

Central Australia Chapter



Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

PROSTATE SUPPORTER

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Groups of South Australia and Northern Territory

www.prostate.org.au

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Volume 3: Number 8

Conference points the way ahead for delegates

The success of the PCFA international conference in August sets a new benchmark for continued prostate cancer awareness and treatment developments.

WITH more than 1000 people attending the second international Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia conference at the Gold Coast Convention Centre in August, organisers are claiming this crucial summit meet of leading specialists, researchers, doctors, support group members and patients has established a new beacon for prostate cancer awareness in Australia.

Encouraged by extensive national media coverage of the event and its keynote addresses, the PCFA is confident that the fight against prostate cancer has become a health issue of primary public concern in this country – which will ultimately help the progress of research programs, treatment innovations, testing regimes and even build the support and

efficient functioning of support groups. “The conference acts as a springboard to inform as many people as possible about what progress into prostate cancer treatment is being made, and a means of spreading hope that such progress will be ongoing,” says PCFA chief executive officer Andrew Giles.

The potency of this awareness message will be amplified further during September with the large number of Bunnings stores across Australia helping local prostate cancer support groups to stage awareness and fundraising events.

“It’s encouraging that we are being presented with more and more opportunities to spread the message about men being active and sensibly managing their health to help combat prostate cancer,” says Andrew Giles.

Newsletters can also be read online at www.pcagsa.org.au/pages/supporter.html



in brief...

• **WORTHY AWARD RECIPIENT:** It was fitting that the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia presented Jeff Roberts (pictured above, at left) with the Max Gardner Award at the international conference for distinguished service. A stalwart of the Central Australia Chapter and local support groups, Jeff commented later that he is probably the only person to have received this award twice – as he accepted it on behalf of Trevor Hunt in 2008. See pages 10 and 12 more conference news.

• **ON SEPTEMBER 10, Flinders University is hosting a significant free public lecture on The Emotional Cost of Cancer: Dealing With Anxiety and Depression. The lecture will be delivered by Associate Professor Jane Turner, from the discipline of psychiatry at the University of Queensland, who has worked clinically in oncology for 20 years. The lecture will be in the Flinders University Health Sciences Lecture Complex, corner of University Drive and Ring Rd, from 6pm to 7.30pm. For more details, contact the Flinders Department of Oncology on 8204 8997 or email rebecca.keough@flinders.edu.au**

• **CONTRIBUTIONS** from all Support Group members to the monthly Prostate Supporter newsletters are most welcome; please email items and images to Karyn Foster: karynfoster@adam.com.au

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

Prostate Cancer Action Group

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 14 MEETING:

The next meeting of the Prostate Cancer Action Group SA will be held in the upstairs meeting room at the Cancer Council SA, 202 Greenhill Rd, Eastwood, commencing at 5.30pm on Tuesday September 14. Entry is via the rear stairway.

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

Odyssey in the Outback

The Rail 2 Rocket Tag-Along Tow was a significant fundraising event for the Newell Foundation for Prostate Cancer Research, retracing the steps of the late photographer who in 2000 published the book *Following the Old Ghan Railway Line: 1878-1980*.

After three years of planning, 21 vehicles carrying 51 adventurers (pictured) set off to follow the old Ghan railway line to Oodnadatta, then across to Coober Pedy and finish in Woomera on August 20.

Brian and his wife Maxine had travelled the Oodnadatta track several times after being diagnosed with terminal prostate cancer. The book of his photos from those journeys



helped raise funds for prostate cancer research, and after Brian's death seven years ago, friends established the Brian Newell Foundation to continue fundraising. Brian's original plans were supported by the Brighton Rotary Club and several sponsors; it was therefore fitting that Rail 2 Rocket was led by Rotarian Don Ward and three members of the Foundation board.

The trip was a memorable experience, with good weather and road conditions. Brian's wife Maxine and sister Laurenta were among the travellers, and the venture raised more than \$15,000. This will be presented to the Coromandel Valley Rotary Club by the Newell Foundation Board, and then forwarded to the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia to help fund research projects.

Raising a glass gives a fitting tribute

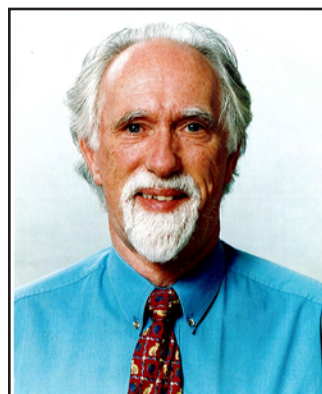
Anne Collins explains how funds collected by a social wine group as a memorial for her late husband will be put to good use for prostate cancer patients.

WHEN my husband, Dr Barry Collins, passed away in 2000 due to prostate cancer at the age of 62, I felt that I wanted to do something worthwhile in loving memory of this most talented and wonderful gentleman – something that would assist other men to cope with this difficult and often fatal disease.

For many years Barry and I had been organising monthly activities for a wine appreciation group with about 70 members, and funds raised by their annual membership and donations at each event were forwarded to a worthy charity.

