



Prostate Cancer
Foundation
of Australia

PROSTATE SUPPORTER

The newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support
and Action Groups of South Australia

AUGUST 2008

<http://www.prostate.org.au>

Finger fun to provide serious funds



A novel fund-raising idea by a local radio station will not only obtain money for necessary research, but also spread the message about prostate cancer to a wider audience.

ADELAIDE radio station Mix102.3 has set itself a serious challenge to raise both funds and awareness of prostate cancer – it aims to sell 30,000 finger buns in memory of 3000 men who died from the disease in 2006.

The station is therefore asking listeners to get off their buns and get on board the Mix102.3 Finger Bun Blitz, to help raise necessary funds for the prevention and treatment of prostate cancer in South Australia.

With the added promotional benefit of helping to draw focus on the ProstateSA Blue Ball on August 9, Mix102.3 has joined forces with Balfours bakery for the Finger Bun Blitz

Listeners can show their support for prostate cancer

sufferers and their families by buying Mix102.3 Finger Buns from the station on Wednesday August 6 – the ideal office morning tea snack or family treat that is also going to help a worthy cause.

The cost is \$8 for a pack of six finger buns, or \$15 for two packs, with all proceeds going to prostate cancer research.

To order your yummy Mix102.3 Finger Buns, simply fax the special order form that can be downloaded from the station website – www.mix1023.com.au – and then send it to 8300 1040, or call the station's Finger Bun Hotline on 8305 1313.

Pre-orders for finger buns will be available for collection from Mix102.3 reception desk at 201 Tynte St, North Adelaide, on Wednesday August 6 from 7am. Payment is by cash or credit card.

This is a fabulous initiative from new prostate cancer supporters Mix102.3 and Balfours Bakery.

Funds raised from the Mix102.3 Finger Bun Blitz will be presented to ProstateSA during the Blue Ball on Saturday August 9.

For ticket inquiries to the ball, please call The Blue Ball hotline on 8291 4260 or visit www.prostatesa.org.au



in brief...

EXTENDING OUR CONDOLENCES - AND GREAT THANKS

Mrs Dianne Haynes recently rang the Adelaide Support Group to inform that her husband Leon Haynes had passed away in May, and that her daughter would send a donation to the group in her father's memory. A cheque for \$100 duly arrived from Menette Pty Ltd, which is greatly appreciated support.

CONTRIBUTIONS to these newsletters from all Support Groups and members are welcomed; send items and images by email to prostate-news@fosterhill.com.au

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99
or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

**COMING
EVENTS****ACTION GROUP
AUGUST 12 AGM AND
GENERAL MEETING**

The next Prostate Cancer Action Group meeting will feature the annual general meeting, plus the normal monthly meeting to follow. This will be held in the upstairs meeting room, Cancer Council SA building, 202 Greenhill Road, Eastwood at 5.30pm on August 12th. Enter via the back stairs. New members are most welcome.

NOVEMBER – The inaugural Australian Prostate Cancer Conference (and Men's Health Forum) will be conducted from Saturday November 15 to Monday November 17. The conference will be held in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Royal Pines Resort, on the Gold Coast.

ALSO, get ready to grow a Mo in November to help raise funds for prostate cancer research.

• For more information about the Action Group, visit the South Australian Prostate Cancer Action Group's dedicated website, with detailed archives containing its newsletters, at <http://www.pcagsa.org.au>

Increasing awareness through more events

The Prostate Cancer Action Group is planning for a busy conclusion to this year's workload, as Jeff Roberts reports.

TWO awareness evenings are being organised before the end of this year, and the Prostate Cancer Action Group is looking for increased assistance from members to ensure their success.

One of these events may be conducted by ProstateSA, with the Action Group providing assistance. A probable date is soon after the Prostate Cancer Call-In, which will take place on Thursday September 11.

There is also the possibility of an awareness evening at Murray Bridge in October.

At this stage, no date has been confirmed for either event.

The Action Group became involved in these types of prostate cancer awareness events about seven years ago, following receipt of a State Government grant.

The Action Group developed a format for awareness presentations and has since been involved in presenting 24 events. Three of these were organised and sponsored by the Cancer Council SA and ProstateSA, with our group providing assistance.

The event format usually includes presenting a urologist as the key speaker. If the event is in a rural area, the district's visiting urologist is approached.

