

P.S.A. NEWSLETTER

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A Member of the Association of Prostate
Cancer Support Groups (SA) Inc.

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NEWSLETTER NO. 72

**September '06 Newsletter including a report on the September Meeting
held at the Burnside Hospital on 18.9.06**

Thank you to our sponsors: City of West Torrens Council, the Burnside War Memorial Hospital, the State Funded Volunteer's Support Fund and the Federal Government's Cancer Support Groups Grant Program.

Our next meeting will be held on Monday 16th October when a Peer Educator from COTA (Connecting Over 50s Throughout Australia/Council for the Ageing) will come along and give us a lecture on their popular subject, "Beyond Maturity Blues". Rollup!

Chair: Barry Oakley

Members present 36

Apologies: Gary, Alan and Cynthia, Jeff, Marilla, Brian, Eric, Keith and Joy and Ross and Pam.

New Members: Frank and Brenda.

It is with regret that we announce the recent passing of three of our members, Eric Francis, Ian Laws and Edmund Retz. Eric was one of our long standing members and passed away on the 26th of September at the age of 80 years. Ian Laws passed away on the 17th September. Ian was one of our regular members who joined our group 4 years ago and as well as having prostate cancer he had an unrelated oesophagus cancer. Last March, he and his wife Judy, were instrumental in starting up an Oesophagus Support Group where 53 people attended the first meeting. We have passed on our condolences to Edmund, Ian and Eric's families.

Videos: Ian and Reg screened a couple of short videos dealing with **trans fatty acids and Omega 6 fatty acids**, also one on **fish oil and Omega 3 fatty acids**. (See a further item on page 4 in this Newsletter dealing with fish oil supplements).

The Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups (SA) Inc., "Health Diary"

The printing of this health diary is well under way and should be ready for distribution to Urologists, some doctors and hospitals in early October. **250 copies** are being printed initially. It is an experimental project. A large envelope containing the diary will also contain 9 or 10 brochures dealing with prostate cancer support groups, prostate cancer and other men's health issues such as, incontinence, erectile dysfunction, hormone treatments and the side effects of the various treatments, and osteoporosis. Other items include a Prostate Cancer Donor Form, details of internet web sites, and information on wills and mental health services. The idea is to make men more aware of what assistance is available to them when first diagnosed with prostate cancer. The project will be referred to **the Support and Advocacy Committee, PCFA, Sydney**, to see what they think of it. If successful, more copies will be printed at a later date.

The Prostate Cancer "Call In"

This was conducted on 7th September when about **120 people rang the Cancer Connect Help Line** (Phone No. 13 11 20) and spoke to a panel of Urologists about their prostate problems. A number of members of the Prostate Cancer Action Group (SA) Inc., were also on hand to take phone calls on behalf of "consumers", if required. As it so happened, **no phone calls were diverted to these members**. They spent most of the evening packaging pamphlets and other information to post out to those people phoning in. It was a bit disappointing to learn after the event that **none of our "Information Brochures" were included in those envelopes**. What about sending out some of our Information Brochures next year, Cancer Council? **Incidentally Peter Goers on ABC AM 891 gave the "Call-in" a very good plug on his program early on the very night of the "Call-in" and interviewed Professor Villis Marshall about early detection of prostate cancer and PSA and DRE tests, for about ten minutes. I am sure this enticed some male callers to phone in. Goodonya Peter!**

Prostate Cancer Awareness Evening at Stirling on 11th October

Jeff Roberts reported that the Prostate Cancer Action Group (SA) Inc. will conduct another of their Public Awareness Evenings at the **RSL Clubrooms, Apex Park, Stirling, from 7pm to 9.30pm on Wednesday 11th October**. This evening is being sponsored by the Masonic Lodges at Stirling, Mt. Barker and Blackwood. The guest speakers will be **Dr.**

James Aspinall and Dr. Graham Lyons. 2 or 3 of the Action Group members will also speak about their prostate cancer experiences. Please phone the Stirling District Hospital on **8339 0200** to register if you want to attend.

