MJ, Nowak AK, Lassman T, Bosco A, Lake R, Lesterhuis WJ. Sensitization to immune checkpoint blockade through activation of a STAT1/NK axis in the tumor microenvironment. Science Translational Medicine 11 (501), eaav7816, 2019.
- Chin WL, Zemek RM, Lesterhuis WJ, Lassmann T. Functional genomics in cancer immunotherapy: computational approaches for biomarker and drug discovery. Molecular Systems Design & Engineering, 2019.



STATEMENT BY THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The Committee Members have determined that the Foundation is not a reporting entity, and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial report.

In the opinion of the Committee of Management, the accompanying financial reports:

- The financial statements and notes are in accordance (a) with Part 5 of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015: and
 - (b) The accompanying Operating Statement gives a true and fair view of the operating excess of the Foundation for the financial year; and
 - (c) The accompanying Balance Sheet gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Foundation as at the end of the financial year.
- 2. At the date of the statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Foundation will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee of Management and is signed by and on behalf of the Committee of Management by:

Date: 02/11/2023 RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Suite 3/100 Hay Street Subjaco WA 6008

PATRON - Justin Langer AM

ABN: 42 030 465 053

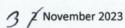
PO Box 1118 West Perth WA 6872

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHILDREN'S LEUKAEMIA & CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION (INC)

NICK DEL POPOLO CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT 9 CARRINGTON STREET NORTH PERTH, WA, 6006

Ph: 0419 922 776



TO THE MEMBERS

THE CHILDREN'S LEUKAEMIA & CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION (INC)

We have audited the financial statements of Children's Leukaemia & Cancer Research Foundation (INC)(The Foundation) for the vear ended 30 June 2023.

The Foundation's Management Committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. We have conducted an independent audit of these financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Foundation. The Management Committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the Management Committee's determine necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether in all materials respects the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards so as to present a view of the Foundation which is consistent with our understanding of its financial position and the results of its operations.

The financial statements include fundraising receipts. It has not been practicable to determine whether pledged monies from external fundraising activities have been received and banked through the Foundation's accounts.

The Audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

INDEPENDENCE

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

AUDIT OPINION

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly the financial position of Children's Leukaemia & Cancer Research Foundation (INC) as at 30 June 2023 and the results of its operations for the year ended 30 June 2023 in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1.

In addition;

- a. The financial statements satisfy the requirements of Part 5 of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015;
- b. We have been given all information, explanations and assistance necessary for the conduct of the Audit;
- c. The Foundation has kept financial records sufficient to enable financial statements to be prepared and audited;
- d. The Foundation has kept other records as required by Part 5 of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015

EMPHASIS OF MATTER- BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Out audit opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Nick Del Popolo

Chartered Accountant

Registered Company Auditor

Liability limited by a scheme approved under professional standards legislation

AUDITORS INDEPENDENCE DELCLARATION

TO THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT OF THE CHILDREN'S LEUKAEMIA & CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION (INC)

I declare that, to be best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2023 there have been no contraventions of: i.Any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit

Name of firm:

N DEL POPOLO

Name of partner:

N DEL POPOLO

Date:

1st July 2023

Address:

