



Prostate Cancer
Foundation
of Australia

PROSTATE SUPPORTER

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

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

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2008

Volume 1: Number 9

Groups aim to start a new PCFA chapter

The recent Adelaide conference steers
support groups and PCFA on a new course.

POSITIVE outcomes from the conference attended by 10 support groups within South Australia and the Northern Territory with Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia support group services manager Paul Redman in Adelaide on September 22 have ensured that this important summit meet will become an annual event.

Designed to allow group leaders to meet, share experiences and ideas that will stimulate successful support groups, the conference – held at the Grand Chancellor Hotel – also prompted robust discussions on the future direction of support groups within SA and the NT.

In a bid to reduce the complexity and duplicity endured by officers of the current umbrella organisation – the Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups (SA) Inc – a motion was carried by the meeting to recommend that support group members

accept the formation of a new Central Australia Chapter under the constitution of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

If agreed by the support group members of every group, the new Chapter will use the existing election process (due to occur before the end of 2008) to elect the office bearers of the Central Australia Chapter.

The future of the original association will be decided when the effectiveness of the Central Australia Chapter is discussed at the second Adelaide support groups conference, to be convened in 12 months.

Paul Redman was pleased that the conference highlighted a desire for simplicity and effectiveness in running support groups, to ensure the best possible stream of information on the latest services and resources available to group members – and to raise awareness among

Newsletters can also be read
online at [www.pcagsa.org.au/
pages/supporter.html](http://www.pcagsa.org.au/pages/supporter.html)



At the
Adelaide
conference
(from left):
Allan and
Joan Man-
field, Paul
Redman,
Lorraine
and Colin
Lang.



Delegates get down to serious discussions.

Photographs courtesy of Ian Fisk.

general practitioners and urologists about the strengths of the support group network.

The conference, supported by the Bank of Adelaide Foundation, included two education workshops for group leaders – on succession planning and the grooming of new leaders, and developing support group meeting vibrancy.

Both sessions were well received, presenting challenges for groups to create even more informative and engaging meetings for their members.

in brief...

IN THIS EDITION you'll notice the lighter touch of a few jokes appearing, such as: A kangaroo walks into a bar and orders a beer. The bartender says, "That'll be \$10. You know, we don't get many kangaroos coming in here." The kangaroo replies: "At 10 bucks a beer, I'm not surprised!"

CONTRIBUTIONS from all Support Group members are welcome; email items and images 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**

OCTOBER MEETING in the upstairs meeting room, Cancer Council SA building, 202 Greenhill Road, Eastwood at 5.30pm on Tuesday October 14. Enter via the back stairs.

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

• 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>

Identifying the role of the Action Group

After seven busy years, the Prostate Cancer Action Group urgently needs help from more members, as Dean Wall reports.

WHY does the Prostate Cancer Action Group (PCAG) exist? How does it differ from the already existing support groups serving the Adelaide area? These questions were raised at the Adelaide conference convened on September 22 by Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, and are perhaps best answered by a report published in *The Advertiser* on September 15, which stated that men in the age group most at risk of getting prostate cancer don't know much about the disease.

More than 500 Australians aged between 40 and 80 were quizzed on their knowledge of prostate cancer as part of a University of Notre Dame Australia study – which showed that four out of five did not know the function of the prostate.

Almost half did not know that the disease was the second most common form of cancer in men behind skin cancer.

The statistics highlighted in

this article highlights the need for greatly increased public information and awareness about the disease.

It was for this purpose that the Prostate Cancer Action Group was formed, and through the past seven years, it has conducted 23 awareness evenings in most of the major population centres through South Australia, attended by more than 2000 people.

PCAG also participates in such events as the Man Alive! festival, agricultural field days and country Shows, where group members distribute information pamphlets from publicity booths.

The group is also closely involved in an advocacy role, being represented on the national Support and Advocacy Committee (SAC) of the PCFA.

The Prostate Cancer Action Group is the only organisation in Australia formed with this specific function in view. Over the years, it has developed

a close liaison with several urologists and other health professionals, many who have participated in our Awareness events as keynote speakers, and who regard the action group highly.

The greatest limiting factor to the group's activities is its numbers. It remains a very, small group of dedicated prostate cancer sufferers and partners – so small that it is now almost unworkable.

The group is actively seeking more members who share a vision of informing as many men as possible of the risks they face just by being men in a certain age group.

