

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

APRIL 2012

Volume 5: Number 3

A clean hit for prostate awareness

Steadily and significantly, Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia is becoming a major charity and sponsorship beneficiary in South Australian events – earning both valuable funds and major community understanding of prostate cancer.

IN the wake of the very successful Boileau Adelaide cycling event, which had more than 4000 cyclists on the streets of Adelaide on Sunday March 18 to raise money for charities including PCFA, yet more big corporate-sponsored events are choosing prostate cancer as their charity of choice – with significant benefits in both publicity and funds.

The Mount Osmond Golf Club will play host to a special Pro-Am Golf event on Thursday April 19 which will raise funds for PCFA.

This event will be part of the 2012 PGA Legends Tour, which boasts numerous legends of Australian golf, such as Michael Harwood, Rodger Davis, Terry Price, Wayne Grady and many more.

On the day, 30 teams will compete for great prizes on the tough layout. The Good Guys will have five teams in the mix and is looking forward to the challenge this 18-hole course will provide. But even more important than the golf will be the message it imparts about prostate cancer – to competitors, sponsors and spectators.

“This event hopes to raise awareness of the dangers of this form of cancer and encourage men to head to the doctor for a check up,” says David Brooks, proprietor of The Good Guys’ Mile End store.

“We hope we can also use this event to raise money which will go towards the ongoing research that Prostate Cancer Foundation

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



The Good Guys and Mount Osmond Golf Club hope to hit a winning round for prostate cancer awareness with their PGA Legends Pro-Am Tournament on April 19.

of Australia conducts.”

Ian Pritchard, club professional of the Mount Osmond Golf Club, agrees about the importance of this event. “I’m excited to be hosting another great event, and I have some great golf contacts that will be playing on the day – so with the help of supporters like The Good Guys, we will be raising a lot of money for Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.”

A fundraising lunch will

follow the golf tournament, where several fantastic prizes will be up for auction, including a personal golf clinic with a PGA professional player.

If you are interested in starting your own team for the event or would like to attend the fundraising lunch, please contact Mark Tan, general manager of the Mount Osmond Golf Club on 8379 1673 or email manager@mogc.com.au for more information.

• **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**

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

Operating in Action mode

The busy list of prostate cancer awareness events for 2012 has commenced and already achieved great successes, as David Merry from the Action Group reports.

THE March issue of Prostate Supporter published the busy calendar of Action Group activities for the few next months – and we are well and truly in ACTION mode, with encouraging responses from participants and audiences at all of our recent appearances.

On March 3, David Merry was at the Mundulla Show, and it proved to be a great day. Enormous community input ensured an excellent country show in a beautiful setting. People were friendly, interested and pleased to see David challenging them with current information about prostate cancer.

Jeff Roberts reports that the South-East Field Days at Lucindale, held on March 16 and 17 and attracting about 25,000 people, proved to be another very successful event on the Action Group calendar. “Three members of the group travelled to Lucindale and were joined over the two days by 11 members from the Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group,” says Jeff. “PCFA had an excellent site in the Lifestyle pavilion and distributed a wide range of brochures as well as promoting awareness and support.

“Overall the response from people was very favourable, and I feel the presence of local support group members was very helpful as they were recognised by many.

“The event is conducted by the Lions Club of Lucindale



Jeff Roberts (above, centre) accepts a cheque on behalf of PCFA at the Lucindale Field Days, while a strong contingent of volunteers (below) manned the prostate cancer awareness stall. Photographs: Ian Fisk



(membership around 40) and they do a fantastic job. Each year donations are made by the club to community groups and local projects, and we accepted a \$1000 cheque for PCFA (PCFA also received \$1000 here in 2010).

“With favourable weather, a well-positioned site and being located in very attractive countryside, this was an excellent event. Where possible, when the Action Group is involved in similar future events, we will certainly also seek the participation of local support groups.”

On the same weekend, David Merry and Bob Woods, with Ron Lehman, the Klenkes

and Trevor Muirhead of the Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group, presented an information stall at the Mount Pleasant Show. Crowd support was incredibly positive, the weather was fantastic and a large crowd attended.

The 150th Mt Pleasant Show in 2013 needs to be a diary entry now, and the Action Group has vowed to be there.

