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Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

THE WALNUT

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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

From the President
Giving back

Welcome to 2024.

With a fresh year ahead of us, I think it represents a great opportunity to reflect on our journeys and how we can make a difference moving forward.

Each of us has been touched in our own personal way by our prostate cancer journeys.

Please never underestimate the difference we can make to others by being prepared to share this knowledge.

Your presence at either monthly meetings or coffee mornings is an opportunity to speak with new members of our Group and perhaps make a difference to their journeys.

Just the fact that these people can see you being active and participating in social functions gives a sense of optimism for their own outcomes.

Perhaps this year we need to look at getting back to the basics of doing information stalls at key events.

I am very blessed that in my job I am able to see men coming in for either biopsies or surgery. When I ask them how are they going, they usually reply that they are nervous and tentative about their outcomes.

My reply is simple. I place a hand on their shoulder, ask them to look at me and say you've got this. You are looking at a man with a 20 year journey and here I am, alive and not only a prostate cancer survivor but more importantly a thriver.

We get caught up in our day-to-day routines but I would ask you all to make 2024 a year where you stop and give back by showing your support to the Group and fellow members. Words of support and kind acts can make all the difference for those struggling in their journey.

Let's all make this year, a year where we make a difference.

Spread the message:

Male? Over 40? Do you know your prostate cancer risk factors?

Greg McRoberts
President

Coming Events

Coffee morning, 10:00 am Tuesday 9 January 2024

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

Come along and share your experiences with men who have been recently diagnosed with prostate cancer or who are continuing their prostate cancer treatment journeys.

Group monthly meeting, 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm, Wednesday 17 January

Our January Group meeting is being held sat our usual location – the Community Room at the Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce.

Our speaker for this meeting has yet to be confirmed.

ACT Seniors Card Directory

The ACT Seniors Card Directory for 2023–25 is now available. The ACT Seniors Card offers discounts on goods and services from businesses across Canberra, as well as ACT Government concessions.

Click this link to download the Directory.

Executive Committee

Members are welcome to attend meetings of the Executive Committee. If you would like to do this, please contact: secretary@pcsg-act.org.au.

The next executive committee meeting will be held on Thursday 8 February 2024.

PCFA News

This information is taken from PCFA newsletters and press releases

Federal Government funding for PCFA's Prostate Cancer Specialist Nursing Service

The Federal Government has announced an investment of $35.4m over the next four years in PCFA's Prostate Cancer Specialist Nursing Service.

The funding will support the employment of 86 Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurses around Australia, helping to bridge the gap in care between city and country areas.

Combined, PCFA's Commonwealth and community-funded Prostate Cancer Specialist Nursing Service now comprises 110 nurses at 90 different locations nationwide.

Importantly, the funding package will give 3 in 4 newly diagnosed men access to a specialist nurse close to home, which is a game-changing investment in saving lives.

PBS listing of NUBEQA

On 16 November 2023 the then Acting Prime Minister Richard Marles and Health Minister Mark Butler announced the PBS listing of NUBEQA (darolutamide) for men with metastatic hormone sensitive prostate cancer.

Around 5,000 men are expected to benefit from the listing each year, saving $42,000 in annual prescription costs.

PCFA led a national advocacy campaign to secure the PBS listing of this life-extending medication.

Prostate and continence: A guide for men undergoing prostate surgery

The Continence Foundation of Australia has released a guide on continence for men undergoing prostate surgery.

If you've experienced urinary incontinence related to prostate cancer surgery, you may find this guide helpful.

The guide covers topics including exercising your pelvic floor muscles, drinking well, eating a healthy diet, and exercise.

The guide also looks at other ways to manage incontinence, including pads, condom drainage, and maintaining good skin care.

Download a copy of the guide.

Australia's first living lab to help beat prostate cancer

Australian researchers are among the first scientists in the world to establish a living lab to help find new treatments and therapies for deadly forms of prostate cancer.

The ground-breaking project, funded by PCFA, aims to help end Australian deaths from the disease.

The lab will expand on the capabilities of the Australian Prostate Cancer BioResource, a national collaboration currently managed by Monash University.

