80TH ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL EDITION

LifeLab

The latest news from **QIMR Berghofer**

ISSUE 126 | SPRING 2025

New national cancer research centre ready to revolutionise personalised cancer treatment

Roadmap for developing new approaches to treating brain cancer

Training a new generation of doctors

QIMR Berghofer

80 years of pioneering medical research

LifeLab

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Message from the Director

Welcome to the fourth collector's edition of LifeLab, in celebration of QIMR Berghofer's 80th anniversary.

When the Institute was established in 1945, it was Queensland's only medical research institute, the original defender of public health. QIMR Berghofer scientists have since been devoted to linking the two worlds of research and patient outcomes. In this special edition, I'm delighted to share with you some research breakthroughs and trailblazing programs that have exciting implications for real-world health.

Firstly, we feature the launch of a national cancer research centre based at QIMR Berghofer that aims to accelerate the delivery of personalised treatment, using the latest advances in genomics and technology.

This edition also highlights an advancement in brain cancer research, with our scientists mapping for the first time how brain stem cells enter and exit a resting state called quiescence. When in a resting state, cancer cells can become invisible to standard treatments and survive initial therapy, only to reactivate later. This discovery not only improves our understanding of brain biology, but it provides a roadmap for developing entirely new approaches to treating brain cancer.

QIMR Berghofer has also launched Australia's first clinical research rotation, a program where junior doctors can develop research skills, giving them the opportunity to revolutionise healthcare across Queensland and beyond in the future.

These are projects that have been years in the making and we are very thankful to our valued supporters who help enable and shape medical research in Queensland.

QIMR Berghofer has a long-standing commitment to improving health outcomes and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. To further strengthen this commitment, the Institute launched its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan in August, which articulates our undertaking to listen, learn and implement measures for meaningful change.

Celebrating 80 years of medical research in Queensland is a great honour for the Institute and it has been a joy meeting many supporters as well as many of the Institute's alumni. Every event has been a celebration of the achievements we've made together for a healthier future and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you again. I hope you enjoy this final instalment of our four-part anniversary series.

Professor Fabienne Mackay
Director and CEO

Contents

FEATURE

World-class cancer research centre to accelerate research and cancer treatments

A new national cancer research centre, the ACRF Centre for Optimised Cancer Therapy (ACRF-COCT), officially launched in August. Based at QIMR Berghofer, the centre is ready to revolutionise personalised cancer treatment, thanks to a $2 million grant from the Australian Cancer Research Foundation (ACRF).

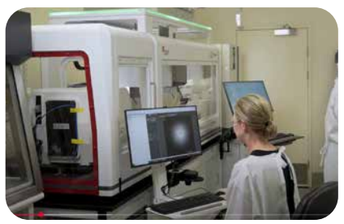
The Centre integrates the latest advances in genomics and technology to understand how cancerous tumours respond to treatment. The funding enables researchers and clinicians to secure innovative equipment to develop future clinical tests, and ultimately improve outcomes for people diagnosed with cancer.

Led by QIMR Berghofer leukaemia researcher and Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) haematologist Professor Steven Lane and medical genomics expert Dr Nicola Waddell, ACRF-COCT brings together a team of leading academic and clinical investigators from QIMR Berghofer, the RBWH and the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

> "ACRF-COCT will accelerate our research towards a future of personalised medicine that delivers treatments tailored to individual patient need."
>
> – PROFESSOR STEVEN LANE

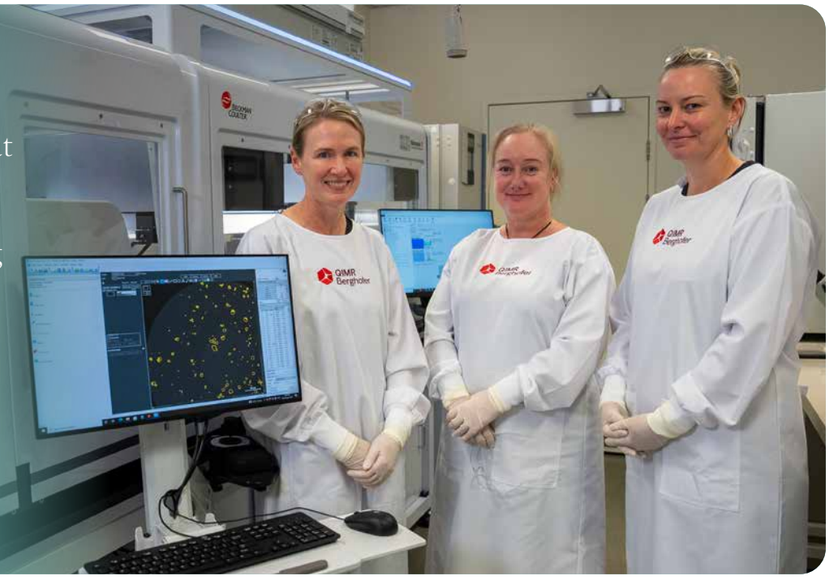
▶ WATCH

Watch a video about this research.



