

The Walnut
February 2016
Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Group
ACT Region Inc.
Affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

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

Personal support

For general information please call SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together) who will arrange for someone from the group to contact you. They are available during normal office hours on (02) 6290 1984.

If you would like immediate support, advice or assistance contact:

President: Graham Erickson

Phone: 02 62546754

Email: ericksongraham01@gmail.com.

Secretary: Michael Fullam-Stone

e-mail: MetaMgt@hotmail.com

Treasurer: John Lucas

e-mail: jandklucas@bigpond.com

Walnut editor: Aidan Moore

Contact Editor at <http://tinyurl.com/mgw9rbp>

Monthly meetings - Next meeting

Meetings of our support group are held on 3rd Wednesday of each month except December. The next general members' meeting is on Wed 17 February 2016. The guest speaker will be Dr Lennon Wicks. Lennon is a Clinical Assistant Professor in Exercise Physiology for the Faculty of Health at the University of Canberra. He has over 14 years of clinical experience and is an accredited Exercise Physiologist with Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA). He will inform us about the exercise in relation to treatment for prostate cancer. His address should be of great interest.

Usual Location and Time:

Room 22, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce, ACT 2607.

6:30 for 7:00 pm See our web site <http://tinyurl.com/bjoyczu> for details and map showing the location, and other useful information. Instructive personal stories of survivors can be found on our website: prostate-cancer-support-act.net

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to this month's newsletter.

At this month's meeting we will have a guest speaker, Dr Lennon Wicks, who will be speaking on exercise and prostate cancer. This should be an interesting topic.

I would like to thank John Lucas and Mark Jackson who helped with assisting with the clean out of our storeroom at SHOUT. It was good to be able to make some room for easier access to our property.

On Saturday 13 February myself and secretary Michael Fullam-Stone attended a meeting with representatives of Resolution Run Series. This organisation is promoting men's health in regards to cancer and depression. Discussions at this meeting centred on the lack of awareness of cancers and in particular, prostate cancer amongst males. The Resolution Run Series involves four individual running events within a series that spans 12 months. The events will be held at Lake Tuggeranong in Greenway, ACT and its surrounds. The representatives of this organisation have asked for volunteers to assist with marshalling and various other on the ground aspects to help run these events. At the end of the 12 month period there is planned to be a ball, the proceeds of which are anticipated to be donated to the Prostate Cancer Support Group in the ACT. If time permits I hope to bring this up at the next meeting to see what the feeling is amongst our members regarding volunteering for these events. It is a great opportunity to promote ourselves. We will also be able to have a booth at the events to hand out brochures.

There was also talk of sponsoring medical research into cancer within the ACT and the local region. This will need to be followed up at a future Executive meeting.

I was saddened to hear of the death of Lloyd Dudgeon. Lloyd beat prostate cancer, but after moving to Queensland, unfortunately had a very large primary brain tumour and after a battle with surgery and radiation passed away on the 14th November 2015. Lloyd's wife Helen, expressed her gratitude to the Prostate Cancer Support Group for their assistance during Lloyd's journey.

Looking forward to meeting as many members as possible at our next meeting on 17 February 2016.

Graham Erickson
President, PCSG - ACT Region

Developments and items of interest

The articles below have been presented before. They are of general and continuing interest and so are included here also for new readers (AM, ed.)

Free ACT Health Exercise Program:

The Canberra Hospital provides a free Exercise Physiology (EP) Programme to aid various patients including those in post cancer treatment recovery. The programme involves two, one hour, supervised sessions per week. EP provides free sessions for 2-3 months periods. Entry to the programme is by referral from your GP, cancer specialist or cancer nurse. Unfortunately, there is a waiting list of about 2-3 months. [I avoided the delay by getting a referral to a very good local physiologist in Belconnen (AM, ed.)] EP will design a routine specific to your needs and ability and get you in the habit. The secret is not to stop when the program expires, but to continue. One solution is to join [a fitness club. Another, my choice, is a hill behind my house which I aim to climb three times a week (Editor)]
(submitted by Mike F-S)

Another article submitted by Michael

How One Might Proceed [After a diagnosis of prostate cancer (PC)]:

Don't be anxious and don't stress yourself or your family. It is no big deal. Firstly you are not alone and secondly, many peers, even friends have experienced this and they are still with us and in the PC Support Group (PCSG). Be thankful that you have not been diagnosed with certain other types of cancer which can have much worse prognoses (outlooks)(ed.).

Gather information, not just from expert websites, GPs, counsellors, and specialists, but also from those that have had recent experience of diagnosis and treatment [the PCSG is a natural place to seek these people].

Explore the many treatment options.

Seek second opinions. Remember that you probably didn't marry the first lady you met, so shop around and find a treatment or surgeon that suits you, your health and your condition. One who communicates clearly and answers questions. One in whom you have confidence. Take written questions and maybe a friend with you to consultations.

Compare surgical with non-surgical methods and listen to persuasion from both camps before deciding. [Most of our members have views on these which they will exchange with you (ed.)]

If you are over loaded with information, confused or scared, my suggestion is the Prostate Cancer Support Group (PCSG) whose members can give you accounts of their personal experience (AM, ed). Chat with them over a cup of tea and a biscuit at our monthly meeting (time and place above). You will not feel intimidated or anxious that you are wasting their valuable time or seeming foolish by asking irrelevant questions, as you might with prestigious professionals. If nothing else our members will show you that others have been where you are now and have worked through it. You will feel you have well-wishers who sympathise with you and are expecting a good outcome.

You will find diagnosis of prostate cancer (PC) a learning and growing experience and you will probably value life more. [Let your health professional/specialist tell you how aggressive it is or isn't. Mine was moderately aggressive (Gleeson score 7) and I just wanted rid of it (ed.) I found a surgeon whose competence I trusted. I don't regret having the operation.

Many men fear erectile and continence dysfunction after surgery. I have erectile dysfunction effects but I have found a way to live with it and am not too shy to admit it. I had some temporary urinary continence effects but have conquered these with the Kegel exercises, promptly applied after removal of catheters (ed).]

The above is not medical advice, it is rather a recommendation to seek, evaluate and consider professional advice [and the personal experience of survivors] before prioritising and deciding a treatment that will suit you. The above is based on my personal experience (and mine, ed.)
Michael F-S., PhD Psyc., member of the PCSG-ACT.

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.