Six members of the Murray Bridge Support Group were in action yet again on Friday March 30 and Saturday March 31 at the Karoonda Farm Fair, following on from success at this fair in 2011.

The Action Group is now

COMING EVENTS

APRIL 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, April 10. Entry is via the rear stairway. New members to Action Group meetings are always welcome.

• For more information, visit the Action Group's dedicated website, with detailed archives containing newsletters, at the website: www.pcgasa.org.au

gearing up to help Don Piro and the Barossa Support Group at the Kapunda Farm Fair on Friday April 20 and Saturday April 21.

An Awareness Night at Mt Barker will be held in the Mt Barker Golf Club on Tuesday May 22.

Arrangements with the Rotary Club of Port Lincoln for an Awareness Night at the Ravensdale Sports Centre, Port Lincoln, are also progressing well in Jeff Roberts's hands.

McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group

Continuing along the path to cancer solutions

The boss of leading pathology laboratory Clinpath explained the process of trialing new cancer drugs, as McLaren Districts support group president Bryan Hearn reports.

MEMBERS of the McLaren Vale group were privileged to have Associate Professor Nick Wickham, CEO of the Clinpath organisation, as guest speaker their March meeting.



Nick Wickham

Professor Wickham's background is in haematology and oncology, and much of his work involves ongoing trials of cancer drugs at the Adelaide Cancer Centre, where he oversees a major research program. Up to 25 different clinical trials being undertaken simultaneously by his program's clinicians and data managers.

He spent some time working in Townsville – its only oncologist at that time – where he noted how patients reacted differently on being informed they had leukemia or myeloma as opposed to cancer.

Much evidence exists to support the view that on hearing that dreaded C-word, many patients become morose and shut themselves off from the rest of the world.

Professor Wickham explained how body cells create enzymes and proteins, and what effects these have on how the body works. Each

cell has up to 40,000 genes that have to be replicated exactly each time a cell is divided. Given how many millions of cells there are in our bodies and how regularly they divide and reproduce, it is understandable how mutations and problems can occur.

Mutated genes, called oncogenes, are generally attacked and weeded out by internal protection systems known as antioncogenes, via a system known as apoptosis.

He explained how samples taken from patients are examined for various cancers, being treated with various stains that show up different types of cancer or cell damage.

No treatment would be recommended or undertaken until such time as the results of these examinations had been confirmed.

Many risk factors exist in

causing cancer and these include radiation (including sunlight), poisons, chemicals (including smoking and alcohol), infections and dietary factors – but age is by far the biggest contributing factor to the onset of cancer.

Treatment modalities vary considerably due to the type of cancer being treated. These can range from simple observation (watching and waiting), radiotherapy with or without chemotherapy, high-dose brachytherapy and a long list of drugs that can be utilised as relevant to each particular case.

Prostate cancer is recognised as the second most common cancer in men with about 20,000 new cases being diagnosed each year. Statistics indicate that about 1 in 1000 of these men are in their 40s, 12 per 1000 in their 50s, 45 per 1000 in their 60s and about

80 per 1000 aged in their 70s.

Prof Wickham says no direct link between stress and cancer has been established. Vitamins have no proven benefit unless a specific defect has been identified. Basically, the immune system will protect against infection but dietary treatment is fraught with danger.

One of Professor Wickham's recommendations to new patients is to remain positive and to enjoy what they already have. Simply because somebody has been diagnosed with a disease does not mean they suddenly have to stop enjoying life or shut themselves off.

He also made a point of informing us that one of his favourite recommendations was for patients to go and enjoy a steak and chips accompanied by pint of Guinness.

COMING EVENT

MONTHLY GROUP MEETING: APRIL 26

- The McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group will conduct its next meeting on **Thursday April 26**.
- The meeting will start at 7pm in the administration building at the rear of the McLaren Vale & Districts War Memorial Hospital, Aldersey St, McLaren Vale. For further information, phone Bryan Hearn on 8323 7924.

PCFA DONATIONS AND PAYMENTS: Commonwealth Bank has advised PCFA that from 1 April 2012, the organisation will need the CSC number on the back of credit cards in order to process ALL credit card payments. Please insert this information on any required PCFA paperwork, and to collect the CSC when taking any donations over the phone.