Note there will be another Awareness Evening in Mt Barker on Wednesday 15th of November, more details later. 

Men's Health - No More Secrets ...

This is an initiative by the Freemasons to promote public awareness about men's health issues. The campaign will include informative seminars on relevant health topics.

Activities will be held during the month of October.

The main theme of the month is *No More Secrets*. Research shows that males are less likely than women to take an active role in maintaining their own health, and may in fact be very secretive about their health. Freemasonry has also been

considered secretive. The month's activities will enable Lodges and Freemasons around Australia and New Zealand to take part in changing attitudes towards Men's Health.

Look out for posters advertising events in your area, and become more aware about Men's Health issues. **for further information ...visit**

<http://www.menshealth.org.au>

see below for Seminars in SA

Gawler	Gawler Arms Hotel	Gawler	10/10/2006	19:00
Mitcham	Mitcham Village Institute	103 Princes Rd. Mitcham	11/10/2006	19:30
Modbury	Celia's Function Centre	100 Smart Rd. Modbury	13/10/2006	19:30
Parndana	Parndana Kangaroo Island		17/10/2006	18:45
Brighton	Brighton Masonic Centre	1 Commercial Rd. Brighton	18/10/2006	TBA
Burnside	Civic Centre	401 Greenhill Rd. Tusmore	23/10/2006	19:00
Semaphore	Masonic Centre	66 Semaphore Rd	24/10/2006	21:30
Port Broughton	Sunnyside Motel	Pt. Broughton	24/10/2006	19:00
Goodwood	Goodwood Community Centre	32 Rosa St. Goodwood	25/10/2006	14:30
Whyalla	TBA	TBA	26/10/2006	TBA
Ardrossan	Ardrossan Bowling Club	Oval Terrace Ardrossan	27/10/2006	20:00
Goolwa	Centenary Hall	Goolwa	27/10/2006	TBA
Adelaide	Naval Military & Airforce Club	111 Hutt Street Adelaide	21/11/2006	19:00

PCFA News

At our meeting on Monday 18th Sept., a **resolution was passed accepting the revised set of Affiliation Rules** covering our continued affiliation with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia. We have also received a two page "**Policy Statement**" outlining the future policies and aims of the PCFA. Should any member want a copy of either of the

above documents, please phone **Reg on 8298 8040** or drop him a line at **39 Greenfield Rd, Seaview Downs, SA. 5049**. He will post a copy out to you. Also copies will be made available at our next meeting for anyone who may want one.

Hopefully it will be on their website soon, if not it will be on ours!. 

A National Web Site for Cancer Groups

There is a new interesting web site now available for **all cancer support groups throughout Australia**. It is at <http://www.CancerCentral.com.au> and **contains a wealth of information** about various cancer support groups including prostate cancer. Postal addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers are also on the site. There is also an area of News and an opportunity to contribute to forums. The support groups can up-date their sites as often as they like by emailing John (Mac) Macmahon and requesting a user name and a password. Check the website for details. Ian Fisk

will update the Adelaide Page and assist, if requested, with the updating of pages for other Groups **in the Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups (SA) Inc.**

The web site has been developed by **John Macmahon** of Perth, Western Australia, who has put a tremendous effort into its establishment. How he's done all of this work, we just haven't a clue! **Anyway, congratulations John!** We strongly recommend that everyone have a look at the site and its various links. **It's well worth while!** 

The Masonic Lodge Art Exhibition for 2006

This exhibition was successfully conducted by the Freemasons in their Great Hall in North Terrace from 16th to 24th September. Thanks to their generosity and, in particular, to **Ray Nicholson**, we were allowed to conduct an information stall inside the entrance to their exhibition. **Many thanks goes to our members** of the PSA Adelaide Group, The Onkaparinga Group, the Mitcham Group and the Prostate Cancer Action Group for manning the stall for 2 hours at a time over 6 days handing out various P/C pamphlets and talking to the members of the general public about our support groups and prostate cancer in general. These members were John Mayes, Keith and Joy Gobbett, Carl Hopkins, Rob Kitto, Bill and Maralyn Toop, John and Phyllis Shields, Barry and Margaret Oakley, Ian Fisk, Les and Joy Belton, Barry Ferris, Alan and Cynthia James, Jeff and Theban Roberts, Reg Mayes, Ray Power, Trevor and Coralie Hunt and Paul and Beverly Ferrett. Many thanks to all you guys and gals!