Over 16 years the group has supported four different causes but, after Barry's death, the members were keen to support prostate cancer – and so, after contacting the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, a fund has been set up in Barry's name. Through the past eight years, this group has raised about \$40,000, with interest. Now a proposal from the PCFA to use these funds has been accepted by our group.

The fund will be maintained and each year a grant of \$5000 will be made available by formal application, with certain criteria, for a rural prostate nurse. The money



The late Dr Barry Collins

can go towards covering travel and accommodation costs, enabling the nurse to update their knowledge and undergo training at a relevant city hospital. This application will commence in 2011.

I have now relinquished management of the wine group, other than to come up with ideas and suggestions for functions and events, and three other long-standing members will continue to host and administer the group.

Most of the wine group members from 2009 have remained and we have already gained several new members in 2010. The main difference will be that events will be held on alternate months instead of the current 10 per year.

• If you would like further details about the wine group or the grant, please contact Anne at ajecollins@yahoo.com.au

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

Many ways to prevent sinking to the depths of depression

Being alert to the warning signs of depression can be the trigger to help curb the damaging affects of this far-reaching and very serious illness, as Ian Fisk reports.

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 20 MEETING:
The Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group meets on the third Monday of each month in the Park View Room of the Fullarton Park Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd, Fullarton, starting at 7pm. The support group's September 20 meeting will feature a talk from Dr David Evans, who will give a presentation on "Prostate Cancer from a Pathologist's point of view".

• For more information, visit the Adelaide Support Group's dedicated website at www.psaadelaide.org or contact Ian Fisk by phoning 8296 3350, or send email to info@psaadelaide.org

THE Adelaide Support Group's speaker for August was Martin Lewis from COTA (Council of the Aging) who talked about Beyond Maturity Blues – and correctly assumed that all of the audience was over 50 years of age.

Rather than give a PowerPoint presentation, Martin drew and put cards on a whiteboard. Martin has personal experience with Prostate Cancer so had an good understanding of what members of the group are going through. His key messages were:

- Depression is not a normal part of ageing.
- Depression is a health problem, not a weakness.
- Depression is a treatable illness.
- Information and support is available.

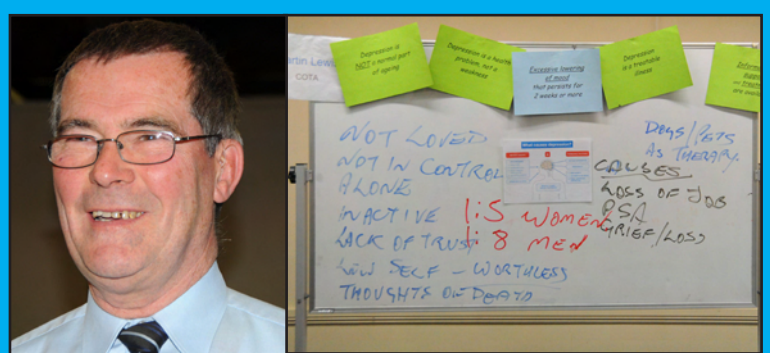
Depression is more than just a low mood, it's a serious illness. While we all feel sad, moody or low from time to time, some people experience these feelings intensely, for long periods of time and often without reason. People with depression find it hard to function every day and may be reluctant to participate in activities they once enjoyed.

Depression is one of the most common of all mental health problems. About one million Australian adults and 100,000 young people live with depression each year. One in five

people experience depression at some stage of their lives.

There are several types of depression. A common one is major depression (also referred to as clinical depression or unipolar depression) – a depressed mood that lasts for at least two weeks.

what not to do! Martin provided several handouts, mainly from the beyondblue group. These include the above checklist and brochures on helping someone with depression, older people and depression, understanding depression, depression in older



Guest speaker Martin Lewis was busy on the whiteboard with notes to explain his topic Beyond Maturity Blues.

Martin went through a depression checklist:

- Depressed mood most of the day
- Less interest or pleasure in all activities
- Weight loss or gain (without dieting)
- Sleeping difficulties
- Slowed or faster movements
- Tiredness or loss of energy
- Feeling worthless
- Difficulty concentrating
- Thoughts of death

He covered practical ways to help someone with depression, highlighting both what to do and

people, what causes depression, help for depression anxiety and related disorders under Medicare and Living with and caring for a person with depression/anxiety.

Other materials included detailing depression in men, with a long list of phone numbers one can call for help and websites for further information.

The main numbers to call for help with depression are the beyondblue info line on 1300 22 4636, or for urgent assistance call lifeline on 13 11 14.

There are also helpful websites such as: www.49.com.au www.andrologyaustralia.org and www.beyondblue.org.au

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER MEETING:

The support group met at 6.30pm on September 1 in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga. The guest speaker was radiation oncologist Dr Phuong Tran.

OCTOBER 6 MEETING:

The next City of Onkaparinga prostate cancer support group meeting is at 6.30pm on Wednesday, October 6 in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga. Guest Speaker is molecular biologist and prostate cancer researcher Dr Grant Buchanan.

