



# THE WALNUT

July 2014

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Group - ACT Region Inc.

Affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia



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## Monthly meetings

All men and women are welcome to attend our regular monthly meetings. No notice is required - simply come along and introduce yourself, or contact one of the people listed later in this newsletter.

### When

Meetings of our support group are held on every 3rd Wednesday of the month except in December.

### Usual Location

Room 22, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce, ACT 2607. See our web site here for details and map showing the location: <http://tinyurl.com/bjoyczu>

### Time

6:30 for 7:00

### Next monthly meeting

Our next monthly meeting will be on Wednesday 16 July 2014 at our usual location and time (see details here: <http://tinyurl.com/ley8grl>). Glen Pidgeon will tell us a bit about his hopes and objectives in relation to his commitment to undertaking the Prostate Nursing Care postgraduate diploma level course provided by La Trobe University in the second semester of 2014. Glenn is currently working as a community nurse in Tuggeranong and is keen to work in this field, he has considerable experience in general nursing and disability support, having run his own medical equipment business in the past. Come along and get a nurses' perspective on things! All welcome: blokes, carers, partners, members, non-members. There will be time for an in-depth question/answer/ information discussion amongst members.

## Contact us

### Postal address

Prostate Cancer Support Group - ACT Region Inc.  
PO Box 717, Mawson, ACT 2607

### Personal support

If you would like immediate support, advice or assistance contact any of the following people:

**President:** Chris Hansen  
Phone: 02 6161 4135  
Email: [chriskayehansen@gmail.com](mailto:chriskayehansen@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:**  
John Lucas  
Phone: 02 6293 2532  
Email: [jandklucas@bigpond.com](mailto:jandklucas@bigpond.com)

## Web site

Our web site provides details about the activities of the group, meetings, meeting location map, contact persons and lots of other useful information:



[prostate-cancer-support-act.net](http://prostate-cancer-support-act.net)

## From the editor

This edition provides information about our last meeting, some events of interest, and information about recent articles and reports that may be of interest.

If you are aware of news, products, publications, web

sites, services or events that may be of interest to members of the group I'd be happy to be informed of them. If you have received this newsletter indirectly and would like to be emailed a copy directly please send me an email through the form here:

<http://tinyurl.com/2bdbbnk>

I'm happy to add any of your friends and carers to the email list for the newsletter. Past issues of *The Walnut* can be downloaded from this page of our web site:

<http://tinyurl.com/42fyrxd>

**Mike Boesen**  
Editor

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## President's report

### Recent noteworthy events:

- **Executive Committee Meetings:** held on 3 June and 3 July 2014. We have these meetings every month to sort out administrative issues that would otherwise clog up our monthly meetings. Members are welcome to attend these meetings that are held 1.30pm on the first Thursday of each month at SHOUT. Things covered at the to most recent meetings:

- ★ We agreed a speaker program for July through November.
- ★ Daryl O'Brien has agreed to deal with Defence and Vets affairs issues that arise periodically.
- ★ Mike Boesen will print new name tags which will be retained by each member and brought to each meeting and to public event as required. This will reduce the workload at each monthly meeting.
- ★ New members to receive a printed badge as part of a 'Welcome Pack'.
- ★ We were given a demonstration of the PA system available in our meeting room and will make use of it in future. There is also a Hearing Loop facility that may be helpful for hearing impaired members.
- ★ We discussed the need for a system for maintaining membership records.
- ★ In the light of the fact that none of our members volunteered to take on some of the clerical activities that need to be undertaken, we will approach Volunteers ACT to see if someone outside our membership able to assist. In particular we need clerical assistance to develop a presentation program.
- ★ **Support for course costs to be given to Glenn Pidgeon RN.** Glenn is a locally-based registered nurse. He is going to undertake the Prostate Nursing Care postgraduate diploma level course provided by La Trobe University in the second semester of 2014. (You can download course details [from here](#) Ed.). This

will add to the stock of qualified staff to support men under treatment for prostate cancer. Glenn is currently working as a community nurse in Tuggeranong and is keen to work in this field, he has considerable experience in general nursing and disability support, having run his own medical equipment business in the past.

