

Hunt on for 'good' genes

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Professor Peter Leedman (left) and Yvonne Kirkbride (right) with melanoma research grant recipients Dr Louise Winteringham and Professor Grant Morahan .

RESEARCHER Professor Grant Morahan is on the hunt for genes that could provide a natural way of preventing and treating melanoma cancer.

Prof Morahan has received a \$100,000 discovery grant from the Scott Kirkbride Melanoma Research Centre to complete a one-year study at the WA Institute for Medical Research in Nedlands.

"Finding these genes would help researchers better understand the causes of melanoma, how it develops and evades the immune system," he said.

The research aims to establish ways of treating the aggressive disease that kills more than 1200 people around the country each year.

Fellow WAIMR researcher Louise Winteringham has received \$50,000 in funding from the program to study the effect of the H1s5 suppressor gene on melanomas.

"So far, we've found that H1s5 influences the levels of proteins affecting the growth of certain cancer cells," Dr Winteringham said.

"We will now work to find out whether this is the case for melanoma and ultimately hope to be able to pinpoint a target for correcting the defect that contributes to melanoma cell growth."

The grants set up by Yvonne Kirkbride honour her son Scott, a young Claremont golfer who lost his battle with melanoma cancer at age 27 in 2005.