Another speaker is also featured, emphasising the important subject of diet and lifestyle choices, and two



Prostate Cancer Call-In to stimulate inquiries

THE 2008 National Prostate Cancer Call-in will be conducted on Thursday September 11, with Cancer Council SA taking calls from 6pm to 9pm.

For the cost of a local telephone call, anyone can reach the Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 and ask questions of urologists and prostate care nurses who will be answering calls. Callers will be encouraged to enquire about all aspects of prostate cancer, from risk factors, early detection and treatment explanations to support options. They may also be interested in speaking to a Cancer Connect volunteer with an experience of prostate cancer.

Callers will also be given a variety of options to gather information and support available to all people affected by prostate cancer. For further information, visit www.prostatehealth.org.au

Action Group members speak as survivors of the disease. We also seek assistance from local health centres and hospitals.

It is crucial that sufficient funding is available to promote these events properly.

Attendances at awareness presentations over the past seven years have totalled nearly 2300 people, confirming the great need for this type

of presentation. Any support group members, partners and families are very welcome to attend these free public events.

If you are interested in more information, please phone Dean Wall (8390 3030), Jeff Roberts (8277 3424), or Ray Power (8356 9887) or visit the dedicated Action Group website at www.pcagsa.org.au

Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness: ADELAIDE GROUP

COMING EVENTS FOR 2008

The Adelaide Group meets on the third Monday of each month, in the Park View Room of the Fullarton Park Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd, Fullarton.

Monday August 18
Guest speaker will be urologist Denby Steele, who will give a lecture on brachytherapy and the latest developments in this field.

Monday September 15
Guest speaker Wendy Tuckwell, a medical physicist at the Dept of Medical Physics, Royal Adelaide Hospital, will complement Denby Steele's speech on brachytherapy by discussing the role of the medical physicist and different disease areas that can be treated with brachytherapy.

Monday October 20
Guest Speaker will be Dr Carole Pinnock, research scientist from the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital, who will give an illustrated lecture.

• For more information, visit the Adelaide Group's dedicated website at www.psaadelaide.org or contact group president Phil Davis (phone 8263 2217), or secretary Ian Fisk (phone 8296 3350).

The benefits of sharing problems with friends

Group meetings provide valuable help for members at all stages of their prostate cancer journey, as Phil Davis reports.

WHEN the Adelaide Group's July meeting launched into open discussion, I realised that those present comprised a mix of newly diagnosed people, others having difficulty adapting to post-treatment issues, through to people who had participated in trials in their endeavour to enhance and prolong life.

Also present were some wives and partners who are equally affected through uncertainty and anxiety. Yet despite the gravity of most situations, people were still wearing smiles and the room was full of happiness.

My role as chairperson of the group involves maintaining this happiness, enhancing the kinship between everyone, encouraging social connections and inviting open discussion. However, if my efforts failed, Plan B can prove equally effective: tears can provide a valuable outlet for a range of emotions, relieve stress – and are even healthy for our eyes.

One of the great benefits of a support and awareness group is helping people adapt to changes affecting them during their treatments. There isn't a cancer or a treatment that does not have side-effects, and the meetings give those present an opportunity to discuss the challenges and issues currently affecting them.

There are also good news stories, discussion concerning

treatments, problems, side-effects and coping strategies to improve daily living.

Discussion at the July meeting was assisted by the wisdom and knowledge of John Mayes and other longer term survivors.

Through sharing our experiences, I hope that members can allay their fears, helping to make the disease less intimidating and in some small way improve the psychological wellbeing of everyone present.

NEW DVD APPLAUDED

SEGMENTS of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia dual-DVD production, *A guide for men and their partners, living with Prostate Cancer*, were screened during the July meeting. The PCFA is to be congratulated for producing this relevant, extensive and informative discussion of prostate cancer.

The health professionals and prostate cancer survivors who assisted, contributed and appear on the DVDs are also to be applauded for sharing their knowledge and experiences.

This DVD should especially be viewed by newly diagnosed men and their partners, as when prostate cancer is initially diagnosed the enormity of the situation proves very difficult for most patients.

Also, through our individual

journeys, decisions about treatments and lifestyle must be made, and we need to feel comfortable and have confidence in our choices. Information contained on the DVDs may help this decision-making process, in consultation with health professionals.