The robotic arm speeds up the work with samples.

> "We are confident that the ACRF-COCT will achieve profound breakthroughs, saving lives and improving outcomes for people diagnosed with cancer."
>
> – KERRY STRYDOM



Professor Vicki Whitehall (central) and Drs Catherine Bond (left) and Kelly Olsen.

"We will use novel research tools to determine how different treatments can be combined and delivered in real-time, significantly improving patient outcomes. We're now able to examine patient samples at the time of surgery, during treatment and at the completion of treatment to provide a comprehensive view of how different cancers respond to standard chemotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapies and cellular therapies," Professor Lane said

QIMR Berghofer's Professor Vicki Whitehall is one of the many researchers using new technology at ACRF-COCT – including an organoid suite which has rapidly accelerated the number of experiments her team can run in a much shorter timeframe.

Professor Whitehall's research is focused on colorectal cancer, the second deadliest cancer in Australia. It is often diagnosed at an advanced stage, when there is little chance of successful treatment.

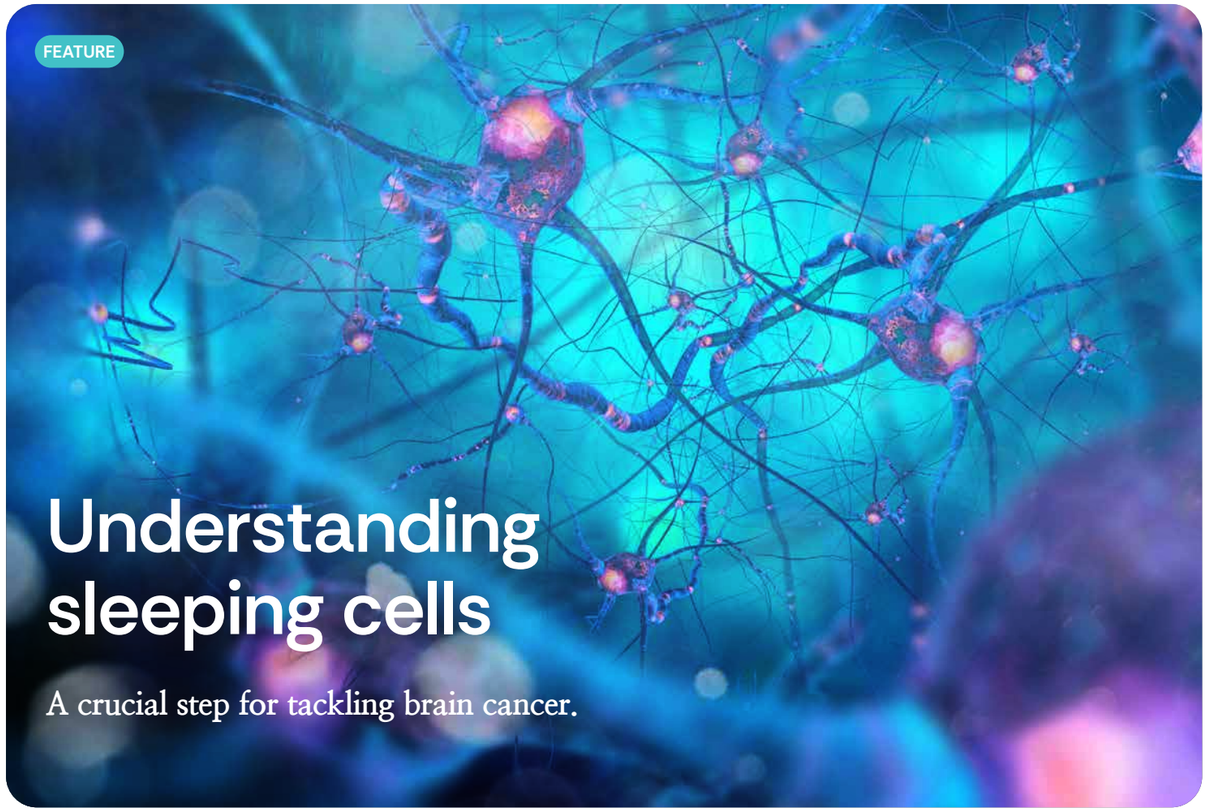
Her team is developing ways to predict a patient's response to different drugs in order to tailor treatment to give the right drug at the right time.

"For patients with advanced colorectal cancer, there may not be a lot of time to trial different drugs and see which they are most likely to respond to. Using the organoid suite, we can prioritise the best drug for the patient to increase their chance of survival, whilst limiting the use and toxicity of drugs less likely to be effective," Professor Whitehall said.

"We couldn't manually do by hand what our new robot is able to do. Drugs are expensive, so if we're able to reduce the volumes being used in experiments, that's a significant cost saving. The system is also automated, saving time and money, and allowing us to concentrate on our discovery-based research."