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

• Special thanks are extended to the City of Onkaparinga Support Group sponsors: **Southern Primary Health Morphett Vale, Port Noarlunga-Christies Beach RSL Sub Branch, Cartridges Now Christies Beach, The Original Open Market** and to the **City of Onkaparinga Council**.

Returning with a mine of good information

The international conference has provided inspiring information that delegates are now keen to pass onto all support group members, as John Shields reports.

AN excerpt from the PCFA International Conference program gives a good indication of what more than 1000 people at the Gold Coast conference experienced over the three days from August 6-8:

“With the theme Advancing Quality of Life, this conference brings together leading Australian and International Speakers, showcasing the latest developments in prostate cancer research, disease management, diagnosis, health promotion, treatment and support.

“A unique mix of discussions, networking events and presentations, this conference brings together scientists, nurses, medical practitioners, community organisations, allied health professionals, public health advocates, support group managers, health promotion professionals and government representatives. It is also an important event for all Australians who have an interest in prostate cancer.

“The conference provides a unique learning experience for delegates in regard to treatment options, disease management and prostate cancer research, and to:

- Meet and exchange ideas, information and experience with others in the field;
- Meet the leading prostate

cancer researchers from Australia and around the world.

- Learn from leading experts from around the world
- Enhance training and skills development to assist those affected by prostate cancer.
- Contribute to formulating an agenda for future government funding.”

John Shields hopes to receive notes and DVDs to provide members with more information from the conference presentations.

SMART INTERVIEW

SAC CHAIRMAN David Gregory has emailed an ABC interview by Norman Swan with two important men, both from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in New York – Professor Peter Scardino, chairman of the Department of Surgery and head of the Prostate Cancer Program (who spoke at the PCFA International Conference), and Dr John Mulhall, director of Sexual and Reproductive Medicine.

John Shields emailed and enclosed this 16-page report to people on the Onkaparinga group mailing list. For others who would like to read the transcript and view all comments, listen or download audio, the link is <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/healthreport/stories/2010/2988868.htm>

BARBECUES GALORE

IN THE WAKE of the successful Pre-Fathers Day barbecue at the Bunnings Noarlunga Store on Friday September 3, at which support group helpers handed out Prostate Cancer Be A Man Pamphlets and sold blue prostate cancer pins and stickers, we have been advised by support group patron, Councillor Artie Ferguson, that we can definitely host a barbecue outside Woolworths Supermarket – so we will wait for the weather to warm up before staging this event.

INFORMATIVE VIEWING

PCFA Pelvic Floor Exercises for Men, by Associate Professor Pauline Chiarelli, is an excellent and informative video, and we thank Wolfgang Schoch, chairman of Prostate Melbourne, for sending a copy of this excellent to the support group. It is now with our librarian Peter Kiley.

CHAPTER COUNCIL NEWS

THE NEXT Central Australia Chapter Council meeting, being hosted by the Payneham Prostate Cancer Support Group, will be held at the Arkaba Court Motel, Glen Osmond Rd Fullarton on Thursday September 16 at 10am. The Central Australia Chapter AGM will be held in the Barossa at 10am on October 15 and 16.

Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group

Quality of life is the aim of ongoing health programs

The PCFA International Conference theme **Advancing Quality of Life** is reinforced by SA Health's **Do It For Life** program, as Mitcham Support Group deputy chairman **Roland Harris** reports.

THE Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group's August meeting attracted 22 members and visitors, who got a first-hand account of what happened at the PCFA international conference – and how its major themes will resonate through local support groups.

Jeff and Theban Roberts, John and Dianne Baulderstone, and Graeme Bradley represented the Mitcham Group at the conference. Graeme's report on this event that he delivered to the support group (published in detail on Page 10 of this newsletter) included these observations:

- PCFA chief executive officer Andrew Giles believes this conference held the largest number of prostate cancer researchers ever assembled at one venue in Australia.
- 55 sessions were conducted by about 80 presenters and moderators – often with four sessions running concurrently.
- PSA testing received general support throughout the conference.
- About 1000 presenters, moderators and delegates attended, 6 – 8 August.

Graeme noted that this event was an impressive experience, and he felt privileged to have been there.



We also congratulate Jeff Roberts, pictured above, (and wife Theban) who received a Max Gardner Award for Distinguished Service from the PCFA.

This award is named in honour of the former PCFA Chairman, who died from prostate cancer in 2004.

THE theme of the international conference – Advancing Quality of Life – was blended into a PowerPoint presentation by the support group's guest speaker for August, Geoff Coombe – a Lifestyle Advisor with SA Health, based at Clovelly Park (phone 8277 2488).

The SA Health lifestyle service is freely available to working-age adults (older than 18) who are at risk of developing diabetes, heart disease and other preventable chronic diseases.

Research shows that living a healthier lifestyle can prevent or delay the onset of chronic

disease. The program is not available to people with diagnosed problems.

The Do It For Life program requires approval from your GP to participate and a 12+ score in the AUSDRISK screening test. In fact, if you are a 65-year-old non-indigenous Australian male without a family history of diabetes type 1 or 2, you already score 11 points, to which blood pressure, lifestyle habits and waist measurement points must be added.