PROPOSED LINKS TO NT

KEITH Williams, representing the Northern Territory Support Groups, recently contacted members of the Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups (SA) Inc, requesting an informal meeting.

Ian Fisk and Phil Davis met with Keith on July 22 at Adelaide Airport to discuss greater links between support groups in the Northern Territory and South Australia.

A new support group has commenced in Alice Springs and some people affected by prostate cancer in NT travel to Adelaide for treatment, suggesting that improved links would benefit all parties, though these early discussions concerning the viability of NT being affiliated with SA will require further consideration.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

THE Adelaide Group would like to extend thanks for recent donations from G. Badenoch for \$20 and from Menette Pty Ltd for \$100 in memory of Leon Hayes.

**COMING EVENTS
FOR 2008****AUGUST 6 MEETING:**

Ms Liz Randall, infection control officer at the Noarlunga Community Hospital, will give an interactive power point presentation on infection control. This Support Group meeting will be held in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga, on Wednesday, August 6 at 6.30pm.

**SEPTEMBER 3
MEETING:**

Round Robin discussions will be featured among attending members.

**OCTOBER 1
MEETING:**

Dr David Elder, urologist, will be guest speaker.

• For more information, visit the City of Onkaparinga Support Group's dedicated website at

www.pcsog.org

• Special thanks to the City of Onkaparinga Support Group sponsors: Southern Primary Health Woodcroft, Port Noarlunga-Christies Beach RSL Sub Branch, **toneraction** Christies Beach, The Original Open Market, and to all who provide valuable support to our group – especially the City of Onkaparinga Council.

Breast cancer information resonates with audience

Members found striking comparisons between breast cancer and prostate cancers, reports Group President John Shields.

OTHER South Australian prostate cancer support groups would benefit greatly from the input of the guest speakers who enlightened the City of Onkaparinga Group's July Meeting – Jane Stanley and Gill Miller, nurse-counsellors with Cancer Council SA, who presented an interactive talk about breast cancer, from prevention to palliative care.

While this meeting had been identified as being of particular interest to the ladies who are the backbone of our group, it quickly became clear that breast cancer and prostate cancer have a lot in common.

Even though they affect different body parts, detection and treatment principles of the cancers are very similar, as is their outcome and response to early detection and action.

Hormone therapy and gene research were just two of the topics that were of interest

and familiar to our group. It generated good discussion, with Jane and Gill answering many questions emanating from their talk. It was particularly interesting to learn that Norman Andrew had breast cancer when he was 30, before he later developed prostate cancer.

It was a timely reminder for us all to be breast cancer aware, and to see a GP immediately if any changes are detected.

INFORMATION DAYS

THE support group has received an invitation from Aged Care and Housing's Perry Park facility, River Road, Port Noarlunga, to conduct a combined information day in the Mall Hall on Thursday September 4, from 10am.

An October date for our information day at Normanville must be decided (so that Bill Griffin can confirm availability with the venue owners) and a

later date for an information day at Woodcroft Shopping Centre (Jules Van Kekem will supervise this). We will return to Colonnades for the next event, to be arranged by our Patron, Councillor Artie Ferguson

It is important that the group continues to be visible and active in our community, armed with the very latest professional information about prostate cancer.

Thanks go to all members who give their support on these days, especially Artie Ferguson, Bill Griffin and Jules Van Kekem for helping to arrange them.

Special thanks also go to The Cancer Council South Australia, Dr Carole Pinnock's Mr Phip – Prostate Health Information, and Andrology Australia for freely providing the very latest professional information for us and the community.

Research findings and news items ... submitted by Trevor Hunt

Australian first in prostate cancer research

AUSTRALIA'S first Nitrogen Laser Cell Photolysis System, donated by The Newell Foundation, is helping Flinders Medical Centre researchers forge new tracks in prostate cancer research.

Researchers say the \$16,000 system, purpose built in South Australia, will produce an ultra violet light beam that allows

the study of highly specific cell details for the first time.

Professor Greg Barritt from the Department of Medical Biochemistry says calcium in cells is central to his team's research, as it has been identified as playing an important role in the rapid division and also the death of prostate cancer cells.

Finding a way to measure calcium function in cells, assisted by the nitrogen laser photolysis system, presents the potential of being able to predict whether or not a cancer will spread, and could lead to new treatments for advanced prostate cancer.