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or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

PCFA National Board

Changes at the top to put David Sandoe in the chair

PROSTATE Cancer Foundation of Australia will farewell its national chairman of six years, Graeme Johnson, on June 30, following his recent announcement of retirement from PCFA's national board.

Graeme has been a director of PCFA since 2001 and national chairman since October 2006, and during this time he has helped establish PCFA as the peak national body for prostate cancer.

He was the inaugural chairman of the Victorian Board from 2001 to 2005 and Deputy National Chairman from 2004 to October 2006.

Following on from Graeme's resignation, PCFA is pleased to announce the appointment of David Sandoe OAM as new national chairman, and Jim Hughes AM as deputy chairman.

PCFA Chief Executive Dr Anthony Lowe said the changes happening at the helm of the national board mark a significant era in PCFA development.

"PCFA would like to extend a sincere thank you to our outgoing national chairman, Graeme Johnson, for his dedication and commitment over the last 11 years," said Dr Lowe.

"Graeme's exceptional contribution as a director of PCFA has made a tremendous contribution to our organisation, and we wish him all the best for his retirement.



LEFT: Graeme Johnson (pictured at right, with former SA Premier Mike Rann to launch national prostate cancer awareness month in Adelaide during September 2009) will soon be retiring from his role as chairman of PCFA's national board. RIGHT: David Sandoe OAM will be taking over the national chair from July.

"We are very fortunate to have David Sandoe and Jim Hughes step into these key roles. Their leadership and extensive management experience will help PCFA continue its work across the country."

In 1996, David Sandoe was diagnosed with prostate cancer and became involved with PCFA in 2000, particularly in support and advocacy areas.

He went on to be chair of the NSW Support and Advocacy Committee (SAC), co-chair of the national SAC, a national director, inaugural chair of the NSW Board, chair of the Public Awareness and Education Committee, and most recently as national deputy chairman, a role he has held since October 2006.

He has also held executive positions with various cancer organisations, including Cancer Voices NSW and Cancer Voices Australia.

With his wife, Pamela, David also leads the Prostate Cancer Support Group at the Sydney Adventist Hospital.

Of his appointment as PCFA's national chairman, David said, "I'm looking forward to my new role at PCFA after working so closely with Graeme as his deputy.

"My focus will be to continue the momentum that has been established in improving our work in the areas of advocacy, awareness, support and research."

Jim Hughes, who has been involved with PCFA for

many years as a director and as chairman of PCFA's Queensland Board, said his appointment to deputy chairman of the national board will give him the opportunity to build on the great work that has already been done by his predecessors.

"PCFA is now a well-resourced and coordinated organisation, thanks to the fantastic work to date," says Jim, who has been a director of PCFA since 2007.

"My focus will be to draw on my experience [Jim is a longtime business leader in the Australian insurance industry] to elevate PCFA's presence, so we can reduce the impact of prostate cancer in the community."

Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness: ADELAIDE GROUP

It hit me when the urologist phoned Parliament House

Dr Bob Such, Member for Fisher, was guest speaker at the Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group's monthly meeting at Fullarton on March 19 – and he presented a very informative account of his prostate cancer journey.

'MY great interest in men's health paid off because I was never reluctant to visit my local GP. He was proactive and committed to preventing health issues, or at least getting on to an issue before it got out of hand, so as my PSA readings gradually crept up, he referred me to a urologist, who did a digital rectal examination, which didn't reveal anything.

Given my PSA was still elevated, I became a candidate for a biopsy, which I feared because men had told me it was "so painful". However, the biopsy, preceded by an ultrasound (which showed nothing wrong), turned out to be painless – well, only some mild pain the next day in the front section and some blood in the urine.

The urologist, prior to the biopsy, said I would hear some banging sounds. I thought he had lost it, but true to the Wild West, I did hear several bangs as the biopsy was carried out.

Two days later, while sitting in the Speaker's office at Parliament House, I received a phone call from the urologist, confirming cancer in the prostate – localised and not too aggressive.

I had the scan and was relieved to get good news. It confirmed several things – some spots of arthritis in the fingers, a hollow head, and



Dr Bob Such: A passionate advocate of men's health.

most importantly no spread of the cancer outside of the prostate. What a relief! It was better than winning the lottery – a feeling I shared with my wife, Lyn, and my GP.

