


A microscopic image showing several cells with prominent red nuclei. In the foreground, a large, detailed virus particle is visible, characterized by a red, textured surface and numerous dark, cylindrical protrusions (spikes) extending from its outer shell.

Funding a Problem

- Problem:
- Human T-cell leukemia virus 1 (HTLV-1), the first human retrovirus discovered in 1980 by GVN Co-Founder Dr. Robert Gallo, is the most potent carcinogenic oncovirus and potentially the most oncogenic risk factor including chemical carcinogens. During a GVN meeting in Melbourne, Australia in 2017, participants learned of hyper-endemic numbers in the Aboriginal population of Australia, though it is endemic in other regions including several islands of the Caribbean, and in countries such as Brazil, Iran, Japan and Peru. Financial support for HTLV-1 research has been declining in the USA and European countries.
- Solution:
- During a GVN annual meeting in Melbourne, we organized a roundtable discussion hosted by a local ABC radio personality that included scientists, clinicians, patient advocates and policy-makers
- Working with an Australian patient advocate and Dr. Gallo, the GVN drafted an open letter to WHO entitled, “Time to eradicate HTLV-1: An Open Letter to WHO.” The letter was printed in Lancet in May 2018.
- The GVN created and implemented international media campaign and coverage.
- The GVN partnered with indigenous Aboriginal groups who are unsure of outsiders and untrusting of the medical community.
- The GVN educated government officials, including the Australian government who granted 8 million to fund an HTLV-1 Task Force in May 2018.
- In March 2021, the World Health Organization added HTLV-1 to its threatening pathogen list.

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Time to eradicate HTLV-1: an open letter to WHO

[Fabiola Martin](#)  • [Yutaka Tagaya](#) • [Robert Gallo](#)

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Making World Headlines



An emotional call to eradicate ancient cousin of HIV



By [Jacqueline Howard](#), CNN

🕒 6 minute read · Published 6:31 PM EDT, Thu May 10, 2018

Time to eradicate HTLV-1, World Health Organisation is warned

More than 20 countries say the world has been too slow to respond to the cancer-causing retrovirus - and urgent action is required

WHO urged to act to eliminate ancient virus HTLV-1 found in Australia

By national Indigenous affairs correspondent [Bridget Brennan](#)

Posted Fri 11 May 2018 at 8:05am, updated Fri 11 May 2018 at 9:03am



Scientists are declaring war against a leukemia-causing virus that has infected millions

Widespread testing can help curb HTLV-1, the retrovirus that HIV has overshadowed

23 MAY 2018 • BY [KAI KUPFERSCHMIDT](#)



Funding the Cause



Ministers

Department of Health and Aged Care

May 2018

Funding to combat Human T-cell Lymphotropic Virus-1 in remote communities

The Australian Government will provide \$8 million to form a taskforce, in collaboration with the states and territories, to combat Human T-cell Lymphotropic Virus-1 (HTLV-1) and other emerging communicable diseases in remote communities.

The Policy Changes: March 2021



New WHO report on Human T-lymphotropic virus type 1 highlights strategies for its prevention and control

3 March 2021 | Departmental news | Reading time: 2 min (654 words)



Indigenous investigations

'People are scared': the fight against a deadly virus no one has heard of

Field worker for Baker institute Una Ratara and Dr Lloyd Einsiel speak with B outside her community. Photograph: Anna Cadden/The Guardian



Aboriginal groups cautiously welcome Coalition's \$8m pledge to fight HTLV-1

Taskforce will study ways to combat deadly virus endemic in several central Australian communities

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Dr Lloyd Einsiedel, left, Joel Liddle, centre, and Shane Schinke of the Baker Institute in central Australia have been raising awareness of HTLV-1. Photograph: Anna Cadden/The Guardian

Doctors and Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations working on the frontline against HTLV-1 have “cautiously” welcomed the federal government’s decision on Friday to set up an \$8m taskforce to combat the