> ACRF CEO Kerry Strydom said she is proud to back the impactful research at ACRF-COCT which has the potential to reshape future cancer treatments.

Plaque unveiling for the official launch on 5 August with (left-right) Professor Steven Lane, Mr Andrew Nolan, Professor Juliet French, Dr Tim Cooper AM, Mr Michael Sargent, Ms Kerry Strydom, Dr Mark Jacobs, Professor Grant Ramm.



FEATURE

Understanding sleeping cells

A crucial step for tackling brain cancer.

Dr Lachlan Harris

For the first time, scientists have mapped how brain stem cells enter and exit a resting state called quiescence, a process that not only preserves the brain's regenerative capacity but also primes it for repair when injury or disease strikes. Understanding this process is a significant step forward in understanding and treating brain cancer.

The breakthrough by researchers from QIMR Berghofer in collaboration with The Francis Crick Institute, London, United Kingdom, may lead to new approaches in brain health and cancer treatment.

For decades, scientists believed that the neurons, or nerve cells, humans are born with are all we ever have. But recent research has shown that small populations of stem cells in the adult brain continue to generate new neurons throughout life, assisting us with memory and cognitive fitness (ability to reason, remember, learn, plan and adapt). Most of the time, these brain stem cells exist in a hibernation-like state, lowering their metabolism to preserve themselves for when they are needed most.

What makes this latest research so foundational is the discovery of how brain stem cells shift between different depths of rest–similar to moving from deep sleep to light sleep –before becoming active again.

> By learning how to manipulate the resting state (quiescence) of healthy brain stem cells, scientists hope to either wake up dormant cancer cells so they can be targeted by existing treatments or keep them asleep indefinitely to prevent tumour regrowth.

Quiescence is not unique to the brain –it is an ancient biological strategy found across species in everything from yeast to humans, and in tissues ranging from muscle to blood.

> "This is the first time we've been able to show, in detail, how brain stem cells move between deep and shallow resting states and ultimately become active again."
>
> – DR LACHLAN HARRIS

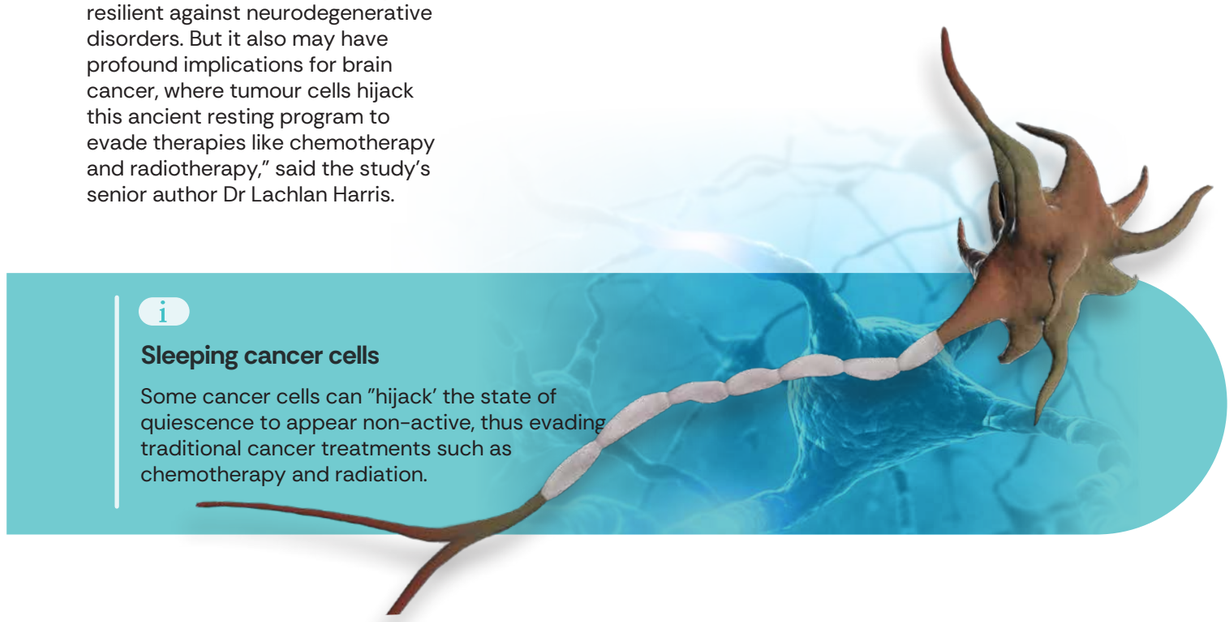
"Understanding this process is crucial, because it underpins how the brain repairs itself and stays resilient against neurodegenerative disorders. But it also may have profound implications for brain cancer, where tumour cells hijack this ancient resting program to evade therapies like chemotherapy and radiotherapy," said the study's senior author Dr Lachlan Harris.

