

Currently, Dr Munsie is responsible for the Centre's government interactions including regulatory and policy issues and the management of the ASCC's diverse research portfolio. She also provides advice and information on ethics and policy in the area of stem cells to ASCC researchers, government and community members.

The Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC) <http://www.stemcellcentre.edu.au/> receives over 500 enquiries a year regarding the status of stem cell research, clinical trials, and therapies in Australia and overseas. Increasingly untested stem cell products and overseas stem cell therapies are being sold over the internet, and there is mounting interest from Australians in accessing these therapies.

There is a clear need to assist the public in understanding what stem cells are and, and to guide individuals on how to fully investigate treatment options before accepting any therapies offered. The ASCC is achieving this need through its Patient Handbook and offering educational talks to patient groups. These initiatives aim to help patients, their carers and family navigate their way through the myriad of treatments being offered.

"It is understandable that people with chronic and incurable diseases are looking at every option available, however it is essential these people understand the science behind these claims and that there may be risks involved." says Dr Munsie "The ASCC does not seek to advise patients, evaluate individual treatments, or comment on an individual's reasons for travelling for treatment, but aims to provide the patient with the necessary information prior to considering any therapy. Australia has a well regulated health system and patients can be confident that when stem cell treatments are offered here they will be both safe and effective"

Dr Munsie will be discussing what stem cells are, the various types of stem cells, which stem cell treatments are considered safe and effective by specialists, which are considered experimental and which are currently unproven.

Stem cell science continues to offer much promise for the treatment of a wide range of conditions and stem cell research is progressing at a rapid pace, with some research quickly moving towards clinical trials.

<ENDS>

For media information, images and interviews please contact:

Sally Thibault 0414 770880 or sallythibault@gmail.com

Or

Aimee Sanderson Manager - Marketing and Communications Australian Stem Cell Centre
Monash University 03 92711149 M 041461133 or Aimee.Sanderson@stemcellcentre.edu.au

PO Box 441 Oxenford Qld 4209 Phone 5573 8600 Fax 5573 8688
Email: thegodafoundation@ssc.qld.edu.au