

Children's Medical Research Institute holds research excellence awards

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And the winners were: CMRI executives have paid tribute to researchers Professor Ian Alexander, Professor Robyn Jamieson and Associate Professor Hilda Pickett

Three of the brightest minds at Westmead's Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI) were recognised at its recent research excellence awards.

Professor Robyn Jamieson received two awards worth \$150,000 for her research in restoring vision in patients with inherited blindness, where no current treatment exists. Gene therapy techniques has translated into improved genetic information

and tailored treatment options with the ability to diagnose the genetic problem in 70 per cent of cases. Her genetic approach has now been implemented in the clinic and available to patients worldwide.

“It’s tough when you can’t give answers to patients, which inspired me to work on methods which will provide a diagnosis,” Professor Jamieson said. “I want to make a difference to patients’ lives and give them hope.”

Associate Professor Hilda Pickett was awarded for her work in analysing the DNA sequence of cancer growths. She hopes to help researchers understand how cancers respond to different treatments and guide the best choice of therapy.

Professor Ian Alexander was also recognised for his research which explains why early gene therapy trials for SCID-X1 were halted when some patients developed T-cell leukaemia.

“CMRI has a long and proud history of conducting internationally leading medical research to help improve children’s health,” director Professor Roger Reddel said.