The Action Group planning meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month in the meeting room at the Cancer Council of SA, 202 Greenhill Rd, Eastwood, starting at 5.30pm. To all who would like to be involved and make a difference, or to find out some more – you are most welcome.

Research findings and news items from around the world ... Submitted by Trevor Hunt

Expert views conflict on prostate tests for elderly men

SOME prostate cancer experts are outraged by new claims that it is "pointless to test over-75s for the disease". The influential US Preventive Services Task Force released guidelines saying the search for the disease in this age group

was causing more harm than good. The older a patient, the more likely it is that PSA test diagnoses cancer that does not end up killing the patient. However one of the world's leading prostate cancer experts, Dr Patrick Walsh,

of the renowned John Hopkins Medical Institute in Baltimore, said the US group was misguided and Australia's resistance to PSA testing was dangerous to patients. "You're behind in Australia. You have got more deaths than you

should have in 2008 and you should have many fewer deaths from prostate cancer than breast cancer." He said resistance to PSA testing was coming from "people sitting in offices looking at statistics".

• Source: *The Age* 7/8/08.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website www.prostate.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 October 20

Guest Speaker will be Dr Carole Pinnock, research



scientist from the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital, who will give an illustrated lecture.

Monday November 17

Arthur Seager will chair the meeting and speak in regard to diet, supplements and healthy food and along with his wife Kathie will prepare a prostate-healthy meal.

The Adelaide group wishes to thank September's guest speaker **Wendy Tuckwell** from the Royal Adelaide Hospital, for discussing the role of the medical physicist and different disease areas that can be treated with brachytherapy.

• 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).

Planning a new home for Adelaide meetings

To ensure the continued successful development of Prostate Support and Awareness, the Adelaide Group aims to relocate its monthly meetings to Payneham, as Phil Davis reports.

WITH four Prostate Support and Awareness Groups located south of the city and no groups meeting in the eastern, northern or western areas of metropolitan Adelaide, it has become important to plan how to service these areas effectively. In the not too distant past, the Adelaide Support Group conducted meetings at the Burnside Hospital, while another group that was active in the north eastern suburbs ceased to operate in 2005.

Confusion now exists among health professionals when recommending a potential sufferer to which support group – especially as the Mitcham Group conducts its meetings close to the current Adelaide Group venue.

As a possible solution, the Payneham RSL Club, at 360 Payneham Rd, Payneham, is being viewed as a more strategically located meeting place for the Adelaide Group, positioned between our current venue and the previous North East Group.

Conducting meetings at Payneham will provide a local group for members and potential members who reside in the eastern, north-eastern and northern suburbs. Southern members of the Adelaide group inconvenienced by more travel have the option of attending the Mitcham Group.

John leaves to go travelling

THE Adelaide group farewelled vice-president and librarian **John Mayes** (pictured right) at the September meeting, as he intends to go travelling and eventually live interstate.

John was diagnosed at the age of 58, on Christmas Eve, 1999, when as a result of a biopsy it indicated he had prostate cancer with a Gleason grade of 5, though from the outset he was very resilient and determined to overcome the disease. He regarded it as "his lucky day" – a disease was identified which needed to be treated.

John conducted a lot of personal research before deciding on a radical prostatectomy in February, 2000. Post-operative pathology revealed a spread outside the prostatic capsule and Gleason 8, prompting John to fight his prostate cancer through diet and lifestyle



changes. In 2001, John joined the Adelaide PSA Group, immediately taking the role of resource librarian. He has given presentations on diet and prostate cancer to various service clubs, also writing articles addressing an anti-cancer diet for the Adelaide PSA Group Newsletter, and being a consultant for men from the Adelaide Group, within SA and interstate on the subject.

His positive disposition will be missed, along with his spontaneous and knowledgeable contributions during our meetings.

The Payneham RSL Club currently has no booking for the third Tuesday evening of the month, and Phil Davis intends to secure these rooms

for the Adelaide group's meetings in 2009. If you wish to comment on this proposal, please email Phil Davis at classic100@bigpond.com

City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group

COMING EVENTS
FOR 2008OCTOBER 1
MEETING:

Guest speaker will be Sandra Buttery, Peer Educator with the Council on the Ageing (COTA). She will discuss the quality use of medicines, and the issue of deciding between brand name or generic medicines. This Support Group meeting will be held in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga, on Wednesday, October 1 at 6.30pm.

NOVEMBER 5
MEETING:

Dr David Elder, urologist, will be guest speaker.