Whilst the morning sessions were slow, most afternoon sessions saw more pamphlets and other literature handed out and **quite a few people came up to our stall and talked to our members. Surprising, it was mostly the women who approached our stall as their husbands were apparently too shy to do so.** There still seems a great reluctance for men to talk about the subject of prostate cancer and want to hide it and not talk about it, hoping that it will all go away. Well we've got news for them! It won't go away and will progressively get worse if they don't do something about it and have a PSA blood test and a DRE for a start! **Your life can be saved with an early detection of prostate cancer! It's up to you!**

All proceeds from the exhibition will be donated towards **Prostate Cancer Research mainly at the Adelaide University and to the Cancer Care Centre, Unley.** The PCFA took out a full page advert in their art catalogue with



The prize winning pictures



Sue Watchman and Steve Cavallo from Cancer Care

a smaller one covering all the P/C groups in the Association (SA) Inc. There was certainly an excellent display of paintings, plus some beautiful aboriginal art work and paintings. Reg nearly bought an **Andis Jansons painting for \$5,200** but at the last minute changed his mind. Ah well, Reg can dream! Incidentally Reg spoke to one chap who told him he **had just planted 100 pomegranate trees on his property with the hope of selling pure pomegranate juice in S.A. in about 4 years time.** So that's good news! I was able to give some members of the Freemasons Lodge 500 of our brochures to hand around at their Awareness Evenings and to other Lodge members. **We're spreading the word!** f

What's on at the other various Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups (SA) Inc

The Onkaparinga P/C Support Group:

Their Oct meeting screened a DVD about High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU). The November 1st meeting will be the Annual talk by their local Urologist Dr David Elder. (Bring lots of questions) Please phone John Shields on 8382

6671 for further particulars. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Mitcham Support Group Meeting 26th Oct

A DVD will be viewed on the recent PCFA Men's Health Promotion Conference held in Melbourne.. Please ring Terry Harbour on 8271-0513 for further information. f

STOP PRESS - PROSTATESA AND THE CLASSIC ADELAIDE CAR RALLY

ProstateSA is involved with this year's Classic Adelaide Car Rally being held from 15th to 19th November. Brent Frewen of ProstateSA is looking for 10 to 15 volunteers to assist with jobs such as fund raising each day along the route using cash tins, helping the Lions Club run BBQ's and also assisting with various jobs at the closing event on Sunday 19th Nov.

The annual Classic Adelaide Car Rally usually starts somewhere in Adelaide and cars travel along different routes throughout the Adelaide Hills. Great fun is had by all! If you think you can assist ProstateSA to raise urgent funds throughout this event, please give Brent a ring at the Cancer

Council SA on 8291 4111 for further information.

Gary Bowes said if he had a classic car, he wouldn't mind going in this event himself, but his car is a pre classic car, and this rules him out. Sorry Gary!

Check <http://www.classicadelaide.com.au> and <http://www.prostatesa.org.au>



The Secretary/Treasurer's Job for Next Year

The Election of Officers for 2007 is coming up soon. Officers will be elected at our Annual General Meeting to be held in February '07, but the actual date has not yet been fixed. Most Office Bearers are happy to be re-nominated when the time comes, but we are also looking for a new Secretary/Treasurer. This position has been held by Reg for the last eight years, plus the position of Newsletter Editor for the last 4 years. Is there someone amongst our members who is prepared to take on the job of Secretary/Treasurer? Please let Reg know by giving him a ring on 8298 8040. Incidentally, the job can easily be filled by a woman. It

doesn't have to be a male. We don't discriminate here. Only elementary book keeping skills are required plus typing/computer skills. A bit of a knowledge of English might also help! Reg will still write-up all the lectures and supply other information for the Newsletter, so the Secretary will not have to worry too much about that side of things, except to hand him or e-mail him any information he/she might want printed in the Newsletter. If interested, Reg can let you know what the actual duties consist of. You will also have all the other Committee members to fall back on for assistance at various busy times. Have a think about it!