Such numbers really put the frighteners on us, doesn't it?

Geoff handed each of us a program folder. My personal AUSDRISK score was 15 points, which gives me a 1 in 7 chance of developing diabetes – about the same as odds as getting prostate cancer!

It would seem that a daily walk from the front door to the car is not enough. At the end of Geoff's presentation, I actually walked over to thank him with a bottle containing 7.5 standard drinks to be sipped over five days, followed by two alcohol-free days as directed.

Lifestyle Advisors with SA Health are located near you in the Adelaide area and various rural locations. To be referred to a Lifestyle Advisor, please phone 1300 803 525.

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 23 MEETING

The next Mitcham Support Group event will be held on Thursday, September 23, in the Colonel Light Gardens RSL club rooms at 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens, from 7pm. Guest speaker will be Clara Tait, a Health Education Officer with Asthma Foundation of SA. Her topic is Living Well with Respiratory Conditions.

OCTOBER MEETING

The support group's October meeting will have a group discussion among support group members.

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

Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group

Speaking opportunities help spread the word

Prostate cancer support groups with small memberships can't perform every awareness task but good opportunities still arise, as Barossa group convenor Don Piro reports.

THE August meeting of the Barossa Valley Prostate Support Group was well attended by current and new members – and was quite lively as we caught up to discuss our health, recent activities and some Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia Chapter issues.

Unfortunately the group recognised it would not be able to help out in the nation-

COMING EVENT

SEPTEMBER 21 MEETING

- The Barossa Support Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month at Don Piro's home, 28 Kindler Ave, Nuriootpa. Please contact Don for further information on 8562 3359 or 0419 863 124.

wide September barbecue and Bunnings prostate cancer awareness activities but the members are still very keen to meet as a group, particularly

supporting each other in our prostate cancer journeys.

Barossa group convenor Don Piro was invited to be a guest speaker by the Kapunda

Lions at their August dinner, and also at the Barossa Valley Machinery Preservation Society meeting in November, where he will discuss "How Cancer Changed my Life".

This event will provide a good opportunity to spread information about the Barossa Prostate Support Group – and hopefully attract some additional members to this valuable local collective.

Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group

Considering grave matters

STRONG NUMBERS attending the Murray Bridge Support Group's August meeting heard well-known and respected local undertaker Claude Minge give an interesting address titled The Last Person To Let You Down.

Claude commenced his talk by outlining the history of his profession and its permitted practices governing the options available to the public.

These options are burial (in a registered cemetery), cremation and bequeathing of the body to medical science.

He advised that the method of body disposal be specified in your will to minimise family rifts. In case of disputes, the executor of the will could decide the matter.

• Bequeathing the body to medical science: The body

must be delivered to the medical school within 24 hours of death. The service is free and the university can be authorised to arrange burial or cremation.

• Organ donation: This is not an option when death occurs outside the metropolitan area due to time constraints.

• Pre-paid funerals and funeral bonds: These prevent problems for the family of the deceased. Funds are held by independent trustees and are not included as assets by Centrelink. They are transferrable between undertakers.

• Recent developments in burials: There are more burials in a shroud, which is an Islamic practice; cardboard coffins, which are more like particle board; and vertical burials, which are a simpler method for digging graves and allow more burials in a plot.

• Plot leases: Originally the standard term of lease was 99 years but in about 1970 it was reduced to 50 years and more recently to 25 years.

• Cremations: These are increasing as a proportion of all funerals and now represent about 60 per cent of the total.

• Crematoria: There are five crematoria in South Australia – Enfield (the oldest) and Centennial Park in the metropolitan area, and at Mt Gambier, Whyalla and Port Lincoln.

• Ashes: These are returned to the family of the deceased for safekeeping. They may be inserted in an existing family plot.

• Headstones: When a lease of a plot is not renewed, the headstones are offered to the family (if known) by the cemetery authority. Any not wanted may be auctioned.

During Claude's talk many questions were raised and explained. Acting Chairman and Vice-President Trevor Muirhead thanked Claude for his excellent presentation and, to acclamation, presented him with a bottle of wine.

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

Prosper Darwin Prostate Cancer Support Group

Keeping members informed delivers encouraging results

Communication is the key to getting more men involved in prostate cancer support activities, as Darwin group convenor Keith Williams reports.

IT HAS been a busy month since the Prosper Darwin Support Group's disastrous July meeting, and while not out of the woods yet, the group is definitely getting back on its feet.

The national conference in early August really was a tremendous event, with quality speakers and programs, and wonderful opportunities to network with group members from all over Australia (including Bruce Kinnersley from Geelong, who attended the Darwin group's July gathering).

It was a tremendous pity that many more members didn't attend, though it was fitting that Central Australia Chapter's Jeff Roberts was recognised for his tremendous efforts for the cause, with him being awarded the Max Gardner Award.

One real bonus was meeting one of our Darwin group members at the conference. He is usually unable to get to our monthly meetings due to a very full professional life, though he remains committed to an informal, but very efficient support group. He said he learned a great amount at the conference, and I have asked him to share his impressions with Darwin members at our September meeting.