• From Flinders Medical Centre Foundation newsletter, Autumn08

Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group

Considering new treatments

A new form of ultrasound treatment offers prostate cancer patients interesting options, as Jeff Roberts reports.

A DVD presentation on High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU), presented at the Mitcham Group's July meeting by Mr Peter Royce, senior consultant urological surgeon at the Alfred & Cabrini Hospitals in Melbourne, created great interest among members for the possibilities offered by this radical new treatment.

Mr Royce described HIFU as a new technology and the latest weapon available for the treatment of localised prostate cancer. Indeed, HIFU is not as yet a universally accepted treatment but the Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved its use in Australia.

Because HIFU uses transferable focus ultrasound energy, no form of surgery, needles or seeds, radiation energy or hormone treatment is required in the procedure.

The initial part of the procedure is to map the prostate using ultrasound as an imaging device. Mapping can include the seminal vesicles if required.

The DVD showed a laboratory-style demonstration of how intense heat can be applied to the prostate through the rectum via an ultrasound probe.

A condom is placed on the tip of the probe. A cooling unit pumps chilled water into the condom, which enables the rectal wall to remain at normal temperature during the

HIFU treatment: What does it involve?

Patient selection is limited to men with localised prostate cancer suitable for watchful waiting, radical prostatectomy, radiation therapy or brachytherapy. Some requirements are:

- PSA <20
- Gleason Score 4-8
- Prostate volume <40cc

The treatment can be used following failed radiation or brachytherapy. If there is a urinary obstruction it is very suitable for a patient to have a "turp" operation followed by HIFU.

However it is not suitable in cases of advanced prostate cancer, or where damage to the rectum has occurred from surgery or radiation.

Typical recovery after HIFU treatment

- Overnight or one day stay – normal activity after a few days
- Catheter 5-14 days
- A bloody discharge over several weeks due to clearing of dead tissue

procedure. Ultrasound energy will not pass through air, so the probe must be surrounded by water.

The operation normally takes 2½ to 3 hours, is primarily driven by software and monitored carefully by

- Rectal discomfort for some days
- Reduced stream after catheter removal
- Sexual activity after a few weeks
- Minimal pain

Treatment Outcomes

The outcomes are assessed by tracking the PSA level over a longer period and also by a further biopsy if required. The PSA level should drop to at least 1. Early data from a quality of life questionnaire looks promising but it is still new technology. Mr Royce made the interesting comment that the PSA appears to be a more important indicator than the Gleason Score.

Complications

The major recorded side-effects are:

- Retrograde ejaculation 30%
- ED 25%
- Urethral Stricture 17%
- Epididymitis (infection) 5.5%

the attending urologist. Two different types of machines are currently available in Australia – the Sonoblate-500 (an American machine, the type used by Mr Royce) and the Ablatherm, designed in France. Both machines work according to the same

COMING EVENTS

AUGUST MEETING

The next monthly meeting of the Mitcham Support Group will be held on Thursday August 21 in the Colonel Light Gardens RSL Clubrooms at 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens, from 7pm to 8.45pm.

The guest speaker will be confirmed via a flyer in the post, though we hope that urologist Dr Jehan Titus will be speaking on an overview of treatment options. Men, partners, carers and families are encouraged to attend.

- For more information on events and group activities, visit the Mitcham Group's dedicated website at www.psamitcham.org

principle but have differences in the technology they each employ.

Mr Royce showed a graph of comparable therapeutic cost benefits, showing that HIFU compares favourably with other treatments, though it is currently not covered by Medicare or Private Health benefits.

Barossa and Gawler Prostate Cancer Support Group

Concerns for the next generation

For men suffering from prostate cancer, alerting their children to the disease is a primary consideration, as Alan Hall reports

DISCUSSIONS among members of the Barossa/Gawler Group have recently drawn focus on the need to protect – as far as possible – the sons and grandsons of prostate cancer sufferers.

While there is increased risk of being affected by the disease because of family history, there is also a greater opportunity for following generations to minimise the impact of prostate cancer – and even to avoid the disease altogether as a consequence of greater awareness and understanding.

The initial challenge is to persuade the male family members of prostate cancer sufferers to discuss their

situation with their GPs soon after their 40th birthdays and to request annual blood testing.

An even greater challenge is to convince them that it would be a good idea to have a digital rectal examination as well.

