Proudly affiliated with Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

# THE WALNUT

March 2023

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Group–ACT Region

Postal address: C/- SHOUT, Building 1, Collett Place, Pearce ACT 2607

https://pcsg-act.org.au

## Monthly Group Meeting, 6:30pm for 7 pm, Wednesday 15 February

This meeting will be held at our usual location at the Pearce Community Centre, Building 2, Collett Street, Pearce.

Our speaker has yet to be confirmed.

## Coffee morning, 10:00 am Tuesday 14 March 2023

Our next coffee morning is at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden.

## PBS news

The drug LYNPARZA has recently been listed on the PBS for use by prostate cancer patients. Instead of costing $6,500 a month, the medication is now available for $42.50 per month, $6.80 for pensioners.

Lynparza is an oral medication for certain types of cancer. It aims to to shrink the tumour and control its growth for as long as possible

## Survivorship essentials: Your personal care plan

If you or a family member have prostate cancer, you might benefit from having a survivorship plan to summarise information about your diagnosis, treatment and ongoing care. You can take your plan with you to health care appointments so that those involved in your current and future care have a clear picture of your diagnosis and treatment.

To make the most of your plan, you can connect with a PCFA Specialist Nurse by calling 1800 22 00 99 or emailing Telenurse@pcfa.org.au. Alternatively, you can ask a member of your healthcare team to help you with keeping it up to date.

# From the President

## Call for a national awareness campaign

As most of you would be aware, I am staunch advocate for early detection and the need for a national campaign to make men over the age of 40 aware of the need to know their prostate cancer risk factors.

As a male diagnosed at the age of 46 and making informed decisions at the appropriate time, I have been able to enjoy another 19 years of good health and few side effects as a result of my prostate cancer.

I would like all men to be proactive in managing their prostate health.

I have drafted a letter to the Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care calling for a federally funded campaign seeking to ensure that men over 40 are aware of their prostate cancer risk factors and the need for appropriate monitoring of these risks. This follows up on a speech I gave at the parliamentary barbecue last November.

I will be emailing all members a copy of the letter. If you support this, I will be asking that you to fill in and send the letter of support to the minister.

We can't undo our journeys or some of what we have endured.

I believe however we have the power and opportunity to help those who will inevitably follow in our paths by greatly improving their health outcomes through early detection.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Greg McRoberts

Our speaker at our February meeting was Associate Professor Hodo Haxhimolla.

The large turnout of 27 members was indicative of the interest shown in A/Prof Haxhimolla's presentation.

Most of the session was taken up in responding to the very many questions of members. Among the topics of interest that were covered were:

- A study that A/Prof Haxhimolla is conducting, comparing the results from regular and fusion biopsies. A fusion biopsy is a procedure that combines the pictures from an MRI scan and an ultrasound to create a detailed 3-D image of the prostate. It makes it easier to see an abnormal area of tissue in order to guide the biopsy needle into the abnormal area. As a part of the study, the professor is performing both regular and fusion biopsies on his patients as part of the same operation. The results of the study have yet to be collated and analysed.

- Advice that A/Prof Haxhimolla is working closely with Dr Patrick Bowden, radiation oncologist with the Icon Cancer Centre in Melbourne on the use of stereotactic ablative body radiotherapy (SABR) treatment of metastatic prostate cancer. We had an interesting presentation on this treatment from Dr Paul Conway from the Icon Cancer Centre in October 2022 (see summary in the November issue of *The Walnut*). Read further information on SABR.

- Improvements in radiation therapy, which now have reduced adverse side-effects (including through the use of a barrier gel between the prostate and the rectum).

- Improvements in targeting lesions in the prostate through gold seeds that mark the location of the lesion and are unaffected by a patient's movement (e.g. breathing)..

- His hope for the future is that immunotherapy will become the gold standard for treating prostate cancer.

# The Combined Prostate Cancer Support Groups of Rural New South Wales Conference
# 10 to 12 March 2023
# Dubbo, NSW

The Combined Prostate Cancer Supports Groups of Rural NSW is again holding a conference.

Our Group was represented at the previous conference and it was well organised. We would be delighted if some members were available to attend and represent the Group again.

This is a great opportunity to meet people from other support groups and to learn what they are doing. There are also excellent specialist speakers on the many aspects of prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment.

It is also an opportunity to visit Dubbo, where attractions include the Taronga Western Plains Zoo, the Royal Flying Doctor Experience and the Old Dubbo Gaol.

Speakers at the conference include:

- Alicia Bell, Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurse
- Dr. Gordon O'Neil, urologist
- Dr Bala Indrajit, urologist
- Dr Pat Horsley, radiation oncologist or one of his team,
- Jennifer Walter, Senior Medicine Technologist Radiation Oncology, PET-CT, Medicare, IPTAAS
- Dr Florian Honeyball, medical oncologist
- Natalie Mcconochie, physiotherapist, pelvic floor exercises
- Dr Dean Fisher bowel cancer
- Mr Andrew Boog  All things legal

A copy of the registration form is attached to this newsletter.

**Registrations close on 1 March 2023** and should be sent to Elizabeth Allen (0408 682 968) at john.elizabethallen@bigpond.com.