I chose the radical prostatectomy using the robot at the RAH. The robot obviously didn't like me as it didn't stitch the urethra 100 per cent. The urologist said I would heal up, but chose not to wait.

He took me to St Andrews on the Sunday for a "modification", after whistling up an anaesthetist from church. It's not every day a medical specialist takes you for a ride in their Mercedes and carries your bags from the car.

Immediately after the operation, I felt fantastic and then recuperated, with the joyous catheter attached and plenty of pelvic floor exercises

(though no baby eventuated).

I believe that I made the right decision to have a radical prostatectomy and am now committed to encouraging men in the target range to get checked out. I have been a PCFA Men's Health Ambassador, providing talks in the city and country.

The greatest thing now is to be told by a bloke that the information at these talks and the resultant check-up helped save their life. It still distresses me that we lose too many good blokes from prostate cancer, when they could have been saved.

I am determined to use my experience, good fortune and position to promote men's and women's health. I am passionate about preventative health care that arises from regular check-ups and early intervention."

COMING EVENTS

APRIL 16 MEETING:

The Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group meets on the third Monday of each month in the Community Room of the Fullarton Park Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd, Fullarton, starting at 7pm.

Guest speaker for the April meeting will be Rex A Symons, a field representative for Craniofacial Australia. This unit is dedicated to the humane understanding and management of the craniofacially deformed, by pursuing excellence in clinical, scientific and educational disciplines to advance the treatment of those afflicted.

• For more information and a detailed archive, visit the Adelaide Support Group's dedicated website at www.psaadelaide.org or phone Ian Fisk on 8296 3350, or send email to info@psaadelaide.org

Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group

Blokes are getting out and about to spread the word

With the prospect of new new Blokes' Shed in Murray Bridge to inspire them, support group members have been active in the community, as secretary Max Klenke reports.

THERE were 19 members – men and their partners – present at the March meeting of the Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group, and all enjoyed an informative presentation from guest speaker Ron Nance – chairman of the local Mens' Shed Project, and also our support group vice chairman.

After having investigated several locations, an appropriate site for a Mens' Shed has been found near the Murray Bridge Showground, near the unused, former Golden Fleece depot. Funds of \$9100, which need to be used by the end of June, are available for this project.

There are now about 700 mens' sheds in Australia, and the Murray Bridge project now has 28 financial members, who will each contribute \$20 per annum.

While the project has to be named Mens' Shed for the sake of funding requirements, it is also open to women. Ron also explained that the finished shed will provide a facility for woodturning, woodworking and metal



On March 17, six members from the Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group attended the 149th Annual Show at Mount Pleasant. Together with David and Bob from the Prostate Cancer Action Group, we ran a stall promoting prostate cancer awareness.

As someone who was attending the Mount Pleasant Show for the first time, Max Klenke says it was an interesting experience, for it is a surprisingly large show and attracts a large attendance.

“Many men, especially from middle age onwards, were approached by our group, and it was pleasing to meet many who are already being regularly tested, as well as those who have had prostate cancer treatment and some who are currently being treated,” says Max. “It was pleasing to see that there is already quite an awareness growing among the male population.”

working, as well as kitchen cooking. It will be an alcohol-free venue.

Our group's financial statement was presented and received, then president

COMING EVENT

- The Murray Bridge support group conducts its monthly meetings at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month, at Our Wellbeing Place, 108 Swanport Rd, Murray Bridge.

- The support group's next meeting will be held on **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18.**

- For more information about the group, phone group president **Trevor Muirhead on 8569 1342**, or group secretary **Max Klenke on 8532 1936.**

Trevor Muirhead and others reported on the successful prostate cancer information stall that the Murray Bridge group helped to present at the Mount Pleasant Show

After a discussion on general food quality falling due to some of the chemicals used to maintain quantity over quality, a sub committee of five was elected to obtain more information on this subject.

Prosper Darwin Prostate Cancer Support Group

The Prosper Darwin support 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. For further information, phone Keith Williams on 8981 4506.

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Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group

Learning how massage gives a healing touch

Massage provides great relief for many prostate cancer sufferers, although it's far from a simple art, as Alice Springs support group chairman Tony O'Brien reports.

At the Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support group meeting on March 8, massage therapists Toni-Maree "TM" Carter and Marie James were guest speakers, explaining the finer points of their profession.