How did he know about the

conference at all, you may ask? It was through reading the monthly Prostate Supporter newsletter and reinforced by materials received through our mailing lists.

BUNNINGS BARBECUE

BACK in Darwin for our monthly meeting, it was great to see some of the nomads gathered around the table again. We did have a program planned, but there was an unusual amount of business to discuss, and everybody wanted to have as much of a natter as our friends can have.

The major item of business was the activities during September with two local Bunnings stores, and the challenge we faced to man two awareness stalls, particularly with our group numbers still depleted.

Fortunately, the Bunnings stores are both on the ball and very keen to do as much as they can. We will only be manning the stall, and leave the fundraising to Bunnings staff via donation tins, raffles and a very successful morning tea event.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

KEITH has received a phone call from an organiser with a singles group known as Dinner Connections. The group had seen the PCFA's advertising campaign for It's



Keith Williams enjoy some good cheer and fellowship at the PCFA national conference at the Gold Coast.

COMING EVENT

The Prosper Darwin support group will next meet on **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13**. The group meets on the second Monday of each month, at the Harbour Room, Christ Church Cathedral, corner of Smith St and the Esplanade, Darwin, at 7.30pm.

Up To You and awareness barbecues. While this group isn't interested in barbecues, it is holding a dinner during September, with all profits coming to our group. I have been invited to say a few words, and to provide some entertainment, such as playing Mike Brady's song *Talk About It* and a very funny DVD called *Date With Destiny*. It's great to see awareness opportunities such as this being picked up in the community.

CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

FROM THE Prosper Darwin group's June meeting, Keith also received a phone call from one of the few members of the public that attended, asking for an informal presentation to 40 to 50 members of U3A (University of the Third Age) at their next monthly meeting,

to be held late in September. And, of course, September also hosts the annual Relay for Life, an awareness and fundraising activity held by the Cancer Council. We hope to have a number of our members participate in the Survivors Lap.

Another very interesting contact was from the health promotions officer at the Cancer Council, seeking help to set up and host stalls at two activities, both connected with men's health. Sadly, it appears that the Cancer Council finds it even harder than we do to maintain a viable men's group. While we would be very happy to help, with our currently reduced numbers, and other commitments such as Bunnings, it is doubtful we can.

Payneham Prostate Cancer Support Group

Appreciating women's issues

In a bold departure from conventional guest speakers, the prostate support group considered the health issues of women, as Payneham Support Group coordinator Phil Davis reports.

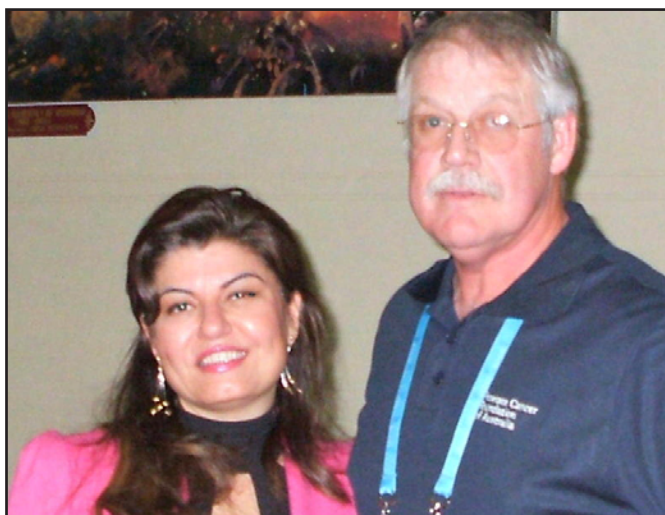
THE August meeting of the Payneham Prostate Cancer Support Group was specifically designed for the women we care about and who are valued participants in the group. The guest speaker was Dr Fariba Behnia-Willison, an obstetrician and gynaecologist who recently completed her Masters Degree in minimally invasive surgery with the Royal College of Surgeons. Her special fields of interest are:

- Prolapse and incontinence including Urodynamics.
- Pelvic pain and endometriosis.
- Menorrhagia, fibroids and post-menopausal bleeding.
- Ovarian cysts.
- Surgery for sexual dysfunction, including vaginoplasty and labioplasty.

Although most men attending the August meeting have a very minimal knowledge of this field, Dr Behnia-Willison was particularly informative and her information well received. It was especially empowering that men should have greater knowledge of their partner's health issues, as well.

It was apparent to all the audience that no matter what health issue you are faced with, there is help available and solutions possible in order to have a better quality of life, especially as you get older.

Dr Behnia-Willison advised if any woman experiences any two of the following



Gynaecologist Dr Fariba Behnia-Willison, an expert on difficult diagnostic issues, is pictured with Phil Davis at the Payneham group's August meeting.

symptoms, they should seek professional medical advice:

- Unplanned, sudden urine loss either while sleeping or during the day.
- Experiencing leakage while laughing, sneezing, jumping or performing other movements that put pressure on the bladder.
- Difficulty holding your urine as you hurry to the bathroom.
- Frequently experiencing a sudden and immediate urge to urinate.
- Visiting the bathroom to urinate more than eight times each day, or a change in your frequency of urination.
- A need to wear pads or liners to protect against unplanned leaks.
- When planning a trip, outing or event, does the availability or location of restroom

facilities affect your decision to either travel or participate?

