

Early Career Researcher Showcase

Friday 23rd November, 2018

New Law Building, University of Sydney



	Morning Workshop
10:30 – 12:00	Eden Robertson, PhD student, Behavioural Sciences Unit, Kid Cancer Centre, Randwick Dr Walter Muskovic, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>Social Media in Research - A practical workshop on how to use social media to increase the reach of your work and build collaborations</i>
12:00 – 01:00	Poster viewing and judging
12:00 – 01:00	LUNCH
	Oral Presentations - students
01:00 – 01:15	Jingwei Chen, PhD student, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>Efficacious targeting of TERT oncogene rearrangement with BET bromodomain inhibitor and proteasome inhibitor combination therapy</i>
01:15 - 1:30	Kimberley Hanssen, PhD student, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>Modulation of MRP1 activity reverses chemotherapy resistance in cancer cells</i>
01:30 - 01:45	Aaminah Khan, PhD student, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>Targeting the polyamine pathway as a novel therapeutic treatment against Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine</i>
	Oral Presentations - ECR
01:45 - 02:00	Dr Caroline Atkinson, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>P-glycoprotein limits the effectiveness of conventional chemotherapies in high-risk neuroblastoma</i>
02:00 – 02:15	Dr Katerina Bendak, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>Development of an improved relapse prediction model for paediatric B-cell precursor acute lymphoblastic</i>
02:15 - 2:30	Dr Hassina Massudi, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>The PA2G4-MycN protein-protein interface is a treatment target in neuroblastoma</i>
02:30 – 2:45	Dr Alexander Sobinoff, Children’s Medical Research Institute, Westmead <i>Identification of a novel RNA binding protein crucial for telomerase recruitment to the telomere</i>
02:45 - 03:00	Dr Lin Xiao, Children’s Cancer Institute, Randwick <i>Chromatin destabilization by CBL0137 and panobinostat leads to complete tumour regression of childhood</i>
03:00 - 03:30	AFTERNOON TEA
	Expert Career Panel – Paths to Independence in Academia
03:30 - 05:00	Professor Karen Canfell - Director of the Cancer Research Division at Cancer Council NSW, Adjunct Professor at Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney Dr Anthony (Tony) Cesare – Head of the Genome Integrity Unit, Children’s Medical Research Institute, Westmead Dr Thomas Cox – Group Leader, Matrix and Metastasis, Cancer Division, Garvan Institute of Medical Research Dr David Croucher – Group Leader, Network Biology, Garvan Institute of Medical Research Dr Angelica Merlot – Project Leader and Scientia Research Fellow, Children’s Cancer Institute, UNSW Sydney
05:00 -06:00	AWARD PRESENTATIONS ❖ REFRESHMENTS ❖ NETWORKING

PATHS TO INDEPENDENCE IN ACADEMIA

Career Session Panellist Biographies

This year, we warmly welcome our panellists Dr. Cox, Dr. Merlot, Dr. Cesare, Dr. Croucher and Prof. Canfell, who have kindly given their time to be with us at the KCA ECR Showcase Workshop. The KCA committee has invited this panel with the view to give the ECR audience opportunities to meet and ask questions of academics with diverse Ph.D. and postdoc experiences. Each of our panel members has been very successful in their early careers, and will bring a wealth of knowledge to our discussion.

Dr. Thomas Cox

Group Leader, Matrix and Metastasis, Cancer Division, Garvan Institute of Medical Research

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Thomas completed his Ph.D. in 2008 at the University of Durham, UK before moving to the Institute of Cancer Research in London as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow. In 2012 he moved to the University of Copenhagen as an Assistant Professor until 2016 when he was recruited to the Garvan Institute in Sydney. Thomas currently leads the Matrix and Metastasis Group at the Garvan Institute, where his group focuses on how the extracellular matrix (ECM) regulates resident cell behaviour and specifically how it contributes to cancer progression, metastasis and response to therapeutics. Recent work has focussed on developing new techniques to image the ECM (*Nature Medicine* 2017) as well as the systemic role of ECM remodelling in

premetastatic niche formation (*Nature* 2015). The aim of Thomas' group is to establish targeting of ECM dynamics as a viable therapeutic approach in the treatment of solid cancers.

Dr. Angelica Merlot

Project leader and Scientia Research Fellow, Children's Cancer Institute at UNSW

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Dr. Angelica Merlot was awarded her Ph.D. in November 2013 at the University of Sydney. In 2016, she became a NHMRC Peter Doherty and CINSW Early Career Fellow and commenced heading the Cancer Targets and Therapeutics Group within her mentor's laboratory at the University of Sydney. In 2018, Angelica joined the University of New South Wales and the Children's Cancer Institute after obtaining a Scientia Fellowship. In 2019, her team will consist of 4 members, including a research assistant, a postdoc, a Ph.D. student and an honours student. Her research focuses on the development of new anti-cancer drugs, with improved pharmacological properties, and the role of endoplasmic reticulum stress in cancer.



