



Although all patients with leukaemia are courageous, Ned and his family were special. Ned, his mother and brothers all embodied a kindness and inner strength that represented everything good in the world.

Ned's enduring legacy to fight leukaemia

At just 21 Ned Parnham had his whole life ahead of him, but in November 2018 the Melbourne University Environmental Science student was diagnosed with a rare form of Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (AML).

For 15 months Ned fought with tremendous strength, dignity and determination, enduring a stem cell transplant, clinical trials and chemotherapy but tragically in February this year Ned lost his battle.

"Ned had just re-enrolled in his studies following stem cell treatment when he sadly became unwell again," says Ned's mum Jennifer.

Through the experience of his own cancer treatment, and an already established love of science via his studies, Ned developed a keen interest in leukaemia treatment and research.

"We were so grateful that just before he passed away, his treating specialist Associate Professor Andrew Wei, was able to share with Ned how his blood would be used in research and trials."

Ned's blood will be stored indefinitely so that researchers around the world can work towards a cure for his type of cancer.

Ned's dedication to AML research will be remembered through his incredible decision to donate \$40,000 of his life insurance towards research at The Alfred Hospital, led by Associate Professor Wei. After Ned's passing, his family continued to honour his determination to help find a cure for AML, creating a GoFundMe campaign set up in his memory, raising an outstanding \$30,000.

Jennifer and Ned's two brothers plan on returning to The Alfred in the near future to meet the research team and learn more about the impact of Ned's legacy.

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**"All research begins with an idea."
- A/Prof Andrew Wei**

— Photo: Ned with his treating nursing staff at The Alfred

Ned made the extraordinary decision to donate his leukaemic cells for research and they have since been transplanted into host leukemia models with the potential for indefinite propagation to support future research. New drug combinations have already been tested in order to validate better treatments. Ned realised that although the results of such research would not lead to his cure, it might make a contribution to the lives of others like him.

All research begins with an idea. That idea is translated into a long series of experiments and clinical trials, with the hope that eventually a drug will be produced. If a drug is shown to extend life by one year and is delivered to 10,000 people then the equivalent of 10,000 life years could be gained. This hope is what motivates cancer researchers. Ned's generous donation will create the ideas and the means to promote future research. In this way, Ned has already made a difference.

**Associate Professor
Andrew Wei**