DECEMBER
BARBECUE:

This will replace the monthly meeting. Date to be announced soon.

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

Sharing stories forms a spine of group support

ROUND robin discussions, with everyone telling each other the story of their prostate cancer journeys – and explaining their current state of health – provided a valuable focus for the City of Onkaparinga Group's September meeting.

Members talked about their PSA levels, some that fluctuate and others that stay unchanged, various diagnoses, and the variety of treatment options they have to choose from.

It's always beneficial for members to share their experiences again, and to be reminded of what others are going through at times, while still holding their heads up high and with a smile.

WELCOMING WAYNE

WAYNE Holt, a new member to the Onkaparinga group, was introduced to the meeting by our Vice President, Malcolm Ellis. Wayne, also chair of the local Buffalo Lodge – GLE, has started collecting money at each lodge meeting for prostate cancer and is organising a regular collection at every Buffalo Lodge meeting in South Australia.

Money collected at these meetings will go to the PCFA, which has given assurance through National Support Group Services Manager Paul Redman that funding will be distributed to all Prostate Cancer Support Groups in Australia. It means that money raised through Wayne's initiative will eventually find its way back to the local community.

This fund will be perpetual and should be named appropriately in Wayne Holt's honour. Congratulations and thanks are due to Wayne from all support group members, and on behalf of the PCFA. Hopefully this great idea will build into a national initiative.

CONFERENCE AIMS

ON BEHALF of the Onkaparinga group, Malcolm, Beverley, Artie, Juli, Phyllis and John attended the PCFA conference at the Grand Chancellor Hotel on September 22, though association reporting will be done by chairman Malcolm Ellis. Delegates discussed the structure and concept of creating a new chapter within the constitution of the PCFA

that brings together support groups from the Northern Territory (Darwin and Alice Springs) and possibly Broken Hill, with South Australia, to become known as the Support Groups of Central Australia. We look forward to working with all of these groups and wish them well for the future.

INFORMATION DAY
AT PERRY PARK

THE Health Promotion day at Perry Park was very quiet due mainly to a lack of advertising, which is a shame as there was good representation from Health Groups. Thanks go to Peter and Chris Kiley, who helped our group on the day.

Our next Information day is at the Normanville Shopping Centre, Main Rd, Normanville, at 9am on October 4.

• 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 especially the City of Onkaparinga Council.

And now for something completely different ... a touch of humor

• A MAN is getting into the shower just as his wife is finishing up her shower, when the doorbell rings. The wife quickly wraps herself in a towel and runs downstairs.

When she opens the door, there stands Bob, the next-door neighbour. Before she says a word,

Bob says, "I'll give you \$800 to drop that towel". After thinking for a moment, the woman drops her towel and stands naked in front of Bob, after a few seconds, Bob hands her \$800 and leaves.

The woman wraps back up in the towel and goes back upstairs.

When she gets to the bathroom, her husband asks, "Who was that?"

"It was Bob the next-door neighbour," she replies. "Great," the husband says. "Did he say anything about the \$800 he owes me?"

• Sent in by Support Group members 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

At the heart of erectile issues

The links between cardiovascular problems and erectile dysfunction are clearly drawn, as Terry Harbour reports.

FOLLOWING the theme explored in August by guest speaker Dr Jehen Titus, the Mitcham Group continued to learn more about erectile dysfunction (ED) that occurs as a result of treatments for prostate cancer. The group's guest speaker in September was cardiologist Dr Hany Dimitri, who spoke about the correlation between ED (not specifically due to prostate treatment) and cardiovascular disease.

Dr Dimitri's talk, supported by excellent powerpoint slides, was both informative and pleasantly humorous as he discussed how many men can't have erections, how erections work, some of the causes of erectile dysfunction and how ED is connected with cardiovascular disease.

ED is defined as the consistent or recurrent inability to attain an erection sufficient for sexual activity. ED affects up to 1 million men in Australia and 150 million worldwide. Age is a significant determining factor – similar to age heightening the risk of cardiovascular disease.

In the 50-59 year age bracket, up to 33 per cent of men suffer ED to some extent – as do 51.5 per cent of 60-69 year-olds, and 69.2 per cent of 70-79-year-olds. Even in younger age brackets, a significant number of men are reported to be suffering ED to some extent.

The major risk factors for suffering ED as a consequence

Interested in having a combined end-of-year celebration?

THE Mitcham support group's final meeting for 2008 will be in November, and traditionally we have had a social dinner as opposed to a more formal meeting.