Brain tumours, particularly aggressive types like glioblastoma, are notoriously difficult to treat–in part because some cancer cells can also slip into this dormant state, becoming invisible to standard treatments that target active cancer cells.

These dormant cancer cells can survive initial therapy, only to reactivate later and drive tumour recurrence–a key reason why brain cancers so often devastatingly return after treatment.

"This discovery is foundational because it doesn't just advance our understanding of brain biology–it provides a roadmap for developing entirely new approaches to treating brain cancer or other neurological disease," Dr Harris explained.

It's a transformational step that builds on an ancient biological process, offering hope for tackling one of the most stubborn challenges in medicine."



Sleeping cancer cells

Some cancer cells can "hijack' the state of quiescence to appear non-active, thus evading traditional cancer treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation.

Dr Lachlan Harris leads the Cancer Neuroscience Lab at QIMR Berghofer.

The impact of our brain cancer research

Brain cancers can be complex, aggressive and evade treatment.

At QIMR Berghofer, we're researching multiple approaches to understand how and why brain and other cancers resist treatments.

This will help us develop more effective treatments.

For more information on the brain cancer research at QIMR Berghofer, click here.

FEATURE

Leah Cummins of Bunya Designs

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

During NAIDOC week in July, staff were presented with QIMR Berghofer's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), before it was officially launched in August. The RAP is the Institute's first formal step toward acknowledging the deep and enduring connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to the lands on which we work.

The RAP is a strategic framework that will drive change and help QIMR Berghofer move beyond good intentions and into deliberate, thoughtful, and sustained action.

QIMR Berghofer has a long-standing commitment to improving health outcomes and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

In QIMR Berghofer's archives, there are notes that demonstrate how early medical research conducted in Queensland recognised the invaluable knowledge of First Nations peoples about health, the environment and the treatment of disease. Early leaders learned from Indigenous communities about the medicinal properties of native plants. Later, researchers sought to understand and address the unique health challenges of northern Australia by drawing on the lived experience and expertise of First Nations people.

"There is still much to achieve in collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to advance health outcomes through research that is ethical, inclusive and impactful," QIMR Berghofer's Director and CEO Professor Fabienne Mackay said.

> "By strengthening partnerships, increasing representation and deepening our understanding of Indigenous knowledge systems, we strive to contribute to a more equitable future."
>
> – PROFESSOR FABIENNE MACKAY, DIRECTOR AND CEO OF QIMR BERGHOFER

The Reflect RAP will lay the foundation with clear and practical steps the Institute will implement over the next 12 months, based on the principles of relationships, respect, opportunities and governance. The Reflect RAP is published on Reconciliation Australia's website.

"As Director and CEO, I am proud to lead an organisation that embraces this responsibility and commits to meaningful change," Professor Mackay said.

A special artwork for an inclusive future

To mark the launch of the Reflect RAP and to celebrate QIMR Berghofer's 80th anniversary, a very special artwork will serve as a legacy symbol of our reconciliation journey.

It is named ***'A Journey of Healing, Growth and Discovery'*** by proud Mayi woman and artist Leah Cummins.

This beautiful piece will feature on the cover of our RAP and be on display at the Institute for years to come.

At the heart of the piece is a central figure — symbolising the individual — supported by staff, services, and the wider community. Surrounding this figure are eight pillars, each representing one of the eight decades QIMR Berghofer has dedicated to advancing research.

These pillars reflect the core values and areas of focus that form the foundation of QIMR Berghofer:

- Respect
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Mental health
- Cancer research
- Accountability
- Excellence
- Brain health
- Population health
- Infection and inflammation

Encircling these elements are microbes — the subjects of intense research by QIMR Berghofer scientists. Flowing through the artwork are river pathways, symbolising the discovery process and the growth it nurtures — mirrored in the thriving plant life depicted throughout the design.

The helping hands of QIMR Berghofer are shown through symbols of connection: palm leaves, shells, the reef, flowing rivers, and the vast blue ocean — linking bush to sea, and spreading across our communities like seeds carried on the wind.

These elements illustrate QIMR Berghofer's outreach — its staff connecting with communities, and seeking solutions and cures for the health challenges faced by many Queenslanders.

1
The individual at the centre — supported by staff, services, and the wider community.
Eight surrounding pillars for eight decades of research.

2
Respect

3
Brain health

4
Mental health

5
Accountability

6
Population health

7
Infection and inflammation

8
Cancer research

9
Collaboration

10
Excellence

11
Integrity

12
Discovery and growth

13
People on the journey

14
Microbes

FEATURE

Celebrating 80 years of medical research in Queensland – Part 4

In the final instalment of our four-part anniversary series, we explore the 2010s to the present at QIMR Berghofer.

Did you catch us on 7NEWS Flashback in June?

