



THE WALNUT

AUGUST 2019

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Group—ACT Region

Affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA)

Postal address: PO Box 650, Mawson ACT 2607

<https://prostate-cancer-support-act.net>



Next monthly meeting

Our next monthly meeting will be held at 7 pm on **Wednesday 21 August 2019**.

Our speaker will be Cathie O'Neill, Executive Director, Cancer



Ambulatory and Community Health Support at The Canberra Hospital. She will speak about developments at the Canberra Region Cancer Centre.

All are welcome to attend our regular monthly meetings and coffee mornings, including partners and carers. No notice is required. Simply come along and introduce yourself, or contact one of the people listed on page 2 of this newsletter.

Meetings of our support group are held on the third Wednesday of the month (except in December) at 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm. The usual location is Room 22, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce, ACT 2607.



Group members at the visit to the Icon Cancer Centre

President's Message

Our visit to the new Icon Cancer Centre in July was most informative and we were made to feel very welcome. Our thanks to all at the Centre for this great event. The Centre has wonderful facilities and many members have already attended the Centre and been impressed with it. There is more about our visit on pages 2 and 3.

In August Cathie O'Neill will speak about developments at the Canberra Region Cancer Centre at the Canberra Hospital. This will be a very informative and interesting session and I encourage as many as possible to come along and join us.

We will also be launching the Group's new website at our August meeting.

Our grateful thanks to the Holy Family School at Gowrie for again inviting us to their Father's Day fundraiser on 30 August and to Harness Racing ACT for inviting us to be their sponsored charity at their Twilight Racing event on 15 December. We are looking forward to both events.

John McWilliam

Appreciation

The Group recognises and expresses its appreciation for the support provided by: the PCFA, SHOUT staff, Harness Racing ACT, staff of the Australian Department of Human Services (Chief Technology Office), the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Holy Family School Gowrie, Paddywack Promotional Products, Residents' Social Club at The Grove, Ngunnawal and the many individuals who have assisted in our fund-raising activities over the past year.

Personal support

For general information, please call SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together) during normal office hours on (02) 6290 1984, and their staff will arrange for someone to contact you.

If you would like immediate advice, support or assistance, please contact one of the following two people:

President: John McWilliam
Phone: 0416 008 299
Email: president@prostate-cancer-support-act.net

Secretary: David Hennessy
Phone: (02) 6154 4274
Email: secretary@prostate-cancer-support-act.net

Next Coffee morning

10:00 am, Tuesday, 13 August at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, **Woden**.

Coffee mornings are held at 10:00 am on the second Tuesday of each month and alternate between the Woden and Jamison venues of the Canberra Southern Cross Club.



Dr Andrew Lee speaking to the Group

Visit to the new Icon Cancer Centre

Dr Andrew Lee, Dr Shaun Sae-Lieo and Jan Pulo provided an excellent evening for the 24 members and partners who attended this event on 17 July.

Dr Lee spoke about the role of radiotherapy in treating prostate cancer and how this had changed over the years. He also spoke about the radiotherapy facilities available at the Centre.

Radiation treatments discussed included:

- Intensely Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT- which is a high dose radiation);
- Stereotactic Radiation Therapy (SRT- lower dose for treating smaller tumours);
- Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT- which has advanced imaging and computer assistance for guiding radiation);
- Volume Modulated Arc Therapy (VMAT- external radiation that is phased through arcs and angles that focus on tumours thus reducing damage to non-tumour cells); and
- brachytherapy.

Dr Shaun Sae-Lieo and Jan Pulo then led groups through the chemotherapy ward (15 chairs for personal infusions) and the Linac Accelerator where X-Rays or accelerated electrons can be directed to internal tumours.

There were many questions after the presentation, including about proton beam therapy and the centre that is being established in Australia for this (although it is unlikely to be widely used in the treatment of prostate cancer because the priority will be to treat more difficult-to-treat cancers).

There was also mention of the benefits of a multi-disciplinary approach in the treatment of prostate cancer. Ask your specialist about this.

At the end of the discussion John McWilliam thanked all who had helped to arrange the visit, including Dr Lee, Dr Sae-Lieo, Jan Pulo and State Manager, Paul Fenton.

Isabella Gardens visit

At the request of the Isabella Gardens Retirement Village, John McWilliam, David Hennessy and Don Bradfield provided an information session on prostate cancer and prostate health to 57 residents on Sunday, 21 July.

Two residents, David Whitehorn and Gus Slattery, also related their own prostate cancer treatment

experiences. The involvement of David and Gus certainly helped to bring home the messages about early detection in the successful treatment of prostate cancer. A lot of interest was created.