9 CARRINGTON STREET

NORTH PERTH WA 6006

Nick Del Popolo

Chartered Accountant

Registered Company Auditor

Operating Statement 01/07/2022 - 30/06/2023

| Revenue | 2022/2023 | 2021/2022 |
|---|---|--|
| Subscriptions | \$3,386 | \$5,255 |
| Donations & Promotions | \$75,836 | \$154,825 |
| Community Activities | \$351,282 | \$452,734 |
| Fed & WA Govt Assistance | \$12,853 | - |
| Georgia Lowry Project | \$2,550 | - |
| Back on Track Program | \$451,448 | - |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns | \$702,010 | \$331,291 |
| Schools & Associations | \$11,875 | \$807 |
| Social Enterprise | \$81,033 | - |
| Commercial Support | | |
| Toolmart Australia | \$5,804 | \$5,518 |
| VLT | \$868 | \$1,396 |
| Woolworths Australia | \$2,258 | \$2,542 |
| Grants & Gift in Wills | | |
| Gift in Wills | \$225,457 | \$524,782 |
| 3BL (Brain Tumour Research Project) | \$510 | \$520 |
| Grants | \$20,000 | \$ 67,320 |
| Profit on sale of Bassendean Properties | | \$478,152 |
| Interest Received | \$29,672 | \$14,409 |
| TOTAL REVENUE | \$1,976,843 | \$2,039,552 |
| Expenditure | 2022/2023 | 2021/2022 |
| Admin, Staff & Other Costs | \$1,024,128 | \$758,850 |
| Back on Track Program | \$128,902 | - |
| Depreciation | \$35,191 | \$34,385 |
| Georgia Lowry Project | \$717 | _ |
| | \$111 | |
| Market Value M/Mment (unrealised) | \$1,901 | \$114,493 |
| Market Value M/Mment (unrealised) Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns | | \$114,493 \$281,850 |
| | \$1,901 | |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns | \$1,901 \$627,584 | \$281,850 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 | \$281,850 \$383,312 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 | \$281,850 \$383,312 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment Social Enterprise | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 \$75,782 | \$281,850 \$383,312 \$44,902 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment Social Enterprise SUB-TOTAL | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 \$75,782 \$2,075,746 | \$281,850 \$383,312 \$44,902 - \$1,617,792 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment Social Enterprise SUB-TOTAL Appropriations | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 \$75,782 \$2,075,746 | \$281,850 \$383,312 \$44,902 - \$1,617,792 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment Social Enterprise SUB-TOTAL Appropriations Research Funding/Grants July to June expenditure: | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 \$75,782 \$2,075,746 2022/2023 | \$281,850 \$383,312 \$44,902 - \$1,617,792 2021/2022 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment Social Enterprise SUB-TOTAL Appropriations Research Funding/Grants July to June expenditure: PRO10111/20728 Block Grant - July 2022 to June 2023 | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 \$75,782 \$2,075,746 2022/2023 | \$281,850 \$383,312 \$44,902 - \$1,617,792 2021/2022 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment Social Enterprise SUB-TOTAL Appropriations Research Funding/Grants July to June expenditure: PRO10111/20728 Block Grant - July 2022 to June 2023 PRO20514 Dr S Malinge - UR Kees Fellowship - July 2022 to June 2023 | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 \$75,782 \$2,075,746 2022/2023 \$735,076 \$346,831 | \$281,850 \$383,312 \$44,902 - \$1,617,792 2021/2022 \$695,275 \$292,479 |
| Raffles & Direct Mail Campaigns Promotions & Events Property Outgoings/Refurbishment Social Enterprise SUB-TOTAL Appropriations Research Funding/Grants July to June expenditure: PRO10111/20728 Block Grant - July 2022 to June 2023 PRO20514 Dr S Malinge - UR Kees Fellowship - July 2022 to June 2023 PRO30190 Dr J Lesterhuis - Sarcoma Research - Jan to June 2023 | \$1,901 \$627,584 \$131,009 \$50,533 \$75,782 \$2,075,746 2022/2023 \$735,076 \$346,831 \$88,431 | \$281,850 \$383,312 \$44,902 - \$1,617,792 2021/2022 \$695,275 \$292,479 \$47,076 |

The accompanying notes form part of the financial statements.

Balance Sheet 30/06/2023

| Accumulated Funds | Notes | 2022/2023 | 2021/2022 |
|---|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Balance as at 01/07/2022 | | \$4,747,044 | \$5,482,821 |
| Excess/(Deficit) from Operating Statement | | \$(1,393,482) | \$(735,757) |
| TOTAL ACCUM | ULATED FUNDS | \$3,353,562 | \$4,747,064 |
| hese Funds are represented by | , | | |
| Current Assets | Notes | 2022/2023 | 2021/2022 |
| Cash on hand | | \$150 | \$100 |
| Cash at bank | | \$94,994 | \$1,054,351 |
| Gaming Commission | | \$31,693 | \$31,693 |
| Term Deposits | | \$3,007,555 | \$3,540,244 |
| TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE | | \$3,314,392 | \$4,626,388 |
| Trade Debtors | | \$7,500 | - |
| Other Debtors | | \$39,117 | - |
| Shares at Cost | | \$22,189 | \$22,189 |
| Change in Market Value | | \$(10,362) | \$(8,461) |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | | \$3,192,836 | \$4,640,116 |
| Non-Current Assets | | 2021/2022 | 2020/2021 |
| Property - Land & Buildings | | | |
| Property Unit 3 / 100 Hay Street Subiaco | 2 | \$886,630 | \$886,630 |
| Property Units 11 & 12 / 100 Hay Street Subiaco - deposit | | \$68,182 | - |
| Capital Improvements | | \$121,626 | \$121,626 |
| Less: Accum Deprecation | | \$(45,610) | \$(36,488) |
| Provision for Diminution in Value | | \$(290,586) | \$(290,586) |
| Provision for Depreciation | | \$(153,348) | \$(131,182) |
| Computer Equipment at Cost | | \$37,902 | \$17,468 |
| Less: Accum Deprecation | | \$(20,370) | \$(16,467) |
| Collectables | | \$2,199 | \$2,199 |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | \$606,625 | \$553,200 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | \$3,799,461 | \$5,193,316 |
| Current Liabilities | | 2022/2023 | 2021/2022 |
| Trade Creditors | | \$(375,705) | \$(287,434) |
| Grants Received in Advance | | - | \$(120,000) |
| Accrued/Sundry Creditors | | - | - |
| Leave Liabilities | | \$(77,017) | \$(68,568) |
| Provision for AL/LSL on-costs | | \$(9,307) | \$(9,286) |
| Total Years Tax Liabilities | | \$16,129 | \$39,036 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | | \$(445,900) | \$(446,252) |
| NET ASSETS | | \$3,353,562 | \$4,747,064 |

