



01 Apr 2018
Sunday Examiner, Launceston TAS

Author: Carly Dolan • Section: General News • Article Type: News Item
Audience : 22,222 • Page: 10 • Printed size: 578.00cm² • Market: TAS
Country: Australia • words: 441 • Item ID: 934082098

isentia.mediaportal

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a licence.

Page 1 of 2

Research to increase bowel cancer testing

BY CARLY DOLAN

A LAUNCESTON researcher is leading a project aimed at increasing early detection of bowel cancer.

Dr Simone Lee received a Cancer Council Tasmania grant for the study.

She is working with general practitioners to conduct the trial, which focuses on raising the participation levels of Tasmanians undertaking bowel cancer screening.

“When the patient comes in to see their GP, there will be a ‘pop-up’ reminder on their file,” Dr Lee said.

“Research shows that GP

endorsement is a key predictor for bowel cancer screening uptake, but GPs have told us that they don’t know when their patients receive a free home test kit in the mail. Our focus is to try and increase the rates of bowel cancer screening for people receiving their test kits aged 50, 60 and 70.”

Dr Lee said if the results looked promising in a small number of Tasmanian practices, the researchers would look at expanding the project statewide. She said the screening program had been “shown to save lives”.

However, a population

screening program worked best when large numbers of people took part, Dr Lee said.

“If found early, nine out of 10 cases of bowel cancer can be successfully treated.

“Unfortunately, only four in 10 Australians who receive a free screening kit take part in the program.

“Compared to other national screening programs, such as BreastScreen (54.4 per cent in 2012 to 2013) and the National Cervical Screening Program (57.8 per cent in 2013 to 14), these rates are considerably low.”

Dr Lee said less than half the 65,379 eligible Tasmanians invited to take part in the 2014 to 2015 program chose to participate.

Associate Professor and GP Jan Radford is working with Dr Lee on the trial.

“Encouraging patients to participate in the bowel cancer screening program may be the input GPs can offer to lift screening rates,” Dr Radford said.

“GPs are visited by 85 per cent of Australians every year so contact is frequent. GPs often try to offer or recommend preventive health activities at the same time patients consult for other problems. Sometimes patients present for purely preventive health check-ups but this is, unfortunately, uncommon.”

Dr Radford said the project would test whether a prompt from patients’ electronic health record aimed

at the GP could lead to increased uptake of bowel cancer screening.

“It’s a simple idea, though not simple to research, that requires proper testing.”

The project is a collaboration between UTAS, Health Department, Tasmanian Health Service and Deakin University, with assistance from the George Town Medical Centre.



01 Apr 2018
Sunday Examiner, Launceston TAS

Author: Carly Dolan • Section: General News • Article Type: News Item
Audience : 22,222 • Page: 10 • Printed size: 578.00cm² • Market: TAS
Country: Australia • words: 441 • Item ID: 934082098

 isentia.mediaportal

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a licence.

Page 2 of 2



TRIAL: Launceston researcher Dr Simone Lee is working with Associate Professor Dr Jan Radford on the bowel cancer screening research.