

A/Professor Phoebe Phillips: Linking great minds

The strengthened links between industry, researchers and clinicians at Randwick is improving cancer patient outcomes and care.

Professor Phoebe Phillips has spent her career researching the devastating disease pancreatic cancer which claims around 7 lives in Australia every day. The five-year survival rate is less than 7% and most patients die within a few months of diagnosis.

‘The best drug only increases life by 16 weeks’ she said. ‘It is a horrible disease but recent breakthroughs from our research is impacting on treatment around the world.’

A/Professor Phillips is proud of the improved collaboration that she’s helping drive at Randwick.

She’s been bringing clinicians and researchers together in a number of ways including coordinating roundtable cancer forums that are impacting directly on the quality of clinical collaboration. The number of treating clinicians joining research teams is increasing, researchers are improving their understanding of the clinical challenges and researchers are now interacting directly with clinicians and patients.

This is being guided by UNSW and the South East Sydney Local Health District and is having flow-on effects to other areas of medical research and patient care.

New technologies and drugs designed at UNSW now have increased opportunities to enter early phase clinical trials within Scientia Clinical Research, which is the first purpose-built, publicly funded clinical trials facility in NSW.

“My vision for the Randwick Health and Education Precinct is to be known as a centre of excellence for education and research because that will have the most impact on patient outcomes.

Embedding research into the clinic and strengthening bi-directional links with clinicians and researchers will promote better quality of life for patients and enhance the education experience.”



Assoc Professor Phoebe Phillips

Deputy Director, Adult Cancer Program,
Head, Pancreatic Cancer Translational Research
Group, Lowy Cancer Research Centre,
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The Research facility is co-located with Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney Children’s Hospital, Randwick, the Royal Hospital for Women, UNSW and the Lowy Cancer Research Centre. The trials are also linking the researchers with the pharmaceutical industry in new ways.

‘It is very difficult in Australia to advance a new drug so the progress we’re making in better linking research with industry is really exciting.

‘The NSW Government’s investment in the Randwick Campus Redevelopment is also exciting because we’re creating new integrated clinical research spaces that supports this expanded collaboration between the clinicians and researchers that can be taken to industry.

‘The next 10 years should see huge changes for patients because we’re working together like never before, with more partners and more approaches’ she said.