The accompanying notes form part of the financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows as at 30 June 2023

| Cash Flows From Operating Activities | Notes | 2022/2023 | 2021/2022 |
|--|-------|---|--|
| Receipts from: | | | |
| Subscriptions | | \$3,386 | \$5,255 |
| Donations and Promotions | | \$232,603 | \$329,015 |
| Community Activities | | \$649,342 | \$263,499 |
| Raffles and Direct Mail Campaigns | | \$702,010 | \$331,129 |
| School and Associations | | \$17,680 | \$807 |
| Commercial support | | \$37,224 | \$25,182 |
| Grants and Gifts in Wills | | \$138,310 | \$677,102 |
| Interest | | \$29,672 | \$14,520 |
| Payments to clients, suppliers, employees and for research grants | | \$(3,213,658) | \$(2,490,314) |
| NET CACH LICED IN ODEDATING ACTIVITIES | 2 | 14 | 4/2 - 2 - 2 - 3 |
| NET CASH USED IN OPERATING ACTIVITIES | 3 | \$(1,403,432) | \$(843,804) |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities | 3 | \$(1,403,432) 2022/2023 | \$(843,804) 2021/2022 |
| | 3 | | |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities | 3 | 2022/2023 | 2021/2022 |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities Investment in Term Deposits | 3 | 2022/2023 \$(487,311) | 2021/2022 \$(800,000) |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities Investment in Term Deposits Payments for Property, Plant & Equipment | 3 | 2022/2023 \$(487,311) \$(88,616) | 2021/2022 \$(800,000) \$(4,098) |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities Investment in Term Deposits Payments for Property, Plant & Equipment Withdrawal of Term Deposits | 3 | 2022/2023 \$(487,311) \$(88,616) | \$(800,000) \$(4,098) \$559,000 |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities Investment in Term Deposits Payments for Property, Plant & Equipment Withdrawal of Term Deposits PPE disposals | 3 | 2022/2023 \$(487,311) \$(88,616) | \$(800,000) \$(4,098) \$559,000 |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities Investment in Term Deposits Payments for Property, Plant & Equipment Withdrawal of Term Deposits PPE disposals Investment in Shares | 3 | 2022/2023 \$(487,311) \$(88,616) \$1,020,000 | \$(800,000) \$(4,098) \$559,000 \$1,604,669 |
| Cash Flows From Investing Activities Investment in Term Deposits Payments for Property, Plant & Equipment Withdrawal of Term Deposits PPE disposals Investment in Shares NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES | 3 | \$(487,311) \$(88,616) \$1,020,000 - - \$444,073 | \$(800,000) \$(4,098) \$559,000 \$1,604,669 - \$1,359,571 |

The accompanying notes form part of the financial statements.

NOTE 1 - Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The significant accounting policies which have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report are:

BASIS OF PREPARATION

The Financial Report is a special purpose financial report, which has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Management Committee to provide information to the Children's Leukaemia & Cancer Research Foundation (Inc). The Foundation is not a reporting entity and is not obliged to adhere to the mandatory reporting requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards. Notwithstanding the special reporting status of the foundation, the Management Committee have, unless otherwise stated followed generally accepted accounting principles in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. The accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical costs and do not take into account the changing value of money. The Accounting policies are consistent with those prepared in 2022.

TAXATION AND GST

Children's Leukaemia & Cancer Research Foundation (Inc) is an income tax exempt body.

The Net amount of Goods and Services Tax and GST recoverable from or payable to the Australian Taxation Office is included as a current asset or liability in the Balance Sheet.

Revenue, Expenses and Assets are recognised net of GST.

EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS

The amounts expected to be paid to employees for their pro-rata entitlement to long service leave and annual leave are accrued annually at current pay rates.

NOTE 2 - Valuation of Non-Current Assets - Property

Hay Street, Subiaco was purchased on 02/09/2010 and is valued at market valuation. The Market Valuation is at 27/07/2022 and is prepared by an independent licensed property valuer.

NOTE 3 – Operating Cash Flow

Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities with current year operating deficit.

| | 2022/2023 | 2020/2021 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| | | |
| Net (deficit) / surplus for the year | \$(1,393,482) | \$(735,777) |
| Non-cash flows in operating deficit | | |
| Deprecation | \$35,191 | \$34,385 |
| Diminution in share investments | \$1,901 | \$114,493 |
| | | |
| Profit on sale of properties | | \$(478,152) |
| Net (deficit)/surplus before working capital changes | \$(1,356,391) | \$(1,065,051) |
| Net changes in working capital: | | |
| Change in trade and other receivables | \$(46,617) | \$(141) |
| Change in trade and other payables | \$(31,801) | \$238,642 |
| Change in provisions | \$31,377 | \$(17,254) |
| Net Cash From Operating activities | \$(1,403,432) | \$(843,804) |



Please, donate today





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