

## MEDIA RELEASE

*Thursday 7 April, 2022 - For immediate distribution*

### **TROG Cancer Research President recognised in inaugural NHMRC award**

TROG Cancer Research's President, Professor Trevor Leong has been awarded the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) David Cooper Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Award.

The award was announced at the NHMRC Research Excellence Awards ceremony held in Canberra on 31 March.

This is the inaugural year for the award and recognises the highest ranked recipient in the Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Grant Scheme in 2020.

The newly named NHMRC David Cooper Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Award is in remembrance of leading HIV/AIDS researcher Professor David Cooper AC FAA FAHMS (1949-2018).

NHMRC's Research Excellence Awards recognise individuals in health and medical research who are going above and beyond to treat and solve the health challenges that face our community.

TROG Cancer Research President, Professor Trevor Leong said he was thrilled and honoured to receive this award and is proud to celebrate his research while remembering the work of Professor Cooper.

"To be the inaugural winner of this award is incredibly humbling. It represents the culmination of many years of hard work by hundreds of trial staff, clinicians, and patients across the globe, and it's great to see this recognised alongside the work of Professor Cooper," Trevor said.

Professor Leong's work with TROG Cancer Research and the [Australasian Gastro-Intestinal Trials Group \(AGITG\)](#) on the TOPGEAR Phase III trial ([Investigating the use of preoperative chemoradiotherapy versus preoperative chemotherapy for respectable gastric cancer](#)), which opened to patients in 2013, was noted by NHMRC as an important research question worthy of government funding.

"This trial was dedicated to answering important questions about the best use of chemotherapy and radiation therapy, in addition to surgery, for gastric cancer," he continued.

Professor Leong was announced TROG Cancer Research' President in 2021 after fulfilling the role as the Chairperson of TROG's Scientific Committee.

Previously, he was the Director of Radiation Oncology at the [Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre](#) in Melbourne.

As a Consultant Radiation Oncologist, he is internationally recognised as a leader in the management and research of gastrointestinal cancers and is an active clinician researcher engaged in both translational research programs and clinical research, with a focus on radiation medicine research.

Professor Leong has been involved with TROG activities for almost 20 years in the positions of Trial Chair, member and Chair of the TROG Scientific Committee and Board Director, as well as being a key contributor to clinical trial radiation therapy quality assurance.

[TROG Cancer Research CEO, Susan Goode](#) spoke fondly about working directly with Professor Leong and congratulated him on this huge milestone.

“I have had the pleasure of working side by side with Trevor on a number of trials, but most recently as our President, he has been providing leadership for TROG Cancer Research, ensuring that our research endeavours in radiation medicine make a significant contribution to cancer control and improving patient outcomes. There is no one else more deserving of this award in its first year,” she said.

“We are so privileged to have the expertise, passion, and leadership of Trevor at TROG Cancer Research, and are all very excited to be able to share this incredible achievement with him. It truly recognises this exceptional clinical research being done in a multidisciplinary way to develop better treatment options for those with cancer.”

Professor Leong is in it for the long run and hopes to continue working with TROG in the development of radiation medicine clinical trials and to improve cancer outcomes for many years.

“All of us at TROG remain focused on conducting high quality clinically important research that responds to, and is reflective of patient needs, changes in cancer treatments, new technologies, the research environment, and our membership,” Trevor said.

“This award is only the beginning of more work to come and that’s very exciting,” he concluded.

**- ENDS -**

**IMAGES |** *TRO\_TrevorWithAward\_Image1 – Professor Trevor Leong, Ilana Cooper, and Becky Cooper.*

*TRO\_NHMRCAward\_Image2 – The NHMRC Excellence Award trophies*

*TRO\_NHMRCAwardRecipients\_Image3 – The NHMRC Excellence Award Recipients for 2022*

***For further information and to request interview opportunities, please contact:***

***Holly Martin | 0403 293 880 | [holly@themarketinggp.com.au](mailto:holly@themarketinggp.com.au)***

---

#### **About TROG Cancer Research**

TROG (the Trans-Tasman Radiation Oncology Group) is a global leader in cancer research and has been successfully improving the outcomes of cancer patients since 1989.

Our mission is to improve treatments and quality of life for cancer patients, and we do so by working collaboratively. We are one of the largest clinical trial groups in Australia and New Zealand and we work with hospitals, universities, cancer centres and the wider community around the world to conduct life-changing research.

TROG Cancer Research’s focus is providing hope to people with all cancer types through one treatment, radiation therapy.

Our research findings have helped advance the way many cancers are treated worldwide.

<https://trog.com.au/>