

A great excuse to dress down

The Manning and Great Lakes community is being encouraged to dress down in support of children's medical research.

The 20th Jeans for Genes Day on Friday August 2 raises much-needed funds to help the Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI) fight childhood disease.

CMRI works to prevent or treat birth defects and genetic diseases such as cancer and epilepsy which affect one in 20 Australian children.

Genetic Counsellor from the Lower Mid North Coast Child and Family Health team Bruce Hopper said some community health staff from the Manning and Great Lakes will be wearing denim to support the cause.

"Here in the Manning and Great Lakes we have a long history of supporting the day and this year is no different," Mr Hopper said.

"Many local businesses, schools and community groups will also support it in their unique way," he said.

Mr Hopper says support received as part of Jeans for Genes Day could lead to new discoveries and treatments.

"Technology is moving rapidly and the ability to sequence the whole genome of a person will be possible in the not so distant future. This may significantly improve some treatments for conditions such as cancers," he said.

Mr Hopper says Jeans for Genes Day is also an opportunity to get people talking about the potential risk factors for diseases such as cancer.

"Since Angela Jolie has come forward discussing that she has a gene mutation that gives her an increased risk for breast and ovarian cancer, there has been an increase in inquiries," he said.

"If you are concerned about your risk of cancer based on your family history then talk to your GP," Mr Hopper said.

Jeans for Genes Day merchandise can be purchased from supporting retailers and workplaces.

Mr Hopper will be in Taree Central shopping centre from 9am on Friday 2 August to answer general inquires about genetics.

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