



THE WALNUT

APRIL 2019

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Group—ACT Region

Affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA)

Postal address: PO Box 650, Mawson ACT 2607

Website: <http://prostate-cancer-support-act.net>



Next monthly meeting

Our next monthly meeting will be held on **Wednesday 17 April 2019**.

Our speaker is Dr Catherine Paterson, Associate Professor in Nursing, Faculty of Health, School of Nursing Midwifery & Public Health, University of Canberra. Dr Paterson has a strong interest in pre-habilitation for prostate treatment, that is, starting the rehabilitation process before surgery or other treatment. She will speak about this and research she is planning in this area. She will also seek about her experience in this area in the UK.

All are welcome to attend our regular monthly meetings and coffee mornings, including partners and carers. No notice is required simply come along and introduce yourself, or contact one of the people listed on page 2 of this newsletter.

Meetings of our support group are held on the third Wednesday of the month (except in December) at 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm. The usual location is Room 22, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce, ACT 2607. See our website [here](#) for details and map showing the location.

President's Message

It was inspirational to hear from Michael Milton at our April meeting. Michael's description of how he adapted to cancer in his own life and the lessons he learnt were enlightening.

Our speaker at our March meeting is Dr Catherine Paterson. Catherine arrived Canberra from Scotland in December and brings perspectives on her time there. This includes pre-habilitation for patients before they have their treatment for prostate cancer. This is so important, but very few patients commence rehabilitation before treatment. This can be because patients feel that they need to have radical prostatectomies urgently and so there is little time to do this. It may also be that urologists do not promote this sufficiently well.

The Group has joined with Catherine in supporting a grant for her and her team at the University of Canberra to undertake research into whether multimodal pre-habilitation intervention provides better functional and quality of life outcomes than the usual care for men choosing radical prostatectomy for localised prostate cancer. This research provides a good opportunity to test the benefits of pre-habilitation.

I would also like to pass on the Group's appreciation of a generous donation from the Residents' Social Club at the Grove in Ngunnawal.

John McWilliam

Appreciation

The Group recognises and expresses its appreciation for the support provided by: the PCFA, SHOUT staff, Harness Racing ACT, staff of the Australian Department of Human Services (Chief Technology Office), the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Holy Family School Gowrie, Paddywack Promotional Products, Residents' Social Club at The Grove, Ngunnawal and the many individuals who have assisted in our fund-raising activities over the past year.

Personal support

For general information, please call SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together) during normal office hours on (02) 6290 1984, and their staff will arrange for someone to contact you.

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

President: John McWilliam

Phone: 0416 008 299

Email: president@prostate-cancer-support-act.net

Secretary: David Hennessy

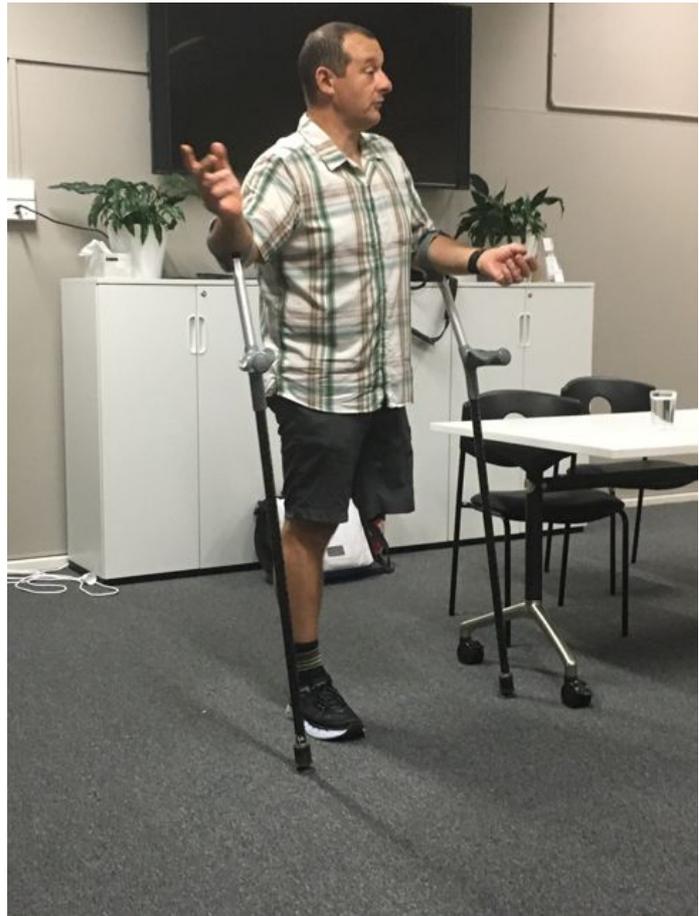
Phone: (02) 6154 4274

Email: secretary@prostate-cancer-support-act.net

Next Coffee morning

10:00 am, Tuesday, 14 May at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Jamison.

Coffee mornings are held at 10:00 am on the second Tuesday of each month and alternate between the Woden and Jamison venues of the Canberra Southern Cross Club.



Our March meeting

Our speaker in March was paralympian, Michael Milton, who provided inspirational advice on overcoming adversity.

Michael was diagnosed at the age of nine with a bone sarcoma and his left leg was amputated, which prevented further spread of cells. Later, at age 34 years, Michael had oesophageal cancer in 2007 and was treated extensively for that.

Learning to ski at the age of three meant that Michael was very competent by nine and, after his left was amputated, he was determined to ski again. Michael went on to represent Australia and win gold in skiing the Paralympic Games and later also in cycling.