I think the great majority of males who have prostate issues or have received treatment for prostate cancer do experience many of these symptoms and readily sympathise with women who also contend with them.

However males do not experience pregnancy, giving birth or other issues that women face which may eventuate in a prolapse – so Dr Behnia-Willison advised that if any woman experiences multiple symptoms signalling urinary or vaginal difficulties, they should swiftly seek professional medical advice.

She mentioned that 70 per cent of women have a prolapse or incontinence issues – yet only 10 per cent seek assistance from their

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 21 MEETING:

The Payneham Support Group will meet in the Payneham RSL Clubrooms, 360 Payneham Rd, Payneham at 7pm on Tuesday September 21. The meeting will feature guest speaker, Dr Jimmy Lam, a urologist who consults at Calvary Hospital, North Adelaide.

- For more information about the Payneham Support Group – or for a helpful chat about your prostate cancer issues – please phone Phil Davis (8251 0939 classic100@lifestylesa.net.au), Peter Woodrow (8263 5556) or Arthur Seager (8289 4180), or visit the Payneham Support Group's dedicated website at www.psapayneham.org

doctors. She emphasised it is important to pay attention to those simple symptoms, there are solutions at hand and after effective therapy one can look forward to a better and more comfortable future.

Dr Fariba Behnia-Willison consults at the FBWGynaecology Plus Clinic, located opposite the Ashford Hospital at 21 Alexander Ave, Ashford, phone 8297 2822. Email admin@fbwgynplus.com

McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group

Special services to provide big help around the home

The extent of services provided by the Aged Care and Housing group came as a surprise to the McLaren Districts Support Group, as Bryan Hearn reports.

THE McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group was treated to a “tag team” presentation at its August meeting from Russell Humphrey and Craig Cooper, both from the ACH group (Aged Care and Housing).

ACH is funded via Home and Community Care as part of the Federal Government. Funding is actually paid to the Onkaparinga Council, who sub-contract the role to the ACH group. The idea is to encourage people to remain in their homes for as long as possible. As people grow older they find they are unable to undertake as many home repairs. By undertaking various help roles, ACH reduce the number of home accidents caused by people trying to do some of these jobs, thus reducing the number of admissions into hospital which reduces overall costs to the community.

ACH undertake what they describe as “low-level handyman” work. This includes such repairs as plastering, fixing loose floor and wall tiles, installing handrails, fixing fence panels and many household chores.

Should a member of the community require handrails to be installed in various locations around their home, advice can be provided following a survey conducted

by an occupational therapist who will suggest the most appropriate locations. Once all locations have been identified, rails will be installed by a contractor and paid for by ACH. The rails usually cost about \$45 each and the survey costs about \$20.

Toilet doors can be refitted so that they swing out instead of in, making entry much easier if an occupant collapses. Special hinges can be installed which allow a door to be lifted off for an emergency entry. Magnetic fittings can be installed on screen doors to keep them open when shifting goods.

Batteries in smoke alarms must be changed on an annual basis and ACH can assist, or provide and install a lithium battery smoke alarm, guaranteed for 10 years without attention. Ceramic discs can be provided at a cost of about \$20 and installed in taps, thus making tap operation much easier for occupants. Many of these services incur a fee of about \$5 per hour, but no call out fee – and where financial hardship is evident, this can be negotiated.

ACH also offers a garden service where volunteers clean up overgrown gardens, prune trees and bushes, poison weeds and other jobs. They do not offer a regular garden maintenance program. If larger jobs involving chainsaws

COMING EVENT

THURSDAY September 23

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, September 23. The guest speaker will either be a local vet talking on the value of pets, or a homeopathy practitioner.

- Phone support group president Bryan Hearn on 8323 7924 or 0410 539 274 to confirm your attendance.

and ladders are required, contractors will be engaged. Cleaning gutters is included in this type of work and costs about \$15 to \$20 per house.

Domestic cleaning on a short-term basis can be arranged for people returning from hospital. Some help can be provided where intensive ongoing care is required but this is dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Home security is a major part of ACH services. A security survey of the home is undertaken and advice given on upgrading locks and security features such as heights of boundary fences and bushes in the gardens, eliminating areas for intruders to hide. Members were shown examples of deadlocks, patio door bolts and sliding window locks, all provided free and can be installed at no cost to the occupant.

Another item that raised a lot of interest was the provision and installation at no cost of

a small key safe that can be attached to a wall adjacent to the front door. This should contain a spare house key and entry to the safe is by way of a 4 digit numerical code entered via small push buttons on the face of the safe.

Peepholes in doors can be provided and installed at no cost. All these items have been purchased through funding from the Crime Prevention section of the State Government, with installations costs covered by Federal Government funding.

Any member of the community seeking these services will need to provide certain personal information to be coded and forwarded for use by the Federal Government. Nothing will be provided that will identify the occupant and the information will be used to facilitate future house planning, maintaining statistical databases and other similar programs.