Thank you to Katrina Blowers and the 7 News Queensland team for featuring QIMR Berghofer's remarkable journey in *Flashback.*

2010s

With a strong track record in cancer research, Professor Frank Gannon, Director-General of the Science Foundation Ireland, became the seventh Director of QIMR arriving from Ireland just days before the flood disaster that engulfed Brisbane in January 2011.

Professor Gannon reflects: "Before coming to QIMR, I was well aware of this great Institute and within my first months, I saw strength in our research diversity."

An advocate for multidisciplinary collaboration, Professor Gannon actively fostered a culture of cooperation across the Institute- encouraging researchers from diverse fields to join forces in advancing the understanding of complex diseases such as cancer and malaria. Commercial activities flourished under Professor Gannon's leadership, as he strengthened the Institute's pathway from Bench to Business to Bedside (B2B2B).

"I often speak about B2B2B, but QIMR was a very early trailblazer in meshing the two worlds between the 'bench and the bedside'. Translational research was the relatively new term for this and QIMR was an early adopter of this approach," he said.

"QIMR was established to have an impact on the health of society. It has been fulfilling this duty for decades and the benefit of the work is felt on a daily basis throughout Queensland and the world."

– PROFESSOR FRANK GANNON

Professor Gannon's arrival also coincided with a new 15-storey third tower linking the Bancroft Centre and Clive Berghofer's Cancer Research Centre. Chuck Feeney again contributed, pledging a significant amount towards the new facility, and Clive Berghofer showed extraordinary local commitment again, with $50 million pledged over 25 years.

2010: Mental health recognised as a core research program.

2013: The Institute changed its name, becoming the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute.

2015: Q-Gen Cell Therapeutics becomes the first Australian manufacturer to receive Therapeutic Goods Administration approval to manufacture cellular therapies for human use and products used in clinical trials worldwide.

2020 - present

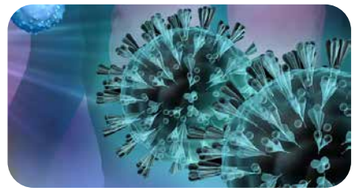
In the first few months of 2020 Australia endured devastating bushfires and witnessed with horror the rapidly unfolding global health crisis with the coronavirus pandemic. When Professor Gannon retired in January 2020, Distinguished Scientist, Professor David Whiteman AM, led the Institute as Acting Director during the start of this pandemic.

LISTEN

Listen to the QIMR Berghofer Originals podcasts as we dive into the stories of brilliant men and women who helped make the last eight decades of research at QIMR Berghofer happen.

With the Institute's unique history in addressing challenging infectious diseases, our researchers were well placed to join the global fight. Within months the Institute had 14 research projects in progress focused on developing urgent treatments and rapid diagnostic tools and understanding why some patients became severely sick while others developed only mild symptoms.

This work was made possible through donations from many Queenslanders.



Thanks to such funding, Professor Andreas Suhrbier and his team were able to repurpose a high biosecurity (PC3) laboratory to undertake research on SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, with the facility also allowing evaluation of new interventions developed by local biotech during the crisis.

Professor Fabienne Mackay was appointed as the Institute's eighth Director, moving to Brisbane in May 2020, during one of the most extraordinary times in history. A renowned immunologist, Professor Mackay had been the head of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Melbourne.

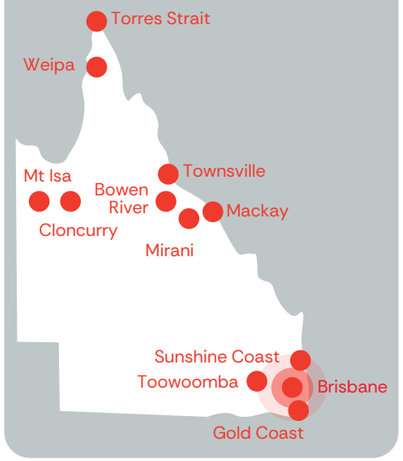
Professor Fabienne Mackay, Director and CEO from 2020

In 2021, an $8 million-dollar fellowship from the Snow Medical Research Foundation was awarded to Professor James Hudson *(pictured, left)*, for one of the most ambitious cardiac research projects ever attempted, developing a comprehensive encyclopedia of the heart. Professor Hudson and his team have set out to make 80,000 miniature heart muscles, known as organoids.

The 80-year anniversary in 2025 also marked the launch of the Institute's new name, QIMR Berghofer, and updated logo.

Throughout 2025, Professor Mackay and other QIMR Berghofer researchers, staff and students have travelled throughout Queensland, meeting donors and partners, community groups and students, and sharing the impacts of our research on health outcomes.

Here are the places we've been.



WATCH

Watch a video about 80 years of pioneering medical research in Queensland.

FEATURE

Neuroscience research offers a new personalised treatment for depression

Dr Luke Hearne.

