



MEDIA RELEASE

20 September 2004

\$400,000 microscope puts Liverpool doctors in the know

Patients with the possibility of a rare disease or condition now have access to the most sophisticated diagnostic equipment in the southern hemisphere.

The South Western Area Pathology Service (SWAPS), based at Liverpool Hospital, has installed a new FEI Morgagni electron microscope.

It is the first instrument of its type in Australia and in fact the southern hemisphere, employing a high degree of user-friendly computer control.

Dr Murray Killingsworth, senior hospital scientist, Electron Microscopy Laboratory, said the new generation microscope has been specifically designed for use in pathology and biomedical research where high specimen throughput must be balanced with high quality image production.

“Many diseases require electron microscopy for their diagnosis with our department examining about 160 kidney biopsies each year,” Dr Killingsworth said.

“Other cases requiring this form of technology include soft tissue tumours, skin diseases, respiratory diseases and rare disorders,” he said.

“Money is also saved as we are able to more thoroughly and quickly process biopsy specimens.

The \$380,000 instrument is named after Giovanni Morgagni, the famous 18th century Italian anatomist who at 79 published what is widely regarded as a pioneering work on pathology.

With a magnification range of 35x to 280,000x and resolution of structures as small as 4 Angstroms (4×10^{-10} metres) the instrument easily allows viewing of single cells, bacteria and even individual virus particles.

The microscope will also be used for research and teaching within the South Western Sydney Area Health Service. Others to benefit will be work experience students from local high schools who attend the laboratory each month.

Issued by Public Affairs, South Western Sydney Area Health Service 9828 5700.