Toni-Maree, a trainer and quality manager at Eagle Training Services in Alice Springs, explained to the group that different therapists are proficient in various different forms of massage, and that each used different pressures to suit their individual patients.

Marie is a masseuse who is also qualified as a practitioner to provide the physiological and practical benefits to prostate cancer patients.

Among the many points covered in their very interesting presentation, Toni-Maree and Marie explained:

- The benefits and effects of massage on the body's system.
- Correct ergonomic positioning when providing massage.
- The meaning of indication and contra-indications of massage.
- An introduction to the pain cycle and its relationship within massage.



Alice Springs support group members are pictured above, receiving a donation from Qantas duty manager Aaron Skinner following a prostate cancer presentation delivered to Alice Springs airport staff. (From left) Murray Neck, Aaron Skinner, Ian Wagner, Tony O'Brien and Rosie Gibbins, Qantas Alice Springs Health & Safety Officer.



Massage therapists Toni-Maree "TM" Carter and Marie James at the Alice Springs support group's March meeting.

- A warning note about endangerment sites.

They also addressed the prickly question of whether massage and cancer treatments are opposed – and this triggered a good discussion among the group members.

The subject of massage techniques proved to be a very interesting and relevant topic, of great interest to many men travelling their prostate cancer journey.

To conclude the evening, group chairman Tony presented gifts to both our guests in appreciation of their attendance and their stimulating presentation.

COMING EVENTS

MAY MEETING:
The support group's April meeting was held on April 3 to accommodate a presentation by visiting radiation oncologist Dr Sid Baxi, from the Alan Walker Cancer Care Centre in Darwin.

The next Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group will meet on Thursday May 10 from 6.30pm to 8pm in the conference room of General Practice Network NT, Skinner St, Alice Springs. This meeting will take the form of members forum and information night.

- For more information about the support group, which usually meets on the second Thursday of each month, phone group chairman Tony O'Brien on 0438 530 366, or convenor Ian Wagner on 0409 534 950.

Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group

Mad March also affects the Limestone Coast calendar

The Limestone Coast group had to draw on its energy reserves to keep up with a whirlwind string of public events and many community awareness opportunities, as Graham Hinze reports.

THE Limestone Coast was not so different to what our city friends were experiencing during Mad March, with the start of autumn proving to be a season packed with events.

Four of our support group members cooked a barbecue lunch for Landmark in Mount Gambier early in the month to celebrate the opening of their new complex, and received a good donation for PCFA as a result of their efforts.

The same day, several support group members helped in the preparation of the Cancer Council's Relay For Life, which is held each alternate year in Mount Gambier.

On Saturday March 3, more than 20 Limestone Coast group members and their families took part in the Survivors and Carers walk around the Mount Gambier Oval. It was a very moving experience to march with several hundred other cancer survivors and carers, something that will stay with us as a very poignant memory.

This event was also a highly successful fundraising venture, with more than \$125,000 raised by the various participating teams.

One of our members, Des Guerin, won the major prize on the day of a return trip for two to Adelaide. Richard Harry was also successful in



No wonder these folks are smiling! Pictured above are an estwhile band of survivors – the Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group members and carers who participated in the biennial Relay For Life walk around Mount Gambier Oval on Saturday, March 3.

winning a lot of cups of coffee.

The Lucindale Field Days were held on March 16 and 17, which attracted 12 Limestone Coast group members and partners together with the Action Group to promote a greater awareness of prostate cancer. As a result of this strong turnout, a large amount of prostate cancer information was distributed.

A highlight of the field days was the drawing of our support group's big beef raffle. All three prize winners were from Mount Gambier – and what is exceptional is that this raffle raised almost \$1100 for the support group.

GET WELL SHARRON

OUR group secretary,

Sharron, has now embarked on her own cancer journey and has resigned from her position. We all wish Sharron a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing both Sharron and Garth at our meetings in the future.

A MEMORABLE MEETING THANKS TO DR MILLER

Our most recent support group meeting, held on March 29, can only be described as fantastic. We had the pleasure of having Adelaide urologist Dr John Miller speak to us as part of his visit to Mount Gambier, and it proved to be totally engaging.

The audience of 25 group members were all ears as John gave us an excellent address, spelling it out in laymen's

COMING EVENTS

The Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group will hold its next meeting at 7.30pm on **Tuesday May 1** at Grant District Council Office, Commercial St West, Mount Gambier.