Over the past three years, the team at QIMR Berghofer's Clinical Brain Networks laboratory and the Queensland Neurostimulation Centre treated individuals for depression in a research study that is seeing patients experience relief after years of struggling.

Using advanced brain imaging to tailor treatment to an individual's unique brain structure and function, the innovative approach offers a new treatment option for people who have had little success with other therapies. Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) therapy is a non-invasive brain stimulation technique that targets specific areas of the brain to regulate neural activity associated with disorders.

Study participants had their brains scanned via MRI, and were offered personalised non-invasive brain stimulation treatments over several weeks.

The impact of our research

With diagnoses of anxiety and depression on the rise, research into these disorders has never been more important.

Source: https://www.aihw.gov.au

The results, according to the researchers, have been remarkable.

> "Just over half of the patients reduced their symptoms by more than 50 per cent, and around one-third achieved full remission."
>
> – DR LUKE HEARNE

"This is particularly exciting for people who have not responded to standard treatments like medication or talk therapy," said QIMR Berghofer neuroscientist Dr Luke Hearne.

This is a significant milestone in the treatment of depression, demonstrating the effectiveness of personalised TMS therapy.

> "Unlike traditional TMS methods that stimulate a broad area, this personalised approach identifies the optimal stimulation site on the brain for each patient based on their own MRI scans."
>
> – DR LUKE HEARNE

Dr Hearne stressed the importance of personalisation in improving outcomes: "The brain is incredibly complex, and even millimetre-level adjustments in stimulation sites on the surface of the brain can make a significant difference to clinical outcomes. By tailoring TMS to each person's unique brain structure and function, we're seeing much better responses compared to traditional approaches."

Dr Luke Hearne and Professor Luca Cocchi.

The study also revealed that patients with depression responded better than those with complex conditions such as bipolar depression or neurological disorders.

Professor Luca Cocchi co-led the research team with psychiatrist, Dr Bjorn Burgher. Professor Cocchi emphasised its real-world impact: "This work is a testament to how cutting-edge neuroscience can directly improve lives. Translating research into clinical practice is always challenging, but seeing patients experience relief after years of struggling with depression is deeply gratifying for our team."

Help launch urgent trials

Dr Hearne and his collaborators need to secure funding to begin randomised clinical trials for the treatment, with a view to making personalised TMS therapy available to people in rural and underserved communities.

Your gift today will help launch urgent trials and bring hope to people battling depression, no matter where they live.

Click here to find out more information.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Townsville celebrated as a hub for Queensland medical research

Infectious disease expert Professor Darren Gray and mosquito laboratory head Adjunct Associate Professor Leon Hugo visited Townsville's Queensland Museum Tropics for a special event in July to celebrate QIMR Berghofer's 80th anniversary, and thank the Townsville community for its contributions to medical research.

Townsville's place in medical history is significant. In 1963, then-QIMR researchers made the landmark discovery of Ross River virus after isolating the virus from mosquitoes collected on the banks of the Ross River. This breakthrough transformed the understanding of mosquito-borne diseases in Australia and around the world.

QIMR Berghofer now collaborates with organisations and teams from the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine, the Centre for Tropical Biosecurity, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Vector-Borne and Neglected Tropical Diseases, and the Margaret Roderick Centre for Mental Health, all housed at James Cook University in Townsville.

The July event brought QIMR Berghofer scientists together with Townsville community donors and supporters, local MPs and councillors, and health and education partners.

Professor Gray, head of the Institute's Population Health research program and a global expert in infectious disease epidemiology, presented an update on the program's research into causes of diseases as diverse as skin and gynaecological cancers, cardiovascular disease, and chronic conditions. He also shared insights from his Global Health and Tropical Medicine Laboratory, which focuses on improving the control and prevention of tropical infectious diseases like strongyloidiasis, a parasitic infection prevalent in remote regions of northern and western Australia.

Attendees also heard from Adjunct Associate Professor Leon Hugo, who leads QIMR Berghofer's Mosquito Control Laboratory. He shared the lab's work on strategies to combat mosquito-borne diseases such as Japanese encephalitis virus, chikungunya, and dengue.

> Community donations are essential to continuing this important research and driving future breakthroughs. This event gave an opportunity for staff to meet donors who play a crucial role in supporting QIMR Berghofer's research.

Professor Fabienne Mackay, Director and CEO of QIMR Berghofer, addressing the media (above) and Professor Darren Gray talking to supporters at the Townsville event (right).

The race against melanoma

Because of you, there's hope for families like Dan's.

Thanks to you, medical research is moving forward—and that progress is making a difference for people like Dan.

When melanoma returned five years after his initial diagnosis, Dan and his wife Emma were blindsided. It had spread to his brain, lungs and lymph nodes. Within weeks, Dan underwent two emergency brain surgeries. Then came radiation, immunotherapy, and targeted drug combinations. Each brought new challenges.

But in January this year, Dan's scan showed something remarkable: no evidence of active cancer.