The benefits of good nutrition are not easily conveyed to young men. They do not seem to react particularly well to a suggestion that they should reduce their intake of fast foods, red meat and dairy products, and fill the gap instead with broccoli, pomegranate juice, cooked tomatoes and steamed fish.

Nevertheless, it is worth the effort to keep persuading

them to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables and less fatty, processed food.

Another topic of interest within the Barossa/Gawler group is the health of their hearts, with a desire to increase awareness of potential cardiac problems and to reduce the risks of succumbing to heart disease.

Accordingly, the group's next meeting will focus on the heart, with Dr John Urlwin providing the expert input.

• **Please note that it has been necessary to change the date of this meeting from the usual third Tuesday to Wednesday, August 20, beginning at 7.30pm.**

COMING EVENT

AUGUST MEETING:

The next meeting of the Barossa/Gawler Group will be on Wednesday August 20 in the Uniting Church Hall, Memorial Ave, Nuriootpa, starting at 7.30pm.

The guest speaker will be Dr John Urlwin, focusing on the health of the heart.

OCTOBER MEETING:

Urologist Mr Denby Steele will be a guest at the group's monthly meeting on October 17.

Research findings and news items from around the world

Submitted by Trevor Hunt

New prostate cancer drug shows promise for difficult cases

AN experimental drug for prostate cancer has shown early promise in treating the most difficult cases of the disease, including men who have failed all other treatments.

Usually such men have an average of 18 months to live, but British researchers have reported almost doubling this to 32 months in men treated with a drug called abiraterone.

The study's London-based authors have forecast that the drug could be on track for accelerated development and approval on the back of these findings, which have been

published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Australian experts have welcomed the findings as promising, but cautioned that the study was very small involving just 21 patients, and say much more work needs to be done before excitement can be justified.

Cancer Council Australia chief executive Ian Olver says the target group for this new drug would be among almost 3000 men who die each year from prostate cancer.

As these deaths are caused by the tumour spreading to other parts of the body, a

treatment that could slow or stop this growth had great potential. "It's an early-phase study but it's showing some promise because it's working in prostate cancer that's resistant to other hormonal treatments," Professor Olver says.

It will also be less painful than existing chemotherapy drugs that have to be administered by intravenous infusion, and are often so toxic they prove unbearable for older patients.

The study, of a type conducted to establish that a drug is safe to use in people, found that abiraterone use carried

some side-effects, including high blood pressure.

The study's authors, from London's Royal Marsden Hospital and Britain's Institute of Cancer Research, say results of a more advanced study, comparing results from patients given abiraterone with those on conventional chemotherapy, will be reported soon.

They believe abiraterone could prove an "efficacious treatment" in chemotherapy-resistant prostate cancer cases, which was "an area of unmet medical need".

Source: *News Ltd*, 23/7/08.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group

Survivor shares the inspiring story of his nine-year journey

Determination and careful decisions about treatment and diet make a difference, as group president Bryan Hearn reports.

THE story of prostate cancer sufferer Bill Toop proved an informative and moving account for members of the McLaren Support Group attending the July meeting. Bill, who attended at short notice to replace a guest speaker who was ill, explained that his “journey” commenced about nine years ago after his wife Marilyn provided a list of questions to ask his doctor when, at the age of 49 years, he wanted to obtain nicotine patches to help him quit smoking.

The list included requests for a PSA test and cholesterol level measurement. Marilyn had read a book about prostate cancer and insisted that Bill should have the test, though when his PSA test result produced a reading of 9.6, both of them were deeply shocked.

The couple considered various options in what Bill described as “a bit of a blur” before visiting a urologist and having six biopsies taken.

Bill described it as a “hammer blow” when he was informed that he was suffering from prostate cancer. At that time there was minimal support available to sufferers but he did his homework by contacting the various support groups that did exist.

Some of the best advice he received was to take his time, learn what he could and eventually make an informed

decision about what to do next.

He chose a “watchful waiting” regime and commenced treatment with a naturopath. He learned to meditate and how to use visualisation as a technique. Bill’s brother advised him

but Bill still wanted it lower, so he returned to mainstream medicine. Brachytherapy was in its infancy and only available in Melbourne at a cost of about \$14,000, so he opted for a radical prostatectomy. Before the operation, Bill started pelvic floor exercises

Ghan memories raise funds

Solicitor John Roger, a trustee of a foundation set up in the name of Brian and Maxine Newel several years ago, told the July meeting of a fantastic legacy provided by the foundation.