- Guest speaker will be Mark Forster speaking on his voluntary work as a pilot for Angel Flights. For further information contact Graham Hinze on 8737 2779.

terms about the various forms of treatment and what the doctors have to consider when suggesting or recommending treatment. There are so many issues to deal with – more than we had imagined.

Many of the audience were surprised at how treatment has changed and improved over the last 10 years, and it is through the support groups that we can all learn about this and help each other to understand the information.

Probably the most valuable part came in question time, when a lot of members gained further information from the Third Umpire. John was very generous in sharing his knowledge, and there were even some of his patients in attendance. I would recommend John as an informative and engaging speaker to any support group.

Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group

Community lobbying gets results for Pirie patients

The Port Pirie support group learned that an intensive health protest campaign has resulted in a great outcome for local dialysis patients, as Richard Kruger reports.

THE Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group once again enjoyed an excellent guest speaker in Raye-lene Yates, a registered nurse who works in Renal Dialysis at Port Pirie with three other specially trained dialysis nurses. Before this centre opened, patients had to travel to Port Augusta or other centres for dialysis, making it a long and tiring day for them. So, after much public outcry and political lobbying, Port Pirie was provided with its own dialysis unit about 15 months ago.

The Port Pirie Renal Dialysis Unit operates for three days per week, has four chairs, operates over two shifts and has five full-time patients, plus occasional respite and holiday clients. Patients attend an average of three times per week and their sessions can last for three to five hours, depending on their needs.

Raye-lene explained how the kidneys normally work, removing fluid, some drugs and toxins from the blood. The renal nurse's job is to correctly balance the patient's potassium, calcium, sodium, chloride, phosphorus, magnesium and other electrolytes by using a variety of tools, assessments and tests available to them, in union with data provided by the patient's nephrologist.

On completing dialysis, the



Garry Green, who previously drove Port Pirie patients to Port Augusta for dialysis, with Raye-lene Yates.

machine returns blood with the correct balance of electrolytes and pH levels to the patients. During this continuous cycle, the nurse monitors the patient's blood pressure, health and wellbeing, and the patient's blood results for haemoglobin and iron levels.

Kidneys are the size of a fist and well protected by the lowest rib toward the back. Some of the causes of kidney failure are diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure, as well as inherited disorders.

Because chronic kidney failure can occur without apparent major symptoms until reaching stages 3 or 4 of the disease (which is

quite advanced), it is quite frightening to think that at stage 5 you face the decision of choosing between renal dialysis, peritoneal dialysis, possibly a kidney transplant, or comfort and supportive care.

Renal dialysis can be performed at a dialysis unit, or in a specially equipped home, while peritoneal dialysis can be performed at home – but in both cases the nurse, patient or carer must be specially trained.

The preferred option for patients is a kidney transplant, but not every person is suitable for this process. While renal dialysis can extend life for quite some years, it is nowhere

COMING EVENTS

- The Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group conducts its monthly meetings (from February to November) at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month at the BHAS Bowling Club, Halley St, Port Pirie. For further details, phone support group coordinator Allan Manfield on 08 8632 1324.

as good as the actual kidney function, although modern medical advances have come a long way. Some patients choose peritoneal dialysis at home for several years, then come onto renal support, and transplants generally give good long-term prognosis.

Raye-lene says that because dialysis is not as good as having two healthy kidneys, patients must be much more strict on maintaining suitable diets (limiting foods high in potassium such as bananas, monitoring phosphate levels, fibre and proteins) and restricting fluid intake.

This was a most informative presentation, of great interest to our support group members.

Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group

All you need is love – and to help create some hope

For many men who have experienced prostate cancer, the importance of love for their wife or partner, and defining what love means to men, is rarely discussed – although a new survey aims to change this. Mitcham support group joint-chairman Roland Harris reports.

THE Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group welcomed Adrian Esterman and Kevin O'Shaughnessy from the University of South Australia to its March 22 meeting.

Adrian is the Professor of Biostatistics at the Sansom Institute of Health Service Research, and Kevin is a PhD candidate under his supervision. Kevin is also a registered nurse with emergency department expertise, and lectures at the School of Nursing and Midwifery at UniSA City East Campus. He has a special interest in helping men with recurrent prostate cancer and their partners, and has been a notable guest speaker at many local support group meetings to explain elements of his PhD research into support for prostate cancer patients.