It's a powerful reminder of what research can achieve—and why your support matters.

Dan's story inspired almost $700,000 in donations recently, helping researchers to develop early detection tools for diseases like melanoma, improve treatments, and give families like Dan's more time together.

By supporting QIMR Berghofer, you are keeping that momentum going.

Thank you.

Dan in hospital with his son.

▶ WATCH

Watch a video about our melanoma research.

"When melanoma comes back, it spreads with terrifying speed. That's why early detection and better treatments are essential. Thanks to decades of research, we now have options we didn't dream of years ago."

– PROFESSOR DAVID WHITEMAN AM

Use our Melanoma Risk Calculator

QIMR Berghofer has developed an online program to calculate your risk of developing a melanoma over the next five to 10 years. Click here to find out your risk.

Note: The Melanoma Risk Calculator is not intended to be used as a substitute for your doctor's advice. You should always consult your doctor if you think you might be at risk, particularly if you have noticed a new or changed skin lesion.

New partnerships to boost regional health outcomes

QIMR Berghofer is committed to making significant health impacts throughout Queensland and in 2025 has entered significant partnership and strategic collaborations to help achieve this.

Toowoomba

QIMR Berghofer has entered a strategic partnership with the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise to identify and address region-specific health priorities and improve health outcomes for the broader Darling Downs community.

The new partnership was announced at the 80th anniversary celebrations in Toowoomba in April and will bring regional health innovation, education and workforce development, improved regional access to healthcare and expansion of cell therapy manufacturing capabilities.

Sunshine Coast

A collaborative approach enables us to deliver real impact—serving patients and discovering new therapies and treatments. Our partnerships with the University of the Sunshine Coast and Sunshine Coast Health and Hospital Services are absolutely vital.

This collaboration includes exploring opportunities for clinical trials. The Sunshine Coast University Hospital is one of three trial sites recruiting patients for a trial of a new combination therapy to target advanced triple-negative breast cancer, which stems from research led by QIMR Berghofer's Professor Sudha Rao.

The partnership also focuses on advancing health and medical research in the region, improving access to diagnostics and treatments and co-designing innovative technologies that directly impact the Sunshine Coast regional community.

Townsville

A strategic partnership agreement between QIMR Berghofer and James Cook University (JCU) will combine the strengths of the two institutes as we work towards better health and wellbeing for Queenslanders.

QIMR Berghofer Director and CEO Professor Fabienne Mackay and JCU's Deputy Vice Chancellor Research Professor Jenny Seddon signed a formal Strategic Partnerships Agreement in Townsville in July. The partnership will include collaboration in medical research, upskilling research workforce, shared infrastructure and technology and expanding regional access to emerging therapies.

For inquires relating to strategic partnerships, please email growpartnerships@qimrb.edu.au.

Top: QIMR Berghofer Director and CEO Professor Fabienne Mackay and JCU Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) Professor Jenny Seddon.

Below: Working together, QIMR Berghofer and the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise, with Clive Berghofer AM.

Partnerships with the University of the Sunshine Coast and Sunshine Coast Health and Hospital Services.

Australian first junior doctor research rotation

Training a new generation of doctors.

"Our research rotation breaks new ground in Australia, giving junior doctors the unique chance to start on a pathway to become future clinician scientist leaders who will drive innovation and revolutionise healthcare."

– PROFESSOR ELIZABETH POWELL

Throughout its 80-year history, QIMR Berghofer has been devoted to addressing the health problems occurring in Queensland, and interlacing the two worlds of research and patient care.

Breaking new ground, QIMR Berghofer and the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital have launched Australia's first clinical research rotation, a program that immerses junior doctors in the research world, honing skills and forging lasting partnerships between clinicians and scientists.

Five junior doctors have joined the inaugural cohort, engaging in hands-on training in research methodology, study design, data analysis, and evidence-based medicine at QIMR Berghofer over a 10 week period.

The new research rotation will nurture the next generation of clinical leaders, providing tools to integrate scientific discovery and patient clinical care, producing highly-skilled, well-rounded medical professionals.

"By blending research with clinical practice, we empower doctors to transform patient outcomes."

– PROFESSOR FABIENNE MACKAY, DIRECTOR AND CEO OF QIMR BERGHOFER.

Clinical Director Professor Elizabeth Powell highlights the program's dynamic impact: "Embedding research skills early fuels a culture of inquiry and evidence-based care," she said. "This Research Rotation actively strengthens the partnership between hospitals and research institutes, elevating healthcare across Queensland and beyond."

Dr Shreyas Honavar is among the inaugural cohort, and said the program has been incredibly hands on and rewarding.

"Participating in the clinical research rotation lets me dive deep into medical research and immediately apply these skills to patient care. I'm excited to develop abilities that will shape my career and improve health outcomes. Making connections with researchers has been a really enjoyable part of the process," Dr Honavar said.