The Treasurer's Report

During September donations were received as follows:- From the Marion Art Group as result of raffling a painting donated by Fred Biggerstaff, \$530.00, Andrew, \$25, Tom

and Glenys, \$10, Sandy and Neil \$35, Anonymous, \$20. Total donations for Sept - \$620.00. Many thanks everyone!

Closing of the Men's Information Centre

We have received an acknowledgement of the association's letter to the Minister of Health, the Hon. John Hill, regarding

the closing of the men's information centre. The minister has promised a detailed reply as early as possible.

Taxotere - A letter from Dr. Bob Such, M.P. Member for Fisher

Dr. Bob Such M.P. and the Member for Fisher, has advised that he has written a letter to the Hon. Tony Abbott, the Minister for Health, requesting that the drug "taxotere" (docetaxel), be placed on the PBS scheme for those men suffering from prostate cancer. Bob told Mr. Abbott that this drug has been available for women suffering from

breast cancer since 1997, yet is not available to prostate cancer sufferers, despite its proven efficacy as part of a chemotherapy regimen for men. Bob said, "Will you please list this drug so that men can access it?" (Thanks Bob. I believe this drug costs about \$2,000 for treating men with advanced prostate cancer. - Reg.)

Our Annual Xmas BBQ

Don't forget to keep that date handy for our Annual Xmas BBQ to be held on Graham Lyons Chapel Hill property in the Adelaide Hills from 12noon to 4.30pm on Sunday the

12th of November. Bring along a friend if you like. We will publish a map in our next Newsletter re how to get there.

Fish Oil is Healthy for You

There is plenty of evidence around that fish oil is healthy for you. Mum told me that 75 years ago when she kept trying to shove very fishy cod liver oil down my neck, which I promptly spat out. After persevering for 2 years she finally gave up. Anyway the video we screened showed that fish oil is particularly good for arthritis sufferers and can even help in combating heart disease and prostate cancer etc. The Omega 3 fatty acids contained in the fish oil help to build up your immune system. People taking fish oil usually mix it

with various juices such as orange or dark grape juice. Some of the people shown in the video swear that taking the fish oil regularly has definitely eased the pain and swelling in their joints and would recommend it to anyone.

If you are interested in buying some good quality fish oil, hop along to a small shop in the foyer of the Royal Adelaide Hospital and you can pick up a good sized bottle of it for only \$15.

Andrology Australia - Free booklets available

"Men's Health Matters" booklets are consumer guides reviewed by a panel of recognized experts in male reproductive health and are based on input from consumers. The booklets contain answers to all questions that men frequently ask about. They are:-

- Androgen Deficiency and Testosterone Therapy. * Prostate Enlargement (BPH). * Testicular cancer.
- Erectile Dysfunction * Male Infertility

We have copies of these booklets in our library (See John). If you want to obtain a free copy for yourself, please phone Andrology Australia on 1300 303 878, or e-mail them on info@andrologyaustralia.org You can also write to them at Andrology Australia, C/o The Monash Medical Centre, Monash University, Monash, Vic. 3800. Bulk quantities are also available, free of charge, to community groups (such as the Prostate Cancer Support Groups throughout Australia) or to Health Professionals.

In opening his address to members, Dr. Steele mentioned that one in ten men are diagnosed with prostate cancer, and from these numbers, one in three will eventually die from the disease. Today, because of modern testing techniques such as the PSA tests, digital rectal examinations and ultrasound probes combined with needle biopsies, prostate cancer is being found in younger men than previously. They have to live with side effects longer than when prostate cancer is found in older men, but at least prostate cancer is found earlier with a greater chance of a cure.