The existing biobank will be enriched by the inclusion of specimens and data from individuals with advanced metastatic disease, and will for the first time include unique collections of patient models of prostate cancer. These resources will then be available for access by prostate cancer researchers around the country.

Read more.

Debra Garroun retires from PCFA

Over the past several years, we have been fortunate to have had the support of Debra Garroun at PCFA. Debra was always very responsive to our needs. So it is with some regret that Debra has now retired from PCFA. We would like to publicly thank Debra for all she was done to support groups such as ours and wish her all the best in her retirement.

WHAT THE PROGRAM IS

Taking unused leftover male pads/continence products from men who do not need them anymore and giving them to men in need.

NEED PADS?

Call ahead to check availability and pick-up / appointment times **1300 006 438**

HAVE LEFTOVER / EXTRA PADS?

Drop off any leftover or extra pads to the below locations

INITIATIVE PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

MENS HEALTH DOWNUNDER

Southside Physio

MENS HEALTH DOWNUNDER DEAKIN

Suite B3 Canberra
Specialist Centre
161 Strickland Crescent
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Monday - Thursday
9am - 4pm

SOUTHSIDE PHYSIO WODEN

Unit 3 - Level 1 Canberra
Health Point Building
16 Wilbow Street
PHILLIP ACT 2606

Monday - Thursday
7am - 7pm
Friday 7am - 3pm

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP ACT

Shout Building Pearce
Community Centre
3 Collett Place
PEARCE ACT 2607

At coffee mornings
or meetings

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.

Studies help explain why some prostate cancers become resistant to hormone therapy

Science Daily (4 December 2023) reports on two new studies led by researchers from the UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center that give insight into how cells use energy to influence the way prostate tumours survive and grow. These advancements can help to explain why some prostate cancers become resistant to hormone therapy, the most commonly used treatment for men with advanced stages of the disease.

The new studies demonstrate a need to further study the link between metabolism and treatment resistance or treatment response. Understanding and controlling these changes could potentially help develop better treatments for prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer report card now available

A prostate cancer 'report card' which outlines the outcomes of various treatments is now available to help prostate cancer patients and their families make more informed choices.

f you've been diagnosed with prostate cancer, you will know that there are many treatment approaches available to you, including:

- surgery;
- external beam radiotherapy;
- low dose rate brachytherapy;
- hormonal treatment;
- active surveillance; and
- watchful waiting.

The report card breaks down each treatment type and evaluates the survival, cancer recurrence, secondary treatment and impacts on urinary, bowel and sexual function for different prostate cancer treatments, based on the experiences of men previously diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Knowing which treatment is best will depend on several factors – including aggressiveness and extent of spread of the cancer, as well as your fitness or presence of other disease.

Read more and download the report card.

Potential new treatment for prostate cancer receives $5M funding boost

A newly funded Monash University-led research program will investigate the potential of Chimeric Antigen Receptor T (CAR T) cell therapy, previously only effective in blood cancers, for the treatment of prostate cancer.

A multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional team of researchers has been awarded a $5 million Synergy Grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to develop highly-tailored treatment regimens for prostate cancer, using next-generation CAR T cell therapy.

CAR T cell therapy uses the body's own immune system T cells and has transformed treatment for some blood cancers. However, CAR T cell therapy could also be effective in solid cancers, including prostate cancer, based on recent evidence published by members of the new Synergy team.

Read more.

Research supports early use of LuPSMA in prostate cancer

Peter Mac researchers have shown LuPSMA therapy can be safely used as a first-line treatment for men with newly diagnosed prostate cancer, potentially revolutionising treatment for aggressive forms of this cancer.

LuPSMA is an infusion containing

radioactive Lutetium-177 which is attracted to PSMA (Prostate Specific Membrane Antigen) on prostate cancer cells wherever they are in the body, killing these cells.

In the LuTectomy study, men with newly diagnosed, localised prostate cancer received upfront radiation treatment with LuPSMA before surgical removal of their prostate. The study showed LuPSMA therapy did not increase the technical difficulty of later surgery or add to risk of post-operative complications, and was therefore safe to give to men ahead of prostate removal.

The researchers hope that this new application of LuPSMA therapy, before surgery, will ultimately cure more patients.

Read more.

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.