The residents also raised funds for the Group.

Our thanks to all at the village for organising this event.



Support Group speakers (L to R), John McWilliam, David Hennessy and Don Bradfield



Resident speakers (L to R), David Whitehorn and Gus Slattery

Remember that you can always ask the Group to give a presentation to your work or social group



Community Conversations Forum

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) invites you and your friends to attend a free Community Conversations forum to discuss the latest research and management of prostate cancer.

DATE

Friday 20th September 2019

TIME

10:00am - 3:30pm

VENUE

Garvan Institute of Medical Research
384 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010

This is a free event with lunch and refreshments provided. Registration is essential.

Join the Forum for a unique opportunity to hear from leading clinicians, researchers and health professionals and share experiences with other men, partners and families impacted by prostate cancer.

To register and for further information go to www.pcfa.org.au/communityconversations.

FOLLOW US AND JOIN THE
#CommunityConversationsAus



Stay up-to-date by joining the PCFA Online Community

The PCFA Online Community is open to anyone who has been impacted by prostate cancer to share their experiences and connect with others. Through the Research Blog, PCFA Online Community members can also learn more about the latest prostate cancer research developments and findings.

The August 2019 edition of the *PCFA Online Community Digest* has articles on:

- Highlights of the 2019 ANZUP conference, i.e. clinicians who perform research and clinical trials. [Read article.](#)
- Apalutamide (a new drug that delays disease progression in men with advanced prostate cancer) improves survival times in men with metastatic prostate cancer when used with hormone therapy. [Read article.](#)
- Race as a risk factor for prostate cancer. [Read article.](#)
- Dust from the World Trade Center site may have affected the prostate glands of responders. [Read article.](#)

It is free and easy to become a member of the PCFA Online Community. You can sign up at:

<http://onlinecommunity.pcfa.org.au>.

August executive committee meeting

At its meeting on 7 August, the executive committee, among other things:

- considered the implications for the Group of changes to the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*, which came into effect on 1 July 2019;
- as a result of this consideration, the Committee:
 - formalised its policy on dispute resolution arrangements, most of which are already provided for under the Group's Constitution; and
 - agreed to review the Group's membership register and to check to ensure that it only includes people who have a continuing interest in being subscribed to the Group;
- noted that we actively need to develop a succession plan for the committee as some members no longer wish to remain on the committee or are only prepared to continue on the committee for one more year. Nominations for the committee from both men and women should be actively sought at this year's annual general meeting in September;
- noted arrangements that had been made for speakers at monthly meetings for the rest of 2019 and discussed options for the start of 2020;
- noted outreach activities that are planned (see 'Coming events' below) and progress on plans to ensure that awareness of the Group is promoted with medical specialists;
- noted arrangements that have been made for the auditing of the Group's accounts for 2019 and the tabling of the audited financial statements at the annual general meeting; and
- noted a number of other matters, including the planned launch of the Group's new website at the August meeting.

Coming events

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|--------------|--|
| 30 August | Fund raising barbecue at the Holy Family School's (Gowrie) Father's Day event. |
| 18 September | Annual General Meeting and monthly meeting. Speaker is physiotherapist, Maureen Bailey. |
| 16 October | Monthly meeting. Speaker is medical oncologist, Dr Ganes Pranavan. |
| 20 November | End-of-year informal meeting and celebration. |
| 15 December | Harness Racing ACT Twilight event with proceeds to the Group. As was the case last year, we will have a Christmas dinner at this event and it should again be a most enjoyable occasion and an opportunity for us all to socialise together. |

Borrowing items from the library

You can borrow items from the Group's library. There is a wide range of materials, from books to videos. Those who are interested in borrowing items from the library or finding out more about our collection can contact U.N. Bhati, email:

librarian@prostate-cancer-support-act.net

Articles and reports of interest

The following articles which have appeared recently on web sites or other sources may be of interest to members. Any opinions or conclusions expressed are those of the authors. See Disclaimer below.

Prostate cancer treatment protocols

This *Medscape* article (25 May 2018) provides treatment protocols for prostate cancer, including general treatment recommendations and those for localised prostate cancer, for recurrent disease, and for advanced or metastatic disease. It is well worth reading.

[Read the article](#) [free registration required].

Prostate cancer screening: a review of current recommendations

This review, reported in *Medscape* (27 July 2019), provides a synopsis of the background of prostate cancer screening, including risk factors, barriers, and disputed recommendations. Current evidence-based prostate cancer screening recommendations are presented and compared to previous guidelines. Finally, implications for practice are provided.