Click here to read more about Australia's first Clinician Researcher Academy.

Help train the next generation of medical leaders

Would you like to invest in the next generation of clinician-scientists? Your donation directly supports QIMR Berghofer's Clinician Researcher Academy, integrating research directly into patient care. You can help us equip doctors to transform healthcare for all Australians. Click here for more information.

Researchers take mental health science to Cloncurry and Mount Isa

QIMR Berghofer researchers hosted two free community events in Cloncurry and Mount Isa in May focused on the science behind mental health and mood disorders. The events were designed to make research updates more accessible as well as encouraging involvement in future studies.

The sessions were led by our Consumer and Community Involvement Lead Dr Nancy Cloake, and Drs Brittany Mitchell and Jodi Thomas – researchers who study the genetic and environmental factors influencing mental health conditions.

Dr Mitchell led the Australian arm of an international study uncovering nearly 300 previously unknown genetic links to depression, allowing scientists to better predict depression risks. She is especially interested in how community insights can drive more meaningful and relevant research, as well as spreading knowledge and reducing stigma around mental health.

"Despite rising mental health challenges in the regions, research remains largely focused on people living in the city and we know that mental health services and outcomes in the regions can look very different to those in the city."

"It's really important to us that people in rural and remote communities are part of the conversation."

– DR BRITTANY MITCHELL

Regional Education Program takes the world of science to Cape York school students

The Regional Education Program has taken the world of medical research to school students from Western Cape College and Aurukun State School in Weipa, with a unique hands-on experience aimed at inspiring the next generation of scientists.

The students' induction into the life of a scientist included using microscopes to view cancers and other diseases such as malaria, practising how to handle a pipette, carrying out simple DNA tests to explore the field of genetics and inherited diseases, and learning about different cell types of the brain and their role in mental health conditions and neurodegenerative diseases.

"At QIMR Berghofer, we want to ensure all students can explore the world of health science and medical research no matter how remote their geographical location," Education Coordinator Dr Manuel Serrano Santos said.

Belinda Jones, the Head of Maths and Science at Western Cape College, said it was great for the students to see their theoretical learning in practice.

"It's really important for us that our students see what they can be in the future, and that can be jobs and positions that don't exist in our local area. So, it means the world to us when people choose to come and visit us here at Western Cape College."

Thank you

We are grateful to those in the community who support and fundraise for us.

We couldn't do it without you.

Priory at The Peak lunch

Mark Osborne and the Darling Downs Priory Community hosted QIMR Berghofer staff at the Priory at The Peak lunch in June, raising vital funds to support bowel cancer research at the Institute.

QIMR Berghofer Professor Vicki Whitehall shared her latest research endeavours for bowel cancer and her focus on personalised medicine strategies to influence treatment for advanced cancer.

It was also an opportunity for staff to personally congratulate Clive Berghofer AO on his recent King's Birthday Honours.

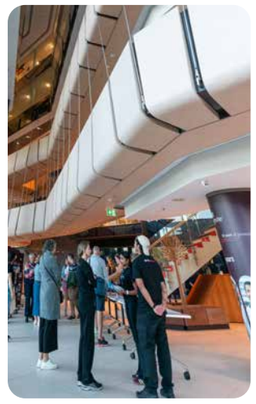
Ekka display showcases 80-year legacy of research in rural and agricultural settings

Visitors to this year's QIMR Berghofer Ekka display discovered how rural life, agriculture and horticulture have played a powerful role in shaping medical research over the past 80 years.

The Mosquito display showcased the life cycle and anatomy of a mosquito, with a giant 3D mozzie model for some fun photos.

The Future Frontiers interactive zone enabled students to chat with scientists about future careers in medical research, agriculture, ag tech and science.

The walk-through timeline showcased research milestones over the past 80 years in Queensland.



Researchers join Brisbane Open House

Five labs opened their doors at this year's Brisbane Open House in July with attendees able to get their gloves on for some hands-on experiments in our purpose-built Education Lab, or join a guided tour to explore diverse areas of medical research.

Across the day, guided tours ran every hour, with more than 120 visitors exploring QIMR Berghofer's labs and learning how the Institute's research is helping to improve health outcomes in Australia and beyond. Tours were available to the Conjoint Gastroenterology, Cardiac Bioengineering, Mosquito Control, and Molecular Nutrition Labs.

Photos by Jeremy Dixon.

Fundraise for medical research

To learn more about community fundraising opportunities, click here, or visit **qimrb.edu.au/support-us/fundraise-for-us** or contact Isla Paul on **0407 245 809** or **isla.paul@qimrb.edu.au.**

QIMR Berghofer

Leave a legacy for the future of health

Every gift in a Will to QIMR Berghofer, no matter how large or small, plays a vital role in funding crucial research into diseases that impact our community.

For more information please contact our Gifts in Wills team for a friendly and confidential conversation.

Free Call: 1800 993 000

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