Dr. Tony Cesare

Head of the Genome Integrity Unit, Children's Medical Research Institute

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Tony Cesare originally hails from the United States. He grew up in Denver, Colorado before moving to Salem, Oregon and completing his Bachelor of Science Degree at Willamette University. Tony then relocated to Chapel Hill, North Carolina in 2000 to begin his Ph.D. with Professor Jack Griffith at the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of North Carolina. While in the Griffith lab, Tony discovered a novel telomeric DNA structure called a "telomere circle" (or "t-circle") and identified the mechanism of t-circle formation. T-circles are now a known marker for a subset of cancers and certain forms of telomeropathies. After completing his Ph.D. he moved to Sydney Australia with the help of a USA National Science Foundation International Research Fellowship to conduct research at CMRI in the lab of Roger Reddel. While in the Reddel Lab, Tony discovered that

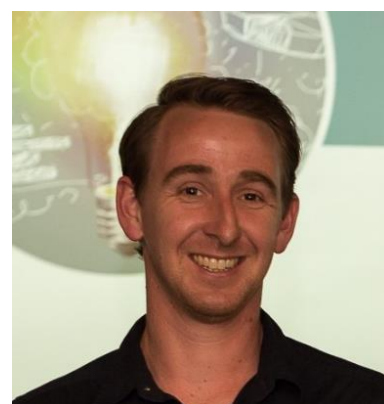
telomeres have the unique capacity to activate the DNA damage response, whilst still remaining resistant to DNA repair activity. This discovery led to a series of publications, first in the Reddel lab and later as a USA National Institutes of Health post-doctoral fellow with Jan Karlseder at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California, in *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology* (two papers), *Molecular Cell* and *Nature*. Tony returned to Australia in 2013 with the assistance of a Cancer Institute NSW Future Research Leader award and a grant from the Australia NHMRC to establish his own lab at CMRI. Since returning to Australia as an independent researcher, Tony's team have identified how telomere loops protect chromosome ends from activating the DNA damage response (Van Ly et al 2018, *Molecular Cell*) and have multiple papers submitted describing discoveries related to chromatin architecture in the DNA damage response, the mechanism of replication stress induced mitotic death, and the identification of a role for filamentous actin in the replication stress response.

Dr. David Croucher

Group Leader, Network Biology, Garvan Institute of Medical Research

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David completed his undergraduate studies and Ph.D. research at the University of Wollongong, followed by a post-doctoral position at the Garvan Institute, all of which focused on the characterisation of individual signalling proteins in the behaviour of cancer cells. Pursuing the idea that these cancer-related proteins do not act in isolation, but are actually embedded within dynamic networks, David undertook a second post-doctoral position at Systems Biology Ireland in University College Dublin. After establishing an independent research group at Systems Biology Ireland, David received a Future Research Leader grant from Cancer Institute NSW and returned to the Garvan Institute as head of the Network Biology group. The focus of his research group is the investigation of network level aberrations induced by oncogenes and oncogenic mutations, ultimately aiming to elucidate how altered network behaviour leads to therapeutic resistance



Professor Karen Canfell
Director of the Cancer Research Division at Cancer Council NSW
Adjunct Professor at Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney
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Professor Canfell holds a D.Phil. (Ph.D. equivalent) in Epidemiology from the University of Oxford. Her work involves the evaluation and translation of new strategies for cancer screening. A focus has been the interplay between HPV vaccination and cervical screening in both high and low resource countries. She leads an NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Cervical Cancer Control (C4) which brings together researchers from Cancer Council NSW, the Victorian Cytology Service, The Kirby Institute UNSW and the University of Melbourne, and she has led economic evaluations of new cervical screening approaches for

government agencies in Australia, New Zealand and England. She is a co-PI for a current National Cancer Institute (NCI) USA collaborative grant, CISNET-Cervical, which is evaluating options for cervical cancer prevention in the USA. Her group's work underpins the current Renewal (review) of the National Cervical Screening Program in Australia – based on this body of work, in December 2017 the National Cervical Screening Program transitioned from 2-yearly cytology screening (Pap smears) to 5-yearly HPV DNA testing. In collaboration with the Victorian Cytology Service, she initiated Compass, Australian's largest clinical trial, which is providing a sentinel experience of the new cervical screening program and is the first trial internationally to assess cervical screening in an HPV-vaccinated population. She is also co-chair of the Executive Scientific Committee for the International Papillomavirus Conference (IPVC2018) which will be held at the Sydney International Convention Centre in early October 2018. In 2015, Karen received the National Research Excellence Award for the highest-ranked Career Development Fellowship in Population Health and was nominated as one of '100 Women of Influence' in the Westpac/Australian Financial Review national awards.