While we will continue with the dinner this year, there has also been a suggestion that Mitcham should

combine with another support group in a "get together" at a venue to be decided.

Does any other support group wish to join with us in this event?

If so, please contact Terry Harbour very soon on 8271 0513 or email harbour@adam.com.au

of chronic diseases are:

- Diabetes: 4.1 times the risk of suffering ED.
- Prostate disease: 2.9 times.
- Peripheral vascular disease: 2.6 times.
- Cardiac problems: 1.8 times.
- Depression: 1.8 times.
- High cholesterol: 1.6 times.
- High blood pressure: 1.6 times.

Dr Dimitri went on to discuss the physiology of the penis and the complex interaction of nerves, veins, arteries and associated blood flow necessary for an erection to occur – noting that the partial blockage of arteries, coupled with exertion, can lead to a person suffering from angina.

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease and blockage of arteries include having high lipids, central obesity, diabetes II, smoking and high blood pressure – all issues which also affect ED.

When questioned whether the occurrence of erectile dysfunction can predict cardiovascular disease, Dr Dimitri's answer is a resounding YES.

In diabetes, ED is the most significant predictor of silent heart disease. For sufferers of ED, there is also a need to rule out other problems that can accelerate possible heart problems, such as blood pressure, excessive waist circumference, high cholesterol levels, diabetes, abnormal kidney function and stress.

In such cases, lifestyle modifications are necessary. Obese males (particularly those with excessive waist circumference) must lose weight; research shows that losing an appropriate amount of weight improved ED by 30 per cent.

COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER MEETING

The next monthly meeting of the Mitcham Support Group will be held on Thursday October 23, in the Colonel Light Gardens RSL club rooms at 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens, from 7pm. Our guest speaker will be renowned urologist Dr Denby Steele – the only urologist in South Australia qualified to treat men with high dose rate brachytherapy. He will address our group on this treatment for prostate cancer.

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

The primary answers are to eat healthily, exercise and to stop smoking, with other options including a variety of drugs to reduce blood cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure – all of these being major issues which can have a positive effect on both erectile dysfunction and cardiovascular disease.

Cancer research innovation at the University of Adelaide

New treatment explored for advanced prostate cancer

Focusing on hormone activity has offered new clues for Adelaide scientists on effective prostate cancer treatments.

THROUGH using existing prostate cancer drugs in combination with new drugs at lower doses, researchers at the University of Adelaide believe that advanced prostate cancer can be treated more effectively with fewer side effects.

Growth of prostate cancer is initially dependent on hormones called androgens, which traditionally have been suppressed to stop tumour growth. But despite an initial response, resistance to hormone deprivation often occurs and tumours start to grow again, according to Professor Wayne Tilley and Dr Lisa Butler of the university's Dame Roma Mitchell Cancer Research Laboratories.

Other significant side effects include reduced libido, impotence, hot flushes, tiredness and sweating, gradual decrease in body hair, reduced bone and muscle strength and cognitive changes.

Professor Tilley and Dr Butler have successfully killed prostate cancer cells in laboratory studies using low doses of a combination therapy of drugs including bicalutamide (an anti-androgen that opposes the action of androgen on the tumour), and the inhibitors 17AAG and vorinostat.

These new drugs – while not particularly effective in killing prostate cancer cells if given

alone – can block key cancer survival pathways when used as a combination.

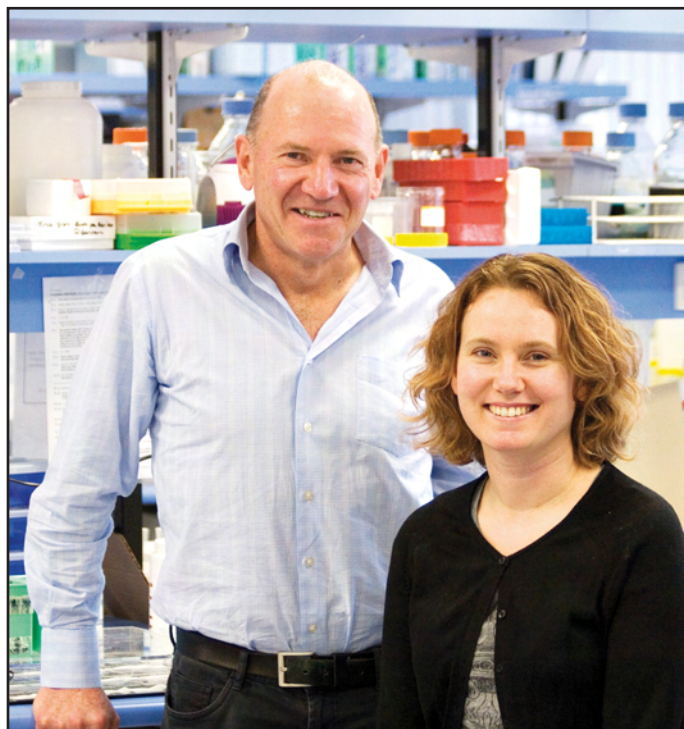
“A very low level of bicalutamide is capable of inhibiting cancer cell proliferation by more than 10-fold when combined with either vorinostat or 17AAG, making our current treatments much more effective and causing fewer side effects,” says Dr Lisa Butler.

