

Australia leads the way with childhood cancer stage at diagnosis data

In a world first, national data on childhood cancer stage at diagnosis has been released.*

SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA, September 4, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a world first, national data on childhood cancer stage at diagnosis* has been released, showing that a high proportion of the most common childhood cancers are diagnosed at a limited stage, before they have spread to other parts of the body.



This new data give us a much greater understanding of the relationship between stage at diagnosis and survival outcomes for children."

Associate Professor Christine Giles, Acting CEO, Cancer Australia

The new data published by [Cancer Australia](#) covers the 16 most common childhood cancers, which represent approximately three-quarters of all childhood cancers diagnosed in Australia.

The Minister for Health Greg Hunt said, "Australia is leading the world in the diagnosis of childhood cancers and this new data gives us a roadmap to combat and beat cancer. My commitment is to continue to invest significantly in the research, diagnosis and treatment of these terrible childhood cancers. I will do all I can to deliver more

support to patients and families."

More than 750 children aged 0-14 years are diagnosed with cancer each year in Australia, and about 100 children die from the disease.

Associate Professor Christine Giles, Acting CEO, Cancer Australia, said that the new data represented an exciting and significant step in progressing national efforts to combat childhood cancer.

"This new data give us a much greater understanding of the relationship between stage at diagnosis and survival outcomes for children," said A/Professor Giles.

"For example, parents of children diagnosed with cancer can take heart from the finding that not only were 12 of the 16 most common childhood cancers likely to be diagnosed at a limited stage, most of these cancer types also had higher five-year observed survival rates than those diagnosed at an advanced stage," said A/Professor Giles.

"The new data also revealed that, for acute lymphoid leukaemia, the most commonly diagnosed childhood cancer, there was a small difference in five-year observed survival by stage at diagnosis."

For children diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma, five year survival was 100 per cent regardless of stage at diagnosis.

Robert Long, Manager, Cancer Australia, said that, until now, there had been no common and consistent way to record data on childhood cancer stage at diagnosis at a national level.

"This has been an identified gap both in Australia and internationally," said Mr Long.

"Knowing the distribution of stage at diagnosis and outcomes by stage can assist us in understanding variations in survival, and will help to inform where best to invest our efforts in terms of future research and targeted initiatives to improve outcomes for children with cancer," said Mr Long.

The release of the data on childhood cancer stage at diagnosis is the result of a collaboration between Cancer Australia and the Australian Childhood Cancer Registry at Cancer Council Queensland, with involvement of all states and territories, and was supported as part of the Australian Government's Investing in Medical Research – Fighting Childhood Cancer initiative. The childhood cancer stage data can be accessed through Cancer Australia's Children's Cancer

and [National Cancer Control Indicators](#) websites.

* Stage at diagnosis indicates the extent to which a cancer has spread when first diagnosed. Due to differences in staging systems used, the categories for stage at diagnosis may differ across cancer types. Most of the 16 cancer types can generally be categorised as either 'limited' or 'advanced' stage cancers.

Cancer Australia was established by the Australian Government in 2006 to benefit all Australians affected by cancer, and their families and carers. Cancer Australia aims to reduce the impact of cancer, address disparities and improve outcomes for people affected by cancer by leading and coordinating national, evidence-based interventions across the continuum of care.

Susie Dobson
Cancer Australia
61438209833
[email us here](#)

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