A view from the audience

Graeme Bradley, secretary of the Mitcham Support Group, attended the recent PCFA International Conference at the Gold Coast from August 6 to 8 – the first event of this type he has witnessed – and provides this overview of proceedings.

THE theme of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's International Conference at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre from August 6 to 8 – Advancing Quality of Life – showcased the latest developments in prostate cancer research, diagnosis, disease management, health promotion, treatment and support.

The conference provided a unique mix of discussions, networking events and presentations, bringing together scientists, nurses, medical practitioners, community organisations, allied health professionals, public health advocates and government representatives.

PCFA CEO, Andrew Giles, in his welcome speech, said that this could be the largest number of prostate cancer researchers ever assembled in one venue in Australia. The assembly included about 1000 presenters, moderators and delegates – including myself with Jeff and Theban Roberts, John and Dianne Baulderstone and Graeme Bradley from the Mitcham support group.

Over the three days, throughout the various auditoriums and rooms, 55 sessions were conducted by about 80 presenters and moderators. At most times, 4 of these sessions were conducted concurrently. Sessions ranged from men's attitudes to seeking help at the early stages to palliative care at the other end with presentations covering complex scientific research in between.

It was impossible to attend all the presentations and difficult to choose those of most interest and to get to them on time. For example, Saturday started with a working breakfast at 7.00 and the Gala Dinner finished at 11.30. Wise Delegates stayed on after the closing ceremony on Sunday to relax or to explore The Gold Coast and hinterland.

Separate booklets containing presenter abstracts and biographies were provided and posters expanding upon these abstracts



Scenes from the international conference, as seen through the camera lens by Ian Fisk.



Grant Buchanan with his award for Young Researcher of the Year.

were displayed around the exhibition hall. There was a huge pool of resources, some confirming what we already know. For example:

- Better outcomes are achieved where a healthy diet and exercise are pursued
- PSA testing received general support throughout the conference.
- When comparing open radical prostatectomy, robotic and laparoscopic surgery, outcomes are similar. The key is to find the surgeon with the most experience – and beware of practices that boast a high success rate, as it may only take on patients with a better prognosis.

However, there were some other very interesting presentations that shed new light on prostate cancer treatment developments, including:

- Excitement among researchers seeking breakthroughs in diagnosis and treatment, with promising trials using a cocktail of drugs, such as taxotere thalidomide and celebrex.
- PCA3 urine tests.

- Hypoxia – the effect of oxygen on cancer cells.

- Sessions on sexual recovery were popular and often humorous (ask me about the cow from Mt Compass some time...).

Support Group delegates produced a manifesto to guide their future endeavours. The convention had eight major sponsors, about 40 other sponsors and exhibitors all of whom generously contributed to the event. Angove Family Winemakers sponsored the Saturday dinner.

There was also entertainment. Mike Brady performed the PCFA anthem Talk About It at the opening session and elsewhere, while Belladivas, a sextet of sopranos, and Maske, a trio of female musicians playing electronic strings, were sensational during the dinners. Other groups sang and entertained during lunch breaks.

The conference organisation by Square One Events, including transport, transfers and accommodation, was 18 months in the making and was a great success.

In his closing address, CEO Andrew Giles acknowledged that there remains more to be done and that PCFA is committed.

Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER MEETING

The Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group met on September from 7pm in the Town Council's Andy McNeil meeting room. Guest speaker was noted Northern Territory sports physician Dr Geoff Thompson, a cancer survivor, presenting Prostate Cancer From Both Sides - What Every Man Should Know About

Prostate Cancer, and also some new perspectives.

SAUSAGE SIZZLE

The Lion's Club of Alice Springs will conduct a sausage sizzle at Big O Mitre Ten on Saturday mornings of September 4 and 25, with proceeds going to our group. They will do the cooking while our group mans an information and awareness booth.

MONSTER RAFFLE

The Alice Springs Support

Group is this year's nominated recipient of the Central Australian Tourism Association's fundraiser. Our members have contributed some of the great prizes and will sell raffle tickets in three shopping centres over the next few weeks. Raffle draw date is September 24.

STRETCH AND STRIDE

Noel Harris conducts free weekly Wednesday evening exercise classes

on the Rhonda Diano Oval, behind Sammy's Pizza restaurant. Note the new summer time from 5.30pm to 6.30pm.

STRIDE-FOR-HEALTH

This 4km walk, jog, stroll, wheelchair, pram, family activity starts at 8am from Olive Pink Reserve on Sunday September 26. Light breakfast is included with entry. Funds shared between breast cancer and prostate cancer groups.

Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group



ABOVE: Nicola Chapman.

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING:

The Port Pirie prostate cancer support group met at 7.30pm in the BHAS Bowling Club, Halley St, Port Pirie. The guest speaker was Colin Ingham from Independence Health Solutions, talking about continence products and the new continence aids payment scheme (CAPS).



Allan Manfield with Grant Buchanan.

Regional services explained

Port Pirie support group members learned about the full extent of services for patients suffering with cancer.