Brian died from prostate cancer, but after his initial diagnosis he decided to do something positive. He mortgaged part of his home and took out a \$50,000 loan to indulge in two of his passions – photography and the Old Ghan.

He spent more than a year travelling and photographing everything associated with the Old Ghan, then compiled a book from the hundreds of photographs he took.

The foundation now sells these photographs and the book, with funds being donated to Prostate Cancer research – about \$70,000 raised so far.

Copies of the book *The Old Ghan* are available for \$40 from John at Southern Vales Legal in McLaren Vale.

not to take ownership of the disease. “Better to take the view that I don’t have cancer; it’s my prostate gland that has the problem”.

Bill continued having regular PSA tests, which was declining but not quick enough for his liking. He embarked on special diets; one required no solid food for six weeks, comprising mainly fruit and vegetable juices. He shed 20kg and his PSA dropped to 5.5

and taking iron supplements in addition to a general exercise program.

After the operation, he had a catheter for about two weeks and did lots of walking. He suffered very little incontinence but reported that impotence was an issue for about a year, though eventually everything returned to normal. He took three months off work, and advises that any return should be treated very

COMING EVENT

Thursday August 14

The McLaren Districts group will next meet in the administration building at the rear of the McLaren Vale & Districts War Memorial Hospital, Aldersey St, McLaren Vale, at 7pm on Thursday August 14. Guest speaker will be Virginia Gill, a specialist in pelvic floor exercises who consults at McLaren Vale hospital and has many male and female clients.

The September 18 meeting in the same venue will feature guest speaker Gizelle Wilson, the dietician who had been scheduled to appear at the July meeting.

Contact group president Bryan Hearn on 8323 7924 or 0410 539 274, to confirm meeting details.

gently, particularly where manual work is involved.

Bill, whose PSA level is now at zero, highlighted the difference of his situation to current sufferers, who fortunately have many more support groups available.

Bill and Marilyn are now members of the Prostate Cancer Action group, and he encourages group members to continue providing services to other members of the public.

The art of robotic surgery

Installing robotic surgery machinery in Adelaide has been good news for prostate cancer patients, as **Tory Shepherd** reported in *The Advertiser* on July 18.

REMOTE robot surgery has so far treated more than 500 South Australian men with prostate cancer – the disease which kills more than 3000 Australian men each year, and will affect one in eight South Australian men.

The Da Vinci – named after the famous artist, engineer and anatomy student Leonardo Da Vinci – is a machine that dramatically cuts operating and recovery times.

There are currently five in Australia, including one at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Tiny instruments on the ends of giant robotic arms are operated remotely by RAH surgeon Dr Peter Sutherland.

They allow him to operate on prostate cancers through very small incisions. He sits several metres away from the operating table and sees his work magnified on a screen.

“This machine really is where the computer age meets surgery,” Dr Sutherland said.



Gordon Pickard with Dr Peter Sutherland beneath the many arms of the Da Vinci machine at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Photograph courtesy of *The Advertiser*.

Adelaide building magnate and philanthropist Gordon Pickard was among those who suffered from prostate cancer – so he decided to buy the \$3 million machine for the RAH.

When he developed prostate

cancer, he was treated by Australia’s first Da Vinci in Melbourne and was the fifth Australian to go under the robot’s knife.

He was out of hospital in 34 hours and back at work in four

days – a recovery that inspired him to ensure the Da Vinci machine was available to other prostate cancer patients in Adelaide.

• *Thanks to The Advertiser for permission to reprint this story.*

Research findings and news items from around the world

Submitted by Trevor Hunt

Daily Viagra dose helps erectile recovery process

LOW doses of Viagra each day may help some men improve their erectile function more quickly after radical surgery for prostate cancer.

A recent study, published in the British Journal of Urology, evaluated 43

sexually active men who underwent a nerve-sparing radical prostatectomy. As measured by a machine called a rigiscan, all experienced nocturnal erections one to two weeks after the operation.

To support the recovery

of spontaneous erections, some of the men were given Viagra every night.

Their recovery of erectile function was quicker and stronger than those who did not have the drug.

These findings support

earlier reports on Viagra improving post-surgical erectile problems, presented to the annual meeting of the American Urological Association in Chicago.

Source: The Australian Financial Review, 5/6/08.