Adrian and Kevin gave a very interesting PowerPoint presentation which posed some vital questions for men. It centres around the often silent and rarely discussed

COMING EVENT APRIL MEETING

The Mitcham support group's third meeting for 2012 will be on Thursday, April 26, and a guest speaker from The Heart Foundation will deliver a talk on "Will you recognise your heart attack?". The group meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Colonel Light Gardens RSL Club, 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens, from 7pm to 8.45pm.

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

issue of what does love mean to men?

Adrian and Kevin have devised a survey for men who have been diagnosed with, or are being treated for prostate cancer. Participants in this survey, called Second Chance, also include wives and partners. Questions related to aspects of love, hope, faith, regret and supportive care will be asked.

They have requested our help in promoting this initiative, which was only

launched at the end of March. Kevin has setup a Facebook page – "Prostate cancer second chance" – where survivors and their families can access the survey. They also hope that this site will be recommended to any other prostate cancer sufferers you know, or to wives and partners of men with prostate cancer.

Alternatively, to find out more about the survey, simply "google" Kevin O'Shaughnessy and find the link to his UniSA Home

Page, which leads to the Second Chance survey link.

For those riding the face of the latest technology wave, Kevin can also be followed on twitter @pkosh

Both of these men have an impressive list of journal articles to their credit, and share a passionate interest in the well-being of prostate cancer patients and survivors.

We would urge all people in support groups to please fill in the questions on-line and help them to ultimately help us.

Discussion among the Mitcham group revealed that post-treatment care many of us received was minimal, so results from this survey could help to enhance appropriate supportive care intervention.

It was a great honour that our March meeting was graced by our first visiting Professor – and Adrian and Kevin both received a bottle of lovely wine as a token of our thanks, which we hope they enjoy.

WHYALLA PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Whyalla support group meets at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of each month, in Room 69 of the University of SA campus, Nicolson Ave, Whyalla Norrie. Contact Terry O'Brien (08 8645 1310) or Stan Oates (08 8644 0591) for more details. Everybody is welcome to attend these meetings – indeed, the wives and partners of group members are an integral part of this group, because any cancer affects the whole family.

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City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group

DVDs expand our knowledge of treatments and outcomes

Even without the benefit of a guest speaker, support groups benefit from PCFA's contributions of informative medical DVDs, as Onkaparinga support group chairman John Shields reports.

THE City of Onkaparinga support group had an informative digital presentation as the centrepiece of its March meeting – the delicate subjects of chronic radiation and rectal bleeding – covered in a very interesting DVD that had been supplied by PCFA.

This DVD presentation by Professor Pierre Chapuis was especially easy to understand. Rectal bleeding is not a common after-effect from what is usually a very successful procedure, and modern methods have ensured this kind of bleeding is on the decline.

The DVD is now in our library and is recommended viewing as it covers broad aspects of treatment and outcomes. It will also be interesting to compare this presentation with the next DVD we will be screening – Radiation Therapy for Prostate Cancer, by Dr Michael Izard.

NEW SOUTHERN CANCER GROUP DEVELOPS

A MEETING of the Friendship Group at Christie Downs Community House on

Thursday March 15 attracted 14 people. The afternoon started with a brief outline of the Fleurieu Cancer Network and its vision for the group under their guidelines as parent body.

Each person shared their cancer experience, why they attended and what they expected. Many were survivors of cancer of the prostate, bowel, tongue, breast and skin, or from leukaemia. Two participants were family members/carers wanting to help others by sharing their stories.

A membership agreement was discussed and confidentiality, respect, patience, encouragement and understanding were cited as important components.

FCN is now looking for volunteers to help move this group forward, so if you would like to help please phone Jules on 8186 0048 (or email info@fcn.org.au).

DR BUCHANAN'S RESEARCH PROGRESS

DOCTOR Grant Buchanan is one of many SA researchers working to understand

how to prevent the spread of prostate cancer in men who have already had their prostate gland removed. The disease usually becomes fatal only after it has spread, or metastasised, to other parts of the body.

As head of the Cancer Biology Group at the Basil Hetzel Institute for Translational Health Research in Adelaide, Dr Buchanan believes the answer to this question lies within the architecture of the prostate – and he says that testosterone plays an important role in maintaining the prostate's architecture.