GUEST speaker at the Port Pirie support group's August group meeting was Nicola Champion, cancer care and palliative services coordinator for Port Pirie Regional Health Service through Country Health SA. Before an audience of 23 members, Nicola spoke about services available to people in the Mid-North Health Area diagnosed with cancer or a terminal illness. Members of the group had quite a few questions about service delivery and querying Nicola about what it was like to work with the dying.

CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

SUPPORT GROUP convener Allan Manfield attended the Prostate Cancer National Conference at the Gold Coast on August 6-8 and attended 14 sessions featuring guest speakers from the US and Australia. Allan found all sessions entertaining and informative, and had the pleasure of meeting the Young Researcher of the Year, Dr Grant Buchanan of Adelaide. Allan took the opportunity to ask if Grant would attend a future local meeting to speak about his research.

PORT GERMAIN AWARENESS

LOCAL prostate cancer support group members Mario and Jeannette Valente organised a Men's Health Information Session held at Port Germein on August 18. Guest Speakers included Men's Health Ambassador Kym Thomas from Port Augusta and Roger Kleinig from Laura. With an audience of 24 people in attendance at the meeting, a prostate cancer information stall was set up and manned by local prostate cancer support group members Allan Manfield, Barry Scarman and Colin Lang. People attending were entertained by speakers and received valuable information about prostate cancer, incontinence and family relationships.

A MONTH OF ACTIVITIES

SEPTEMBER will be another busy month for the Port Pirie support group with a few events to enjoy - especially a fundraising barbecue being held at the local Automobile Restorers Club, with proceeds from the event being donated to PCFA.

Let's talk about sex

The national Prostate Cancer conference identified a greater need for more thorough analysis of sexual function and satisfaction as an important aspect of post-operative recovery.

DELEGATES at the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's second International Conference during August heard that clinicians are finally getting the message that rehabilitation of post-operative problems for prostate cancer patients is possible – but will take a more concerted effort from all parties to register greater success.

Curing prostate cancer comes at a price for patients, according to conference speaker Dr Phillip Katelaris, a consultant urologist and director of the Prostate Cancer Rehabilitation Centre in Sydney.

And that cost is often anxiety and depression, incontinence or lack of bladder control, and sexual problems, especially erectile dysfunction. Problems with incontinence and sexual function can lead to embarrassment, social isolation and relationship problems, which in turn feed into depression and anxiety.

Dr Katelaris says the focus has been on treating the cancer while ignoring a man's quality of life: "This is unusual in medicine". However, this is largely due to men and doctors being reluctant to acknowledge that a problem exists. Many studies reflect an inflated sense of success with regards to a man's ability to have sex following surgery, though a mismatch can arise from what questions researchers ask. Those inquiring if a man is able to achieve an "erection strong enough for intercourse" report more reliable outcomes than



questionnaires asking men to compare their sex life before and after surgery. Similarly, some researchers ignore whether the sex is enjoyable, or spontaneous, or frequent. Also, claims that robotic surgery has better outcomes than open surgery in terms of sexual function don't stand up under available evidence.

Rosie King, a Sydney-based GP and sex therapist, notes that after surgery many men find their penis may be as much as a few centimetres shorter, as well as claiming their erection isn't as firm or sensation is reduced. "Most, if not all, men will notice some reduction in the quality of their erection, even though it may still be serviceable and functional," King says. This can have a tremendous negative effect on men's psyche and cause problems with their sense of masculinity, reduce desire for sexual intercourse and send ripples through the relationship.

Papers presented at the Gold Coast conference report growing evidence that proactive rehabilitation can make a real difference, in the bedroom and the bathroom.

Dr Katelaris said poor bladder control is caused by weakening of a small muscle under the prostate that is part of the pelvic floor muscles. Men who start pelvic floor training before their operation and continue it during recovery have improved incontinence rates and recover more quickly.

Dr Michael Gillman of the Health Institute for Men in Queensland – a member of national advisory boards concerned with erectile dysfunction – says one of the most common treatments for prostate cancer involves surgically removing the prostate gland while sparing the two nerves that switch on blood supply to the penis – though it takes from three months to three

years to know for sure whether this has been successful. Even if the nerves remain intact, they go into hibernation if they're disturbed. Without assistance, they may remain in limbo.

"Men need regular erections to keep oxygenated blood flowing to their penis. A healthy man will have five to six erections every night during rapid eye movement sleep, but that stops when the nerves are temporarily damaged," Dr Gillman says.

"If the penis doesn't get enough oxygenated blood flowing to it, fibrosis and scar tissue can develop. When that occurs there's a possibility that the man can become permanently impotent, even after the nerves recover."

There are increasing numbers of options available to help men maintain erections during the recovery stage, including PDE-5 inhibitors – the most famous being Viagra – which improves blood flow into penis. However, PDE-5 inhibitors only work if the nerves to the penis are intact after surgery. If they are not, penile injection therapy is a more suitable option, as it also stimulates blood flow into penis.

Dr Gillman says there isn't yet consensus or guidelines on exactly what protocol works best, but adds that it doesn't matter what treatment is used, as long as it produces regular erections until spontaneous erections recommence.

• Source: *The Australian*, 7/8/2010, edited from the original report.