From his experience, and success of overcoming his disability, Michael said that he had to find new ways of coping, since copying the actions of intact persons was often of little guidance.

Over the years, Michael has had a busy schedule speaking to senior staff of many corporations in Australia to encourage them to think about and to adopt new ways of doing business in changing conditions.

Michael's interest in prostate cancer came about through Billy Pearce at the Australian Institute of Sport with his program 'What's under the kilt'.

Michael was also the 'consumer representative' on the Board of the Cancer Council, where he learnt a lot about the many different types of cancer and the need to place resources where the best results can be obtained.

Michael's time on the Cancer Council and interest in the Heart Foundation guidelines has led him to concentrate on the aspects, under our control, that assist in reducing the likelihood of cancer. These include weight stasis or decrease, regular exercise, stopping smoking and reducing (and preferably avoiding) alcohol intake. Michael emphasised the importance of being positive during tough times and learning how to solve or overcome problems.

Michael now runs the Harry Potter Shop at Fyshwick.

April executive committee meeting

At its meeting on Wednesday, 3 April, the executive committee, among other things:

- approved the sponsorship of three nurses at The Canberra Hospital to undertake prostate cancer nursing studies, with the ultimate aim of improving care for prostate cancer patients at the hospital;
- discussed possible speakers for future meetings in 2019;

- agreed on the next steps to consider the content for the Group's website, which is currently being redeveloped;
- noted that the Group's exhibit at the Seniors Expo in March attracted much interest from attendees and agreed to register interest again in 2020;
- noted with appreciation that the Residents' Social Club at The Grove, Ngunnawal would be presenting the Group with a cheque for \$900 on 4 April; and
- noted that some members of the Group would be attending the NSW/ACT combined Support Groups conference in Dubbo on 4 and 5 May 2019 and that registrations close on 25 April.

The next committee meeting will be held on 1 May. Group members are welcome to attend meetings of the committee.

Prostate Cancer Conference, Dubbo, 4 to 5 May 2019

It's not too late to register for this conference, which is being held by the Combined Prostate Cancer Support Groups of Rural NSW (see [information flyer](#) and [registration form](#)). It is shaping up to be a great weekend full of interesting speakers and wonderful camaraderie.



Stay up-to-date by joining the PCFA Online Community

The PCFA Online Community is open to everyone who has been impacted by prostate cancer to share their experiences and connect

with others. Through the Research Blog, PCFA Online Community members can also learn more about the latest prostate cancer research developments and findings.

The April 2018 edition of the *PCFA Online Community Digest* has articles on:

- diagnosis and over-diagnosis of prostate cancer in Australia. [Read article](#);
- an update on prostate cancer diagnosis, treatment and outcomes 2015-2016: annual report of the PCOR-ANZ. [Read article](#);
- prostate cancer in younger men. [Read article](#); and
- designing better support programs for couples with sexual issues after prostate surgery. [Read article](#).

It is free and easy to become a member of the PCFA Online Community. You can sign up at:

<http://onlinecommunity.pcfa.org.au>.

Borrowing items from the library

You can borrow items from the Group's library. There is a wide range of materials, from books to videos. Those who are interested in borrowing items from the library or finding out more about our collection can contact U.N. Bhati, email:

librarian@prostate-cancer-support-act.net

Articles and reports of interest

The following articles which have appeared recently on web sites or other sources may be of interest to some members. Any opinions or conclusions expressed are those of the authors. See Disclaimer below. With thanks to Don Bradfield and Mike Boesen for assistance with this segment.

PSA testing

As noted above, the April 2018 edition of the *PCFA Online Community Digest* has an article on diagnosis and over-diagnosis of prostate cancer in Australia.

In our March newsletter, we reported on a study by Maria Franlund, which followed 20 000 men in men living in the city of Göteborg, Sweden in 1994 for more than two decades and found that PSA testing cuts deaths from the disease by nearly 30%. It also found that PSA screening detects prostate cancer about six years earlier than a digital rectal examination and 10 years before symptoms appear. [Read article](#) in *Prostate Cancer News Today* (subscription required).

A separate study over 19 years based on a Rotterdam pilot study also showed significant benefits from prostate screening. It found indications of a more substantial reduction in metastatic disease and cancer-specific mortality from prostate cancer screening than previously reported. [Read article](#).

Editor's Note: Some previous studies, particularly US based, which found little difference when men were screened, were flawed by the fact that the control (unscreened) group received a similar level of screening, but outside the study, compared with the screened population. The Swedish study commenced at about the time of the US studies, but has a 20 year follow-up.

PSMA-PET scans

The use of PSMA-PET scans to help direct treatment of metastatic prostate cancer has been increasing in Australia.

A recent study, reported in *Medscape Urology*, which reviewed 37 articles involving 4790 patients, provides evidence that, above a certain PSA level, PSMA-PET scans are of

use in locating exactly where the cancer recurrence is happening. The study also found that the evidence currently does not support pre-treatment screening. [Read article](#) and [research report in European Urology](#).

A good discussion on the use of new imaging techniques in prostate cancer, the sensitivity of imaging and the use of theranostics PSMA targeted therapies for metastatic castrate-resistant prostate cancer can be accessed [here](#).

From the editor

If you are aware of news, products, publications, web sites, services or events that may be of interest to members of the group, we would like to be informed of them.

If you have received this newsletter indirectly and would like to be emailed a copy direct, or if you would like to add any of your friends or carers to our distribution list, or if you no longer wish to receive copies of the newsletter, please send us an email through the form here:

<http://tinyurl.com/ybkxnlq4>.

John McWilliam

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 does 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 Group. Any recommendations made in such materials may not be applicable in your 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 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.