Media release – Wed 7 August, 2013

TROG wins NSW Premier’s Award for outstanding cancer research

Hunter-based clinical trials group, TROG Cancer Research, won the 2013 ‘Innovation in Cancer Clinical Trials’ Award at the NSW Premier’s Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research on Friday night.

The prestigious accolade, which included a cash prize of $20,000 to be used toward future research achievements, was presented to TROG by NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell at an awards ceremony held the Art Gallery of NSW.

One of ten awards presented during the evening, the ‘Innovation in Cancer Clinical Trials’ award recognises an example of innovation in relation to the conduct of cancer clinical trials in NSW. It is open to any NSW-based clinical research team within a university, not-for-profit or local health district setting.

TROG Cancer Research, otherwise known as the Trans Tasman Radiation Oncology Group, is a not-for-profit membership body of over 900 radiation oncologists and other professionals across Australia and New Zealand who share the common aim of defeating cancer through radiotherapy-based research. TROG’s clinical trials program is coordinated through a Central Operations Office located at Calvary Mater Newcastle.

TROG was recognised for 25 years of research into radiotherapy treatments for various cancers including head and neck, breast, bladder, lung and prostate.

The award was accepted by TROG’s Central Operations Manager Joan Torony, who thanked the Cancer Institute NSW for recognising an organisation that has struggled in the past to get its name out.

“I don’t know if everybody realises but 60% of people who are diagnosed with cancer will have radiation therapy,” said Ms Torony. “However it’s hard for us to get the message out about what we do because we’re not working with one type of cancer [such as breast, or lung]; we target every type of cancer,” she said.

Ms Torony also spoke about TROG’s aim to be more inclusive of regional, remote and indigenous cancer patients.

“We have centres in Darwin, Cairns and in remote Western Australia,” she said. “A new radiation oncology department opened last week at Tamworth’s North West Cancer Centre
and we are planning site visits to encourage clinical trial participation in TROG trials, drawing from all the regional areas to include aboriginal communities,” she said.

Now in its tenth year, the NSW Premier’s Awards for Outstanding Cancer Research are presented by the NSW Government and the Cancer Institute NSW to recognise excellence in cancer research across the state.

In a statement issued Friday the Cancer Institute NSW recognised TROG as “the peak Australasian body in radiation oncology research”, saying that “the importance of TROG trials cannot be underestimated with a proven positive effect on patient care and importantly the advancement of treatments to the broader population”.

One of the largest cancer clinical trials groups in Australia and New Zealand, TROG reached a milestone last month with the accrual of its 12,000\textsuperscript{th} participant.

TROG is currently working with 67 trial sites internationally, including hospitals and radiation therapy centres, to deliver its clinical trials program.

Anyone interested in becoming part of a cancer clinical trial should speak to their doctor. For more information about TROG Cancer Research phone 02 4014 3911 or visit www.trog.com.au.

\textit{Joan Torony is available for interview. Interviews, images or other media information:}

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