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Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

THE WALNUT

March 2024

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

Coming Events

Coffee morning, 10:00 am Tuesday 12 March 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 20 March 2024

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

Our speaker is accredited practising dietician, Maddie Ferguson, from Southside Physio.

President's Message

World Cancer Day

This year for World Cancer Day we had the opportunity to participate in a week long event at the Canberra Region Cancer Centre (CRCC), with four-hour sessions offered to ACT groups involved in cancer support.

On the Monday morning I represented our group, handing out information to those coming into the centre and responding to questions.

It was also a great opportunity to network with other participants and discuss the work that they do in our community to support people on their cancer journeys.

Many thanks to the ACT Cancer Council for organising and co-ordinating the event.

Webinar for GPs

To help improve the early detection and treatment of prostate cancer in men, we are working with the Capital Health Network on delivering a webinar for GPs later this year. We will keep you informed about progress with this initiative.

New Cancer Wellbeing Centre

We recently met with Canberra Health Services to receive an update on the planned Wellbeing Centre at the CRCC. This is expected to open in July/August. We hope to hold a Group meeting there once it has opened and later to be involved in programs at the Centre.

Greg McRoberts
President

Our February Meeting

There were 19 members and partners at our February Group meeting—another good attendance, with most members remaining to have a chat and share refreshments.

Our speaker was Assistant Professor Joe Northey, Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Canberra. He was supported by PhD student Alanah Pike. They are part of the 'Active Brain' Research Group at the university.

A/Prof Northey spoke about a clinical trial that is being conducted, which is aimed at understanding the effectiveness, feasibility, and acceptability of a combined physical and cognitive intervention to improve brain health and cognitive function of men affected by prostate cancer receiving androgen deprivation therapy (ADT). The trial is being undertaken in conjunction with researchers from the Australian National University, Flinders University and the University of Melbourne. It is being funded by the World Cancer Research Fund and Cancer Australia. Our President, Greg McRoberts, is on the steering committee.

The target group for the study is males over the age of 18 who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer and who are currently receiving primary ADT for either metastatic or non-metastatic hormone-sensitive prostate cancer.

The study aims to provide much-needed information on the experiences of men affected by prostate cancer, to provide targeted supportive care interventions to optimise brain health and well-being.

This study is part of other research that the university is conducting into the role of exercise and brain health.

In children it is clear that exercise helps to prime the brain and make it more 'elastic' or ready to learn. It does this by pumping more blood to the brain, with hormones that also promote brain health. This finding indicates that it is vital that schools should include exercise and physical activity in the curriculum. It also suggests that exercise and physical activity could usefully form a part of approaches to dealing with

disruptive behaviour displayed by some children.

In working age adults physical activity in occupational settings helps to reduce stress.

In older age people physical activity has a range of benefits for the brain, besides the well-known cardiac benefits. For example, there is consistent evidence that being more physically active can protect against age-related declines to cognitive function.

In older people, for brain health, exercise involving a moderate level of activity is recommended for those who are able to do this. In doing this exercise, a person should be able to hold a conversation with other people at the same time.

Where a person has mobility issues, some level of activity is always better than none. For example, walking to the end of a driveway or down a walkway (if necessary, with a walking frame) may be all that the person can manage at first.

Working harder is not always better! Exercising while doing another task, such as having a conversation, promotes brain health. Exercising in a social setting, for example, with family or friends or in a walking group, has also been shown to be good for brain health.

For cardiac health in older people, resistance training to build muscle strength is highly recommended.

The study is being conducted at the Wellness Centre located at the Icon Cancer Centre at the university.

Participants receive pre- and post-intervention testing by qualified exercise physiologists.

Alanah Pike demonstrated one of the tasks that participants undertake. It involves pedalling on an exercise bike while also completing a task on a monitor. One of our members tried it out and quickly worked out what he had to do.

In addition to the exercise facility at the Icon Cancer Centre, more generalised exercise physiology support is available through the University's Health Hub.

Research participants for the study are still needed and further information about the study and what is involved is shown in the flyer on page 4.

Further information about the study and the university's health clinics can be found using the following links:

INFORMATION ON STUDY

UC HEALTH CLINICS

Alanah Pike also works at Clinic 88, which provides exercise physiologist-led therapy. Referrals are not required.

Research Participants Needed!

We are looking for men with **prostate cancer** to participate in a research project which aims to understand the effect of physical and cognitive training on brain health and cognition.

Who can participate?

Males over the age of 18, diagnosed with prostate cancer and currently receiving primary Androgen Deprivation Therapy (ADT) for either metastatic or nonmetastatic hormone-sensitive prostate cancer.

To be included, you must also meet the following criteria:

- Have had at least one dose of ADT in the last 6 months, with life expectancy of >12 months
- no chemotherapy or radiation within the last 3 months
- not currently receiving steroids equivalent to >10 mg of prednisolone a day
- no opioid-based medication within the last 28 days

What is involved?

