

How have bequests made a difference?



A bequest left to Cancer Council over 50 years ago helped Cancer Council researcher Professor Don Metcalf to find a groundbreaking cancer treatment. He was able to discover, isolate and then produce agents called Colony Stimulating Factors (CSFs), which are the naturally occurring regulators of bone marrow growth.

More than nine million people worldwide have now benefited. Most have needed CSFs to raise their white cell counts and protect them from potentially lethal infection following radiation therapy, high dose cancer chemotherapy or a bone marrow transplant. Patients with HIV/AIDS have also had CSFs as part of their treatment.

One of the first patients in the world to receive CSF treatment was renowned tenor José Carreras. After developing acute myeloid leukaemia, which didn't respond to initial treatment, he received a treatment regime that included CSF therapy in 1987. He responded positively and recovered.

The discovery of CSFs took many decades of laboratory research, from that original bequest left to Cancer Council in 1945.

Yes, over nine million patients have been helped. And that all started with one single bequest to Cancer Council.



Cancer Council Australia

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