



# Clinical Trials

Melbourne, Victoria

Victoria is the premier location for clinical trials in the Asia-Pacific region, with a first class reputation for quality and integrity, and long-established expertise in conducting clinical trials. Victoria is known for its excellence in medical research and has a recognised collaborative model of excellence across basic and clinical research. It boasts four major biotechnology precincts linking hospitals with universities, medical research institutes, industry and world-class infrastructure: Parkville (North West), Clayton (South East), Geelong (South West) and Bundoora (North East). Coming online at the end of 2009, a new system for streamlined multi-site ethics approval will ensure an even more efficient process for clinical trials in Victoria.

## Victoria's Clinical Trials Strengths

- Availability of highly skilled professionals including internationally recognised clinicians and researchers
- Fast regulatory process – the Clinical Trial Notification (CTN) scheme enables ethics committee approval for initiation of clinical trials, with 99 per cent of clinical trials able to begin within a week of being registered, following ethics approval
- A new system being implemented in Victoria to streamline multi-site ethics approval is now open for applications – [www.health.vic.gov.au/ethics/multi/](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/ethics/multi/)
- Particular strengths in paediatric and first-in-human trials
- Favourable environment for conducting clinical trials including:
  - Ethnically heterogeneous population
  - Internationally accepted standards for ethics and clinical practice
  - World class health system
- Strong pharmaceutical and biotechnology base – Victoria's world class biotechnology clusters include 138 biotech companies, 13 major independent medical research institutes, 10 teaching hospitals and 9 universities
- Advanced infrastructure and facilities co-located with strong supporting industries involved in all aspects of clinical trial administration and management and ancillary support service providers.



[www.biotechnology.vic.gov.au](http://www.biotechnology.vic.gov.au)

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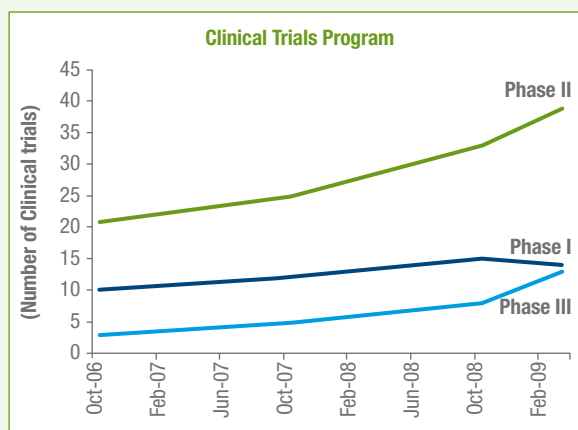
## Recent Major Developments

- Monash University is jointly leading a new US\$50M international trial investigating the effect of low-dose aspirin on cardiovascular, cancer and mental health outcomes in the elderly. The study, funded by the National Institute on Aging, one of the US National Institutes of Health, is called ASPREE – ASPirin in Reducing Events in the Elderly and will be the largest prevention trial ever to take place in Australia. For more information: [www.med.monash.edu.au/epidemiology/cardioreas/aspre.html](http://www.med.monash.edu.au/epidemiology/cardioreas/aspre.html)
- The CSL H1N1 swine flu vaccine is currently being trialled in children at the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute in Melbourne. For more information: [www.mcric.edu.au/pages/research/news/2009/7/swine-flu-vaccine-trial-in-children-set-to-start.asp](http://www.mcric.edu.au/pages/research/news/2009/7/swine-flu-vaccine-trial-in-children-set-to-start.asp)
- A vaccine for coeliac disease, developed at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute (WEHI) is currently being trialled in Victoria, led by the WEHI spinout NexPep, in conjunction with Medicines Development Ltd and Nucleus Network. For more information: [www.nexpep.com/coeliacdiseasevaccine/clinicaltrial.aspx](http://www.nexpep.com/coeliacdiseasevaccine/clinicaltrial.aspx)
- Prince Henry's Institute in Melbourne, in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, is trialling a new contraceptive method for men. The two-year study will look at the fully reversible use of the hormone Testosterone for contraception via the reduction of sperm count. For more information: [www.princehenrys.org/clinical-studies](http://www.princehenrys.org/clinical-studies)

## Key Victorian Clinical Trials Infrastructure

- BioGrid Australia – [www.biogrid.com.au](http://www.biogrid.com.au)
- Cancer Trials Australia – [www.cancertrialsaustralia.com](http://www.cancertrialsaustralia.com)
- Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics Laboratory – [www.austin.org.au/Page.aspx?ID=124](http://www.austin.org.au/Page.aspx?ID=124)
- Cogstate – [www.cogstate.com](http://www.cogstate.com)
- Integrative Neuroscience Facility (INF) – [www.hfi.unimelb.edu.au/inf](http://www.hfi.unimelb.edu.au/inf)
- Neurosciences Trials Australia – [www.neurotrialsaustralia.com](http://www.neurotrialsaustralia.com)
- Nucleus Network – [www.nucleusnetwork.com.au](http://www.nucleusnetwork.com.au)
- Neurosciences Victoria – [www.neurosciencesvic.com.au](http://www.neurosciencesvic.com.au)
- Australian Brain Bank Network – [www.neurosciencesvic.com.au/page/infra\\_nntrc](http://www.neurosciencesvic.com.au/page/infra_nntrc)
- Victorian Cancer Biobank – [www.viccancerbiobank.org.au](http://www.viccancerbiobank.org.au)

## Victorian Life Science Clinical Trial Activity



Melbourne's listed life science companies currently have 85 life science products on the market, with 13 Phase III and 39 Phase II clinical trial programs underway. Source: Blake Industry & Market Analysis Pty Ltd.

## Case Study

Clinicians and researchers at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, and the Royal Melbourne Hospital (Melbourne Health), in conjunction with Cancer Trials Australia, have worked together to successfully trial a new biomarker-associated therapeutic treatment (PLX4032) for melanoma and colorectal cancer. The PLX4032 trial, sponsored by US company Plexxikon, relied on key Victorian infrastructure BioGrid (a unique platform for managing clinical research data), Cancer Trials Australia, and the Victorian Cancer Biobank. Victoria was the only non-US trial site chosen by Plexxikon for its first Phase I trial of PLX4032, selected because of international recognition/leadership in the field (at Peter Mac and Melbourne Health), for its unique combination of infrastructure, and for a recognised collaborative model of excellence in both basic and clinical research.

Photos courtesy of Cancer Trials Australia.

## For further information

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