The review concludes that prostate cancer screening can assist with reducing rates of deaths associated with prostate cancer diagnoses and unnecessary ancillary testing. It argues that providers can be involved in discussing the topic with the patient individually through the shared decision-making process and decision aide, along with monitoring via active surveillance, to determine routine PSA testing.

[Read the article](#) [free registration required].

5 α -Reductase inhibitors associated with increased time to diagnosis and mortality in prostate cancer

5 α -reductase inhibitors (5-ARIs), which are used for the treatment of benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH) or an enlarged prostate (finasteride 5 mg and dutasteride, marketed in Australia as Proscar, Avodart and combination therapy with Tamulosin Duodart) and male pattern baldness (finasteride 1 mg, marketed in Australia as Propecia), appear to be associated with delayed prostate cancer

diagnosis and an increased mortality risk. This is according to a study of 80,875 men with prostate cancer, patients using 5-ARIs prior to diagnosis.

The study suggests that, where 5-ARIs are prescribed, their use needs to be carefully monitored to avoid late diagnosis of prostate cancer. In particular, PSA levels need to be carefully monitored and appropriate adjustments made in assessing them, because 5-ARIs reduce the production of PSA by stromal cells in BPH. To correct for this effect, men treated with a 5-ARIs must multiply their level by 2.0 for the first 2 years, by 2.3 for years 2 to 7, and after year 7, by 2.5. Where PSA levels increase, patients may need a biopsy.

[Read the article.](#)

Precision radiation leads to improved metastatic prostate cancer survival

A landmark Australian study indicates that fractionated stereotactic body radiotherapy, a precision radiation treatment, can delay treatment escalation in men with metastatic prostate cancer without leading to severe toxicity. This treatment used radiation in high doses to target small areas of cancer while sparing healthy tissue.

For the trial — the world's largest and first to include patients with up to five metastatic lesions, 199 men were treated using stereotactic body radiation therapy at Melbourne's Icon Cancer Centre.

After two years of follow-up, nearly 52% of men still did not need treatment escalation to initial androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) for ADT-naïve patients, ADT recommencement or chemotherapy for those with prior history of the therapy or palliative radiotherapy.

In addition, around 23% of these men had a PSA reading below baseline and no late grade 3 (severe) toxicities were reported during follow-up, which reached four years for some patients.

Further, while the number of oligometastatic lesions considered amenable to treatment remained contentious, researchers reported that the data showed treating 4-5 synchronous prostate cancer lesions was just as effective as treating 1-3.

[Read the article.](#)

Note: One of the study's authors was Canberra-based Dr Hodo Haxhimolla.



November Foundation News

This radical new treatment could help thousands of men...

This week, a Movember-funded study revealed which men are most likely to benefit from a radical new 'search and destroy' treatment for advanced prostate cancer.

A team of scientists at the Institute of Cancer Research in London have found that the amount

of a protein molecule PSMA (prostate-specific membrane antigen) detected on a cancer cell, along with changes in a man's DNA, could help doctors predict how they will respond to this new class of treatments known as PSMA radiotherapy.

This breakthrough, made possible by you, "is a significant step forward in the field of personalised medicine", says the Movember Foundation's Global Director of Biomedical Research Dr. Mark Buzza.

Since 2011, the Movember Foundation has supported 17 projects globally that help to build evidence around the utility of PSMA-based technology. In Australia, more than \$5.8 million has been invested into four ground-breaking trials involving the use of PSMA PET/CT imaging for the detection of recurrent tumours, and looking at whether theranostic PSMA is safe for men whose disease has spread.

[TELL ME MORE](#)

From the editor

If you are aware of news, products, publications, web sites, services or events that may be of interest to members of the group, we would like to be informed of them.

If you have received this newsletter indirectly and would like to be emailed a copy direct, or if you would like to add any of your friends or carers to our distribution list, or if you no longer wish to receive copies of the newsletter, please send an email to:

president@prostate-cancer-support-act.net.

John McWilliam

Disclaimer

From time to time in our newsletters we provide information about developments in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, research articles, documents, audiovisual products, presentations and other interesting materials. However, the Group does not have the medical expertise required to make an informed evaluation of the conclusions and recommendations presented in such materials, and we have not verified such conclusions and recommendations through appropriately qualified medical professionals. The information presented in this newsletter must not be interpreted as being endorsed or recommended by the Group. Any recommendations made in such materials may not be applicable in your case. Before implementing any recommendations made in the materials that are reported, it is essential that you obtain advice from appropriately qualified medical professionals. The view of the Group is that no two prostate cancer cases are alike and that no single treatment option is better than any other in all cases. While the information in this newsletter should be of interest, there is no substitute for getting informed medical advice from your own GP, specialists and other medical professionals.