- Eight weeks of fully supervised physical and cognitive training
  - (2x ~1hour sessions per week each)
- Pre- and post- intervention testing including:
  - Blood test at a pathology clinic
  - In person questionnaires
  - Cognitive and physical fitness assessments

Participants will receive a $360 gift card upon completion of the study

For further information, scan the QR code or contact the study team on
prostatebrainhealth@canberra.edu.au | 0405 645 139
or Professor Ben Rattray
via Ben.Rattray@canberra.edu.au

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR SPORT & EXERCISE

ACTIVE BRAIN research group

This project is approved by the University of Canberra Human Research Ethics Committee (approval #11955)
This project is registered as a clinical trial: ACTRN12623000767606.

PCFA News

This information is taken from PCFA newsletters, press releases and the PCFA website

PCFA Vodcast: Focal Therapy with Professor Phillip Stricker AO

Each year more than 21,000 Australian men will be newly diagnosed with prostate cancer that has not yet spread beyond the prostate. The latest PCFA vodcast on Focal Therapy is led by one of Australia's national and international pioneers, Professor Phillip Stricker AO. Watch to see how focal therapy can, for some men, offer a treatment option that ablates prostate cancer tumour without damaging surrounding nerves and tissues.

Watch now

Your one-stop-shop: PCFA's new Survivorship Toolkit

PCFA's new Survivorship Toolkit web app supports men at every stage of the prostate cancer journey, from diagnosis to recovery and beyond. Around 250,000 Australian men will benefit from this one-stop-shop for information on diagnosis, treatment options, side effect management, health and wellbeing, and life after prostate cancer. Importantly, it gives our community direct connection to PCFA nurses and specialist care. Visit the website below and share across your networks.

Access the Survivorship Toolkit

Benefits of peer support and social networks following a prostate cancer diagnosis

Coping with a diagnosis of prostate cancer can be tough. Uncertainty about what lies ahead can bring a raft of complex emotions. Fear, anger, confusion just to name a few.

Seeking out peer support has many potential benefits. Research suggests that this form of support helps people to feel less alone and more connected. It also enables the sharing of information about treatment, managing treatment side effects and hopefulness.

Read the article

PCFA's Life Force Program

PCFA's Life Force Program aims to raise awareness of prostate cancer in workplaces and communities across Australia and encourage more men to take action to improve their health outcomes.

PCFA can organise a presentation by a trained PCFA representative for you and your team, giving you access to information, materials, and support to help save lives.

Find out more

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.

Being active reduces the risk of prostate cancer

Following on from our February meeting which dealt with physical activity and brain health, it is useful to report on a 2019 University of Bristol study on physical activity and its effect on prostate cancer.

The study, published in the *International Journal of Epidemiology* [5 December 2019], was led by the University of Bristol and co-funded by World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) and Cancer Research UK (CRUK). It found that people with the variation in their DNA sequence that makes them more likely to be active, had a 51 per cent reduced risk of prostate cancer than people who did not have this particular variation.

Importantly, the findings relate to overall physical activity, not just intense exercise.

WCRF's own evidence had already shown that being active can reduce the risk of bowel, breast and womb cancer, but the evidence of physical activity on prostate cancer was limited.

But this large study, which used genetics as a proxy measurement for physical activity, showed that being active may in fact have a large impact on prostate cancer risk.

Read the report in *Science Daily*.

Blood test distinguishes neuroendocrine subtype of advanced prostate cancer

Science Daily [10 January 2024] reports that researchers at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the University of Trento, Italy, have developed a blood test that can reliably detect neuroendocrine prostate cancer (NEPC) and differentiate it from castration-resistant prostate cancer-adenocarcinoma (CRPC-adeno).

Approximately 10-15% of patients with metastatic prostate cancer develop NEPC. The transition involves a shift from cancer cells that are dependent on hormones called androgens (CRPC) to cancer cells that no longer even recognise androgens.

NEPC is currently diagnosed using a biopsy of tumour tissue from a metastatic tumour site. Yet, it isn't always clear to clinicians when to do a biopsy.

The researchers successfully identified patients with NEPC in two clinical trials based on pathology reports. It also identified patients who had not been diagnosed with NEPC yet had signs of a transition to NEPC in their pathology reports.

The researchers would now like to determine if their test can help predict which patients respond to certain prostate cancer treatments, including precise treatments that target neuroendocrine prostate cancer.

Read the *Science Daily* article.

Diet, nutrition, physical activity and prostate cancer

The World Cancer Research Fund International is a not-for-profit organisation that leads and unifies the network of cancer charities with a global reach, dedicated to the prevention of cancer through diet, weight and physical activity. It has published a report on diet, nutrition, physical activity and prostate cancer (2024, updated 2018).

Read the report.

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.