In patients whose cancers spread early, before the prostate is removed, testosterone does not seem to be working as well, which weakens the matrix and allows the cancer cells to escape.

"Our aim is to understand how the architecture of the prostate is maintained, how it breaks down in lethal cancers and, ultimately what we can do to stop the process," Dr Buchanan says.

The team, which recently received a grant from PCFA and Cancer Australia, is using

COMING EVENT

MAY 2 MEETING:

The City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group will hold its next meeting at 6.30pm on Wednesday, May 2 in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga.

• For more information, visit the City of Onkaparinga Support Group's website at www.pcsog.org, or phone John Shields on 8382 6671, or Malcolm Ellis on 8326 5588.

• Special thanks go to our support group's generous sponsors: **Southern Primary Health Morphett Vale, Port Noarlunga-Christies Beach RSL Sub Branch, Cartridges Now Christies Beach, The Original Open Market and The City of Onkaparinga Council.**

retrospective data to identify those patients whose prostate "architecture" created a higher risk of metastasis.

It's future aim is to identify those patients who would benefit from more targeted treatment. We wish them well with their research.

Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group

THE Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month and will be sharing the venues around at different members' homes. For further information, phone Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group co-ordinator Don Piro on 8562 3359.

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

LOCAL FUNDRAISING EVENT BUILDS PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS

Muso's concert for cancer

When respected Adelaide musician Brendan Fitzgerald was diagnosed with prostate cancer, his musician friends rallied to organise a benefit concert – to help cover his treatment costs and raise the profile of prostate cancer among the local community.

ON March 25, a music benefit concert held at Adelaide's Higher Ground art venue in Light Square helped to raise funds for the prostate cancer treatment of local jazz musician and high school music teacher Brendan Fitzgerald. It also contributed part of the proceeds to PCFA – and raised awareness of a radical treatment form that Brendan chose to undertake.

When Brendan was unexpectedly diagnosed last year with intermediate, high-risk Stage 2c prostate cancer, he found that treatment options in Adelaide were mainly confined to radiotherapy, as surgery would have been difficult to undertake without causing significant collateral physical damage in his case.

“Being somewhat daunted by the risks associated with these conventional cancer treatments, I undertook extensive research about other methods to treat this affliction,” says Brendan. “I narrowed my treatment preference down to HIFU (High Intensity Focused Ultrasound), which is only available in Melbourne at a private hospital for a cost of \$20,000, with no support through Medicare or private health funds.

“Further research uncovered that this procedure has been adopted extensively in Japan at 30 hospitals with treatment statistics published in recognised professional medical journals. Their \$13,500 cost is significantly cheaper than in Victoria, and the Japanese level of HIFU expertise is deep.

“Considering I had to act fast (at this stage there was no evidence of the spread of cancer to other organs), I recently travelled to Japan for HIFU treatment by Professor Toyoaki Uchida at Tokai University Hospital, paid for with borrowed funds and by accessing some of my superannuation. I am now in a recovery phase and will know initial results indicating success (or not) of my treatment in late May.”

The concert featured local guitar ace



ABOVE LEFT: Brendan Fitzgerald at the keyboard. ABOVE RIGHT: Fretted instrument wiz Lindsay Buckland. BELOW: Guitarist Chris Finnen and his band on stage at the HIFU concert.

Photographs: Ian Fisk



Chris Finnen and band, The Baker Suite (which recently released a CD produced by Paul Grabowsky), Monkey Puzzle Tree (classically-influenced quartet of piano, violin, drums and guitar), Caliente Guitar Trio (Brazilian Choro-influenced group), Balkan Jam (eastern European group comprising accordion, voice, violin, bass and percussion), The Beggars (an acoustic trio that has performed to acclaim in Europe), Neptuno (Brendan's own latin group

comprising voice, pan flutes, trombone, accordion, piano, acoustic and electric guitars, bass and percussion), Patsy D Cline (US country singer-comediene) and other artists including legendary international busker Lindsey Buckland and stand up comedian Sam Baisun.

Special thanks go to Dushant Kumar, the proprietor of Higher Ground, who offered the venue free of charge, and to Chris Finnen, who generously suggested the benefit concert and mobilised it.

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