# 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.

## The new prostate cancer blood test with 94 per cent accuracy

Researchers have helped develop a new blood test to detect prostate cancer with greater accuracy than current methods. New research shows that the Prostate Screening EpiSwitch (PSE) blood test is 94 per cent accurate -- beating the currently used prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test. The research team says that the new test shows significant potential as an accurate and rapid cancer screening diagnostic.

Read the article in Science Daily,
7 February 2023.

## Developing therapies for treatment-resistant prostate cancer

Investigators from Cedars-Sinai Cancer have identified an investigational therapeutic approach that could be effective against treatment-resistant prostate cancer. Results of their Phase II clinical trial, published in the peer-reviewed journal *Molecular Therapy*, have led to a larger, multi-centre trial that will soon be underway.

Read the article in Science Daily,
2 November 2022

## New combined therapy helps extend lives of men with prostate cancer

Practice-changing research from Cedars-Sinai Cancer shows that a combination of androgen deprivation therapy -- a commonly used hormone injection -- plus pelvic lymph node radiation, kept nearly 90% of clinical trial patients' prostate cancer at bay for five years. The findings were published in the peer-reviewed journal *The Lancet*.

The study also shows that patients with prostate cancer who didn't receive androgen deprivation therapy -- and who did not receive pelvic lymph node radiation -- had a five-year survival of 70%.

Read the article in Science Daily,
26 May 2022

## Diets higher in plants associated with lower risk of prostate cancer progression and recurrence

An analysis of data from the Cancer of the Prostate Strategic Urologic Research Endeavor (CaPSURE) study has shown that individuals with early-stage prostate cancer who reported the highest amounts of plant-based foods in their diets had lower risks of prostate cancer progression and recurrence. Cancer progression is when the cancer continues to grow and/or spread. Recurrence is when the cancer comes back after treatment.

Read the article in Cancer.Net,
16 February 2023

## Oncology breakthrough reveals better treatments for prostate cancer patients

Paving the way for success in prostate cancer treatment, TROG Cancer Research is helping to reduce common side effects and the length of treatment with the TROG 15.01 SPARK Trial.

The clinical trial, led by Professor Paul Keall and Professor Jarad Martin, proposes the use of kilovoltage intrafraction monitoring (KIM) alongside stereotactic body radiotherapy (SBRT) to provide more accurate results when targeting cancer cells.

For prostate cancer patients, the TROG 15.01 SPARK Trial presents the opportunity for larger doses of radiation therapy to be given at each treatment session. Ultimately, this means that the number of treatments needed are significantly reduced.

This trial is investigating the use of new technology to improve the accuracy of

radiotherapy for prostate cancer patients, reducing treatment from 40 visits to just five.

The KIM technology allows images of a tumour to be taken in real-time while the treatment is occurring. The advantage is it enables strategies such as patient shifting or beam shifting during treatment, which improves the accuracy of the treatment and potentially reduces the patient's side effects.

Read more about the trial.

# 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@pcsg-act.org.au

# 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: Greg McRoberts, president@pcsg-act.org.au 0413 480 864
Secretary: John McWilliam, secretary@pcsg-act.org.au 0416 008 299

# Appreciation

Thanks to all those supporting the Group's fund raising activities, in particular, Harness Racing ACT, the Canberra Southern Cross Club, ACT Masters Hockey, Chartertech ACT, Paddywack Promotional Products and SAC Tyrepower, Belconnen.

**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:
secretary@pcsg-act.org.au

**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.

# *Combined Prostate Cancer Support Groups of Rural New South Wales*

Conference Committee
Chairman, Kerry White
Combined Group
M 0437194810

Secretary, Elizabeth Allen, OAM
Combined group; M 0408682968
Email.
john.elizabethallen@bigpond.com

## Registration form for the Dubbo conference
## 10th – 12th March, 2023

| | |
|---|---|
| Name: | |
| Address: | |
| | |
| Home phone: | Mobile: |
| Email: | |
| Support Group: | |
| Motel where you are staying: | |
| How are you travelling? *(please tick)* | □ Plane □ Train □ Automobile □ Shanks pony or □ Boat |
| Special dietary Requirements: | |

**Proposed program Proposed program**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Friday** – Registration of attendance the RSL Club 12.00 noon – 4 pm | | **Meal attendance** |
| **Friday Evening** – At RSL Club, Brisbane Street, Dubbo 6.pm. | ☐ | Friday Dinner |
| **Saturday** – registration at the club from 8 – 8.30 am | ☐ | Saturday Morning tea |
| **Saturday** – Conference program of speakers from 8.30 – 4.30pm<br>Saturday afternoon– Time? Men's gathering with coffee<br>Saturday afternoon – Time? Carers High Tea<br>**Saturday night** – Dinner at the RSL Club 6.30 dinner<br>**Sunday** – commence 8.30? time to be confirmed – finish 12.30/1pm | ☐<br>☐<br>☐<br>☐<br>☐ | Saturday Lunch<br>Men's afternoon coffee<br>Carers High Tea<br>Saturday Dinner<br>Sunday Morning tea |

**RSVP to Conference Secretary Elizabeth Allen by 1st March, 2023**

Phone: 0408682968 Email: john.elizabethallen@bigpond.com
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