Newer treatments involve, for example, Brachytherapy. This method of treatment requires highly specialized training for the operators and Urologists, and also very expensive equipment, not previously available. People are constantly asking him about treatments seen on overseas internet web sites, but in fact most of these treatments are in the early stages of development and have not yet been fully tested. If they are successful, they are still years away from being fully developed and used in Australia. Some of the more modern treatments now available in Australia are:-

Conformal External Beam Radiotherapy. The Da Vinci Robotic assisted surgery for prostatectomies. Low Dose Rate seed Brachytherapy. High Dose Rate seed Brachytherapy. High Intensity Focused Ultrasound. (HIFU). Cryotherapy (this uses extremely cold nitrogen to freeze the inside of the prostate capsule). The last two procedures are not available in Adelaide. "Watching and Waiting" which involves 6 monthly checks of your PSA readings and DRE tests is sometimes a good option to follow.

Denby said that he has noticed over the past few years that because of information on the internet and more types of treatments being available than ever before, patients want to know more about their treatment options and side effects etc. This is fair enough, but it has resulted in longer and more consultations, multiple opinions, cross referrals, biased opinions, patient confusion and clinical confusion. Some patients are definite in what sort of treatment they want, but "Mr. Average" quite often comes away from a consultation, confused.

Low Dose Rate Brachytherapy:

The main advantage of this type of treatment is that it is a "single dose" treatment which allows a higher radioactive dose (known as grays) to be given to the patient. The side effects are usually more favourable than with other methods of treatment. There is a minimum disruption to life. Men are back to work after only a few days. Modern computerized planning and CT scans greatly assist the Urologist to accurately place up to 110 radioactive seeds into the prostate. A radioactive dose of 145 grays can be given directly to the prostate. This compares with only 74 grays that can be delivered with conformal external radiotherapy. There is a success rate of 87% over a period of ten years for low risk patients and this is very good indeed. Brachytherapy was first developed in Seattle, USA, quite a few years ago.

Denby and several colleagues went to Gilford, England,

in 2003 to be trained and returned to Adelaide to start the brachytherapy program at Calvary Hospital. Six months later he helped introduce the program at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Patient Selection:

No one can just walk into a surgery and ask for Brachytherapy treatment because certain criteria must be met. For example, the Gleason score must be 6 or less.

The PSA level must be 10 or less. The grade should be T1 to T2. (**T1** - The tumour is too small to be seen on scans or felt during examination of the prostate. (It has been discovered by needle biopsy.) **T2** - The tumour is completely inside the prostate gland but is larger and a lump or hard area can be felt when a rectal examination is done.) The size of the prostate must be 50 grams or less. One should have a reasonable flow rate of urine. Also it is preferable that the patient has not had a previous TURP procedure. There is a saying that if you can't pee well before a brachytherapy, then you won't pee well afterwards. Medicare rebates are available for brachytherapy procedures under the above conditions. The Calvary Hospital will perform this treatment if your PSA is above 10 and below 15 but you have to foot the whole bill yourself, which is quite a few thousand dollars. Hospital authorities and Urologists are trying to convince Medicare to come to the party and allow rebates for patients that have a PSA level of up to 15, but have not yet been successful. The R.A.H has funding for 26 LDR Brachytherapy procedures funded by the State Government for this financial year. The funding cuts out in February '07. The RAH has asked for funding for a further 26 cases up until 30.6.07. It will be interesting to learn if this has been approved in the State Budget, just released.

In LDR Brachytherapy, a volume study of the prostate is first carried out, then comes computer planning and dose planning. This is to try and keep the radioactive dose away from the urethra as much as possible. Titanium radioactive capsules (seeds) are inserted into the prostate with the aid of grid references. This is done under a general anesthetic. The seeds are left in the prostate permanently. The catheter is