



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

MELBOURNE  
SCHOOL OF  
POPULATION  
HEALTH

# SEMINAR



## **Identifying people at high risk of developing cancer: *beyond family history into morphology, gene discovery and clinical practice***

**Associate Professor Melissa Southey  
Department of Pathology  
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences  
The University of Melbourne**

How do we identify people at high risk of developing cancer? Our recent work and that of others in breast cancer has revealed the complexities behind genetic predisposition that can be made up of many common genetic variants with individually small associated risks, and rare mutations in breast cancer predisposition genes that convey an additional and substantial elevation in risk. We have demonstrated that in many situations family history is not a strong indicator of a high-risk cancer susceptibility gene mutation and that tumour morphology and molecular markers can offer simple, cost-effective and practical ways of identifying the people who are most likely to carry a mutation in cancer predisposition gene, starting with those with early-onset disease.

Associate Professor Southey (PhD, GradDipLaw, FHGSA) is a NHMRC Senior Research Fellow with nearly 20 years research experience in the molecular and genetic epidemiology of cancers. She has substantial tertiary teaching experience and has been active in translating research findings into clinical practice, including heading a molecular diagnostic pathology service laboratory at The Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute. She has a strong international profile and network of collaborators strengthened by experiences such as leading a research team at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (France) and being co-Chair of the Steering Committee of the Breast Cancer Family Registry (National Cancer Institute, USA).

**Wednesday 8 July 2009**

12.30 - 1.30 pm, Seminar Room 515  
Melbourne School of Population Health  
Level 5, 207 Bouverie Street, Carlton

**ALL WELCOME**