All the drugs needed for combination therapy are already approved for use in clinical trials, so the new therapy can be readily tested in patients with advanced prostate cancer.

Professor Chris Sweeney, a world recognised medical oncologist and Director of Clinical Trials at the Royal Adelaide Hospital Cancer Centre, will lead a multidisciplinary team to test the new treatment.

“The ultimate test of this exciting laboratory breakthrough is to see if it improves outcomes and quality of life for men suffering from advanced prostate cancer,” says Professor Sweeney.

“The strong partnership between medical scientists and clinicians at the University of Adelaide and the Royal Adelaide Hospital means patients can benefit from



Professor Wayne Tilley and Dr Lisa Butler in the Dame Roma Mitchell Cancer Research Laboratories.

Photograph by David Ellis

Barossa and Gawler Prostate Cancer Support Group

COMING EVENT

OCTOBER 17 MEETING:

While there was no formal meeting for the Barossa and Gawler group during September, Urologist Mr Denby Steele will be a guest speaker at the group's next meeting on Friday, October 17, from 6.30pm in the Uniting Church Hall, Nuriootpa. Members are asked to bring a plate for a light tea before Dr Steele's talk.

advances in medical science much faster than in the past.”

Professor Tilley is a founding member of the Freemasons Foundation Centre for Men's

Health, which is working towards establishing a national prostate cancer research facility in Adelaide.

Source: Adelaidean magazine, The University of Adelaide.

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

Obtaining balance in your diet is a foundation of better health

Learning more about the benefits of healthy food encourages plans for a better diet, as group president Bryan Hearn reports.

GIZELLE Wilson, a dietician who spoke at the September meeting on healthy eating, attracted the largest attendance since the inception of the McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group late last year.

A gathering of 30 members and wives heard Gizelle emphasise that small dietary changes over time can provide great help to a person's health, noting that a well-nourished body has a reduced risk of infection from colds and other debilitating illness as result of improved immunity.

To demonstrate the elements of a balanced diet, she displayed a plate divided into the five basic food groups – breads and cereals, fruit, dairy, meat and vegetables – and eight cups of fluids that need to be consumed each day. These can consist of water, tea, coffee or even alcohol in moderation, though freshly squeezed orange juice is highly recommended, with the pips and pith providing fibre.

Breads and cereals, including rice, pasta and rolled oats, form the largest food group, requiring five serves a day (one serve equals two slices of bread or ½ cup of rice or pasta). Carbohydrates in these foods fuel the body, provide fibre and are the only foods that feed the brain.

Four serves of vegetables are required each day (one

Thanks extended for a very generous donation

THE September meeting learned from group organiser Bryan Hearn that a donation of \$500 from the Willunga Lions has been received by the McLaren Districts group,

serve equals ½ cup of cooked vegetables or one cup of salad). Be aware that boiling vegetables removes up to 60 per cent of their nutrient value, though the water retaining this goodness can be used to make a healthy soup.

Three serves of fruit are required each day (one serve equals one slice of fruit or about 10 grapes). Fruit is best eaten fresh – the longer the gap between picking and eating, the less benefit, with four weeks being the maximum duration. Fruit that has been frozen for a lengthy period will have lost most of its nutrition. Also note that dried fruits consumed in the same quantities will not provide the same benefits as fresh fruit.

Three serves of dairy – milk, cheese or yoghurt – are also required each day (one cup, or a slice, or a small tub equates to one serve). Low fat or light milk meets these requirements. Milk contains 4 or 5 per cent fat, though cheese can

comprise up to 38 per cent fat – therefore, cottage cheese is recommended. Active cultures in yoghurt are beneficial for anyone with bowel problems, and should be eaten twice a day.

