‘Opposite of a one-size-fits-all approach’: Every Australian child with cancer eligible for genetic testing and precision treatment

The precision – or personalised – medicine model is the opposite of a ‘one size fits all’ approach, and can look at genetics, environment, and lifestyle to discover which medicines might be most effective for an individual patient. This is particularly important for something like cancer, where taking the time to try multiple drugs that may not work on a patient can have very harmful results.

Precision medicine isn’t just happening at [the Zero Childhood Cancer Program, or] ZERO though. With the cost of sequencing the human genome now less than $1000 per person, those with rare genetic diseases, and treatment resistant cancers, are sometimes able to receive genome or tumour testing to analyse what type of treatment would be most effective.

With more genetic information on these cancers, there’s potential for better research into the future.

“In the expanded ZERO, genomic analysis will occur from the time of diagnosis for every child enrolled, allowing us to track the way each child’s cancer changes in response to treatment. Analysing the cancer journey of up to 1000 young Australians each year in this way will add volumes to our understanding of childhood cancer, for the benefit of all children diagnosed with cancer in the future,” said Professor Michelle Haber AM, Executive Director of Children’s Cancer Institute.

This is an excerpt. Read the full article here