



## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 6 February, 2026

### **\$5m grant set to accelerate new nuclear medicines for prostate cancer**

A landmark \$5 million research investment is set to accelerate the next generation of prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment in Australia, saving thousands of lives.

The grant has been awarded by Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia to a team of researchers led by the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, bringing together leading prostate cancer researchers from around the country.

The three-year, multi-institutional program will be led by Professor Michael Hofman of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

“The project brings together experts in nuclear medicine, medical oncology, radiochemistry, artificial intelligence, genomics and consumer advocacy, united by a single ambition: to move beyond managing prostate cancer toward more precise, effective and potentially curative treatments,” Professor Hofman said.

“The project will focus on the development of novel, world-leading theranostics, which is a rapidly evolving field that tightly integrates diagnostic imaging with targeted therapy.

“Australia is already recognised as a global leader in this area, and this new grant will allow our next major leap forward.

“While current treatments such as PSMA-based imaging and radioligand therapy have transformed prostate cancer care, they are not curative for most patients,” Professor Hofman said.

“This program asks what comes next—new targets, new radioactive particles, and smarter ways to personalise care so we can deliver deeper and more durable responses.”

Key areas of research will include:

- Identifying new molecular targets beyond PSMA to treat aggressive and treatment-resistant prostate cancers.
- Developing next-generation radioligand therapies, including the novel isotope terbium-161, designed to more effectively destroy microscopic cancer deposits while sparing healthy tissue.
- Applying artificial intelligence to imaging and blood-based biomarkers to improve diagnostic accuracy, predict treatment response, and reduce unnecessary biopsies and overtreatment.
- Embedding consumers at every stage of the research, ensuring patient priorities such as quality of life, dignity, and long-term outcomes remain central.

The three-year grant is Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia’s most significant research funding initiative to date, designed to support collaborative programs with near-term clinical impact while building long-term national research capacity



Professor Jeff Dunn AO, PCFA's Chief of Mission and Head of Research, said the \$5 million investment reflects the scale of ambition required to tackle prostate cancer's most pressing challenges.

"This grant is about bringing together the very best minds across disciplines and institutions," Professor Dunn said.

"This collaborative cross-territory approach exemplifies our vision – driving research that can change clinical practice while strengthening Australia's leadership in prostate cancer care."

In addition to scientific discovery, the program will support early and mid-career researchers and help build a sustainable national ecosystem for translational cancer research.

"Our vision is bold but grounded in evidence," Professor Hofman said.

"Ten years ago, PSMA PET imaging was available at only a handful of sites. Today it's used worldwide. We believe we are on the brink of another such moment."

For men diagnosed with prostate cancer – and for their families and clinicians – the \$5 million project represents renewed hope for a future with safer treatments, better outcomes, and longer, healthier lives.

For more information and support go to [www.prostate.org.au](http://www.prostate.org.au) or call **1800 22 00 99** to speak with a Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurse.

## **ENDS**

### **About PCFA**

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's goal is zero deaths from prostate cancer. We do this by driving early detection, funding life-saving research, and providing expert care and support for Australian men and families impacted by the disease.

### **About prostate cancer in Australia**

- Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia.
- 28,868 Australian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2025.
- 3,975 Australian men will die from prostate cancer in 2025.
- Around 79 Australian men are diagnosed each day with prostate cancer, and around 11 Australian men will die each day from the disease.
- 290,163 Australian men are alive today after a diagnosis of prostate cancer between 1982 and 2021.
- Men diagnosed with prostate cancer have a 96% chance of surviving for five years compared to their counterparts in the general Australian population.
- Between 1982 and 2021, five-year relative survival for prostate cancer improved from 58% to 96%.
- Forecasts suggest that by 2035, 34,587 Australian men will be newly diagnosed with prostate cancer each year, accounting for a 20% increase in incidence numbers over the 10 years from 2025 to 2035.