Meat provides the body with protein, as do fish, chicken and eggs. Meat cuts should be as lean as possible, in portions about the size of a person's palm. Vegetarians can use lentils to substitute meat requirements in the diet.

In preventing cancer, controlling diet is the second most important factor behind eliminating tobacco. A balanced diet should leave no need for supplements, unless specific conditions such as osteoporosis exist.

Everybody's needs are different; therefore, everyone should design their own diet and exercise program according to their needs – which always vary with age.

Beware that processed foods

COMING EVENT

Thursday OCT 16

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 October 16.

Guest speaker will be Leon Bignell, State MP for Mawson, who will speak about men's health services in the southern suburbs.

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

carry risks from additives and preservatives; consequently, all food prepared from fresh ingredients are much better than processed foods.

Antioxidants are a great help to prevent or reduce prostate cancers, attacking the free radicals that contribute to cancers. Red fruits and vegetables contain antioxidants, with green tea and tomatoes (in any form, including pasta sauce and ketchup) being especially good sources.

Another great cancer prevention agent, selenium, is sourced from balanced intake of grain, meat, dairy and fish.

PFCA NATIONAL CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 15-17, 2008

Sharing cancer concerns

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia chief executive officer Andrew Giles extends an invitation to all group members to attend the inaugural national conference on the Gold Coast next month.

UNDER the theme of Supporting Quality of Life, the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia will next month host the largest ever meeting in Australia for men, carers, nurses, GPs and researchers who are interested in fighting prostate cancer.

This inaugural National Conference of the foundation – being held at the Royal Pines Crowne Plaza Hotel on the Gold Coast, on November 16 and 17 – will highlight all the issues surrounding prostate cancer and provide a unique opportunity for interaction between cancer sufferers, medicos and administrators.

The idea for this conference was developed by some of the key figures within the PCFA's support group networks, such as Bill McHugh and Don Baumber, who has been a staunch advocate that men with prostate cancer want to stop being blind consumers of public health.



PCFA chief executive officer Andrew Giles.

Don's view, based on the bitter experiences of fellow sufferers, is that nothing should be initiated regarding prostate cancer treatments or research without the active participation, or at the very least the views of men suffering from prostate cancer being seriously considered.

The major aim of the conference is to empower men

to take control of their health. It will also raise community awareness of the growing prostate cancer problem, provide information and support to men living with this disease, and build an agenda for more government support.

Some issues to be addressed at the conference include:

- Understanding and dealing with prostate cancer diagnosis
- Side-effects of treatments
- Palliative care and ending care
- New supportive care models
- Facilitating support groups

The conference will bring together representatives of support groups from across Australia, as well as medical researchers, nurses, doctors, community organisations, allied health professionals and government representatives.

The program will feature two full days of meetings, workshops and keynote

addresses, providing a unique opportunity to:

- Meet and exchange ideas, information and experience with other support group convenors from around Australia
- Learn from leading cancer experts from around the world
- Hear about the latest prostate cancer research
- Develop your training and skills on practical aspects of running a support group and assisting those touched by prostate cancer
- Contributing to form an agenda for government action

The PCFA website features the program of international and national speakers are highlighted on the following pages. I look forward to having all of you join us at the PCFA's first National Conference.

• Registration for the PCFA national conference can be completed online at www.prostate.org.au/conference

Research findings and news items from around the world

Submitted by Trevor Hunt

ANEW imaging system highlighting cancerous tissue makes it easier for surgeons to detect and remove tumors without harming surrounding healthy tissue, according to US researchers. The fluorescence-assisted resection and exploration (FLARE) system, comprising a near-infrared imaging

system (NIR), a video monitor and computer, shows promise for improving surgery for breast, prostate and lung cancers. In advanced stages, boundaries of these cancers can be difficult to define; FLARE may help cancer surgeons avoid cutting structures such as blood vessels and nerves.

Patients are injected with special dyes that target specific structures such as cancer cells. When exposed to NIR light, the dyes light up the cancer cells, which appear on a video monitor.

Details about early clinical trials of the system, where researchers used FLARE to visualize organs and

body fluids of mice and map the lymph nodes of pigs, were presented at the recent national meeting of the American Chemical Society. The first human clinical trials will involve mapping the lymph nodes of breast cancer patients.

Source: HealthDay News, 19/8/08.

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