

Dear Core Cancer Supporters.

Thank you very much for your generosity and foresight for supporting researchers like myself.

Core Cancer funding has been vital for my work to understand a cancer specific process and use this knowledge to develop a blood test for cancer. During my PhD, I had an idea that an abnormal type of DNA may be important for a process that some cancers rely on. I proved this and worked on developing a blood test for cancer - which was only made possible by a 2006 grant I received from Core Cancer Australia.

Encouragingly, the test is currently being used by cancer researchers to speed work towards finding a cancer treatment that could kill cancer cells without harming the patient.

My 2006 funding opened up many paths towards improving cancer outcomes, however, there are important projects that were not covered by the funding. For example, lung cancer is the biggest cause of cancer related death and early detection can improve average survival rates fivefold. Very little is known about lung cancer and the cancer specific process my cancer blood test is based on.

The newest funding (2011) I have received from Core Cancer Australia, will provide me the necessary resources to look at this further. Preliminary results indicate that 10% of lung cancer patients (equates to 750 new Australian diagnoses every year) have cancers that could potentially be detected by our test early.

We still have a long way to go to develop our blood test for cancer and understand how the abnormal DNA it is based on fits in to the cancer specific process. Wisdom has good reason for advising we properly understand this process before acting on ideas. However, I find it difficult seeing the impact of cancer on the hospital wards, not to mention trying some of these ideas out early in the lab. I am sure you are well aware of the tragedy cancer causes. Such as a middle-aged patient dying within a year of diagnosis of brain cancer, before they have the chance to see their children grow up. Or a child, who braves the harrowing experience of bone cancer diagnosis and treatment, comes out on the other side thinking they have beat it - only to scream in horror two years later upon finding out they have a recurrence and this time they are not likely to survive.

Everyone wants better treatment and a cure as soon as possible. Cure Cancer Australia supports like you are doing something about it. Please give generously to Cure Cancer Australia to help us to continue our work towards finding a cure.

Thank you for believing in the power of research to save lives and for supporting young researchers.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Henson.