- **Presentation to Tuggeranong Men's Shed** on 10 June 2014. I attended this on short notice and gave our standard presentation on prostate cancer, which was well received.
- **Department of Defence Show n Shine at Brindabella Park** on 19 June. This is the second in a series of motorbike events, which will culminate in the Long Ride (Canberra to Uluru) in September. It was a fundraiser for the PCFA. I attended this event with George Kayaba, Steve Sweet, John Lucas and Jaroslav Kaszparszak. We provided information to a number of people attending and expressed our gratitude for the funds provided to the PCFA..
- **Donations received from the organisers of the 2013 German Autofest and from the VW Car Club.** We have gratefully received donations of \$1,200 and \$600 given to our Group by these two organisations. Many thanks to the automobile fraternity!

### Upcoming Events

- July and August are usually quiet months for us in the community.
- 3 September 2014: Self-Help and Wellbeing Expo. This will be held at the Canberra Hellenic Club in Woden. The objective is to raise awareness of Self-Help organisations. It runs from 10am to 3pm on the day.
- 17 September 2014: Our Annual General Meeting. This is the meeting where we report on the past year and formally elect office-holders for the upcoming year. We will also vote on an amendment to the constitution to limit the period of time office-holders can remain in office. Please give some thought to putting your name forward for one of the positions, which will be available.
- 18-19 October 2014: Murrumbateman Field Days. As in previous years we expect to have a strong presence at this event, which provides exposure to a different group of people.

**Chris Hansen**  
President

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## Secretary's report in the meeting on 18 June 2014

Attendance - including three new members - was 28. Once again, the number of signatures in the book did not match the head count. Signing the attendance book is important for the reporting of the group and it would be appreciated if names could be printed in a clear form way that will save us the need to guess at the details provided for ease of interpretation. Please!

**Guest speaker.** The guest speaker was well-known ACT urologist Dr. Hodo Haxhimolla who had only recently returned from an overseas study tour. He informed us about a number of matters including:

- **Fusion imaging** used in undertaking prostate biopsies. Traditionally, prostate biopsies have relied on ultrasound to map the location of the prostate. However ultrasound images are not very precise and lack precision in assisting in the placement of biopsy needles. Fusion Imaging, amalgamate information from MRI and ultrasound images and improves the targeting of prostate biopsies. Dr Haxhimolla expressed strong endorsement for the use of MRI technology in the context of diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer. *(Note the content of two articles relating to MRI fusion imaging, referred to later in this newsletter. Ed.)*



*Dr Haxhimolla explaining aspects about new and emerging technologies*

- *Dr Haxhimolla commented on a recent press article by Dr Frank Bowden that recommended against PSA testing on the basis that it may lead to unnecessary biopsies and the potential of causing serious blood infections in 2% of cases. Dr Haxhimolla indicated that the actual infection rate is closer to 1%. He referred to an alternative biopsy technique - the transperineal biopsy - which does not involve penetration of the bowel. He indicated that this technique has an infection rate of about 0.5%, but takes more than double the time, and where infection occurs it is likely to be staph infection, which can cause abscesses. (A summary of Bowden's views and some counter-views have been provided in the May 2014 edition of The Walnut newsletter.) For back issues of The Walnut see: <http://tinyurl.com/2crc4oc> Ed.)*
- An improved blood test named the PHI (Prostate Health Index) that is based on PSA characteristics. *(The June 2014 edition of The Walnut summarises an article by Stacey Loeb and William Catalona*

*which provides details about this index. For back issues of The Walnut see: <http://tinyurl.com/2crc4oc> Ed.)*

- Dr Haxhimolla touched on the issue of erosion of the urethra, which can sometimes occur after installation of a urethral sling or artificial sphincter. He described a new device that allows the pressure exerted on the urethra to be varied, so that risk of erosion can be reduced.

#### **New members.**

The three new members provided information about their status and plans for future treatment. One had a prostatectomy some 4 years ago and his PSA is still negligible. Another new member reported having a biopsy indicating a relatively low Gleason score of 6. He is awaiting placement for the operation in Sydney. The third new member was diagnosed as having an aggressive cancer and is now undergoing radiation therapy.

#### **General matters.**

- The **need for clerical assistance** with some administrative work was discussed. This could be undertaken by a member of the group or, less preferably, by paying someone to assist on a part-time basis. Members were encouraged to read the duty statement, which had been circulated via email, and consider helping. *(Unfortunately, no-one has indicated their availability. Ed.)*
- The existence of **new name tags** was noted. Members are asked to find their name tag, insert it in any of the plastic holders, take it home, bring it to any meeting attended, and wear it at any event attended.
- The president noted that he would not be at the September meeting, which will comprise both the **Annual General Meeting and a Special General Meeting** to consider a change to the constitution to limit office-holders length of service. The immediate past president, Peter Daley has agreed to chair this meeting.
- **Next Meeting** - at the usual place and time on 16 July 2014 - see details on page 1 of this newsletter.

**George Kayaba**  
**Secretary**

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### **Information about the transperineal biopsy procedure**

One of our members undertook a transperineal biopsy in Sydney a few weeks ago. He might be prepared to talk about it at the next meeting.

The May 2014 edition of The Walnut newsletter summarises an article by Jeremy Grummet et al reporting a study of the transperineal Vs transrectal biopsy procedures.

The June 2014 edition of The Walnut summarises two

articles about the Transperineal procedure - one by Delicia Yard and the other by S Nafie et al.

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## Recent articles and reports that might be of interest

The following articles that have appeared recently on web sites or other sources may be of interest to some members. The group's Executive has not attempted to evaluate the articles' findings and conclusions or the credentials of the authors. The articles are simply being drawn to your attention so that you can make your own evaluations. Due to constraints on my time and energy I have not had time to provide summary extracts for readers. If you cannot access any of the articles, contact me and I'll help.

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### Fusion-guided biopsies

A 3 March 2014 Urology Times article by John Jesitus entitled "*MRI guiding future of prostate cancer diagnosis*" provides informative details about the MRI-fusion imaging technique, and the views of a number of experts in this field. The article is [here](#) or here: <http://tinyurl.com/kzuom5r>

In a 4 June Medscape Urology article by Fran Lowry, a clinical trial of MRI-fusion biopsy undertaken by Dr Ardeshi Rastinehad *et al* is reported and reference is also made to a study undertaken by Morgan Pokorny *et al*. The Lowry article is [here](#) and here: <http://tinyurl.com/nmmxox>

In an abstract of his study, Rastinehad states that: "*Magnetic resonance imaging/transrectal ultrasound fusion guided biopsy can improve prostate cancer detection. The results of this trial support the external validity of this platform and may be the next step in the evolution of prostate cancer management.*" See that abstract [here](#) and here: <http://tinyurl.com/lc3yt2e>

Pokorny is quoted by Lowry as saying "*I think the future lies with MRI. We're not categorically saying you shouldn't do TRUS-guided biopsies, but we think that MRI can help you risk-stratify very powerfully - more so than any other tool.*"

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### Alternative medicine

An anthropologist was cataloguing South American folk remedies with the assistance of a tribal elder who indicated that the leaves of a particular fern were a sure cure for any case of constipation. When the anthropologist expressed his doubts, the elder looked him in the eye and said, "Let me tell you, with fronds like these, you don't need enemas."

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## Disclaimer

From time to time in our newsletters we provide information about developments in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, research articles, documents, audiovisual products, presentations and other interesting materials. However, the Group's Executive and the editor of this newsletter do not have the medical expertise required to make an informed evaluation of the conclusions and recommendations presented in such materials, and we have not verified such conclusions and recommendations through appropriately qualified medical professionals. The information presented in this newsletter must not be interpreted as being endorsed or recommended by the Executive or the editor. Any recommendations made in such materials may not be applicable in your particular case. Before implementing any recommendations made in the materials that are reported, it is essential that you obtain advice from appropriately qualified medical professionals. The view of the Group's Executive is that no two prostate cancer cases are alike and that no single treatment option is better than any other in all cases. While the information in this newsletter should be of interest, there is no substitute for getting informed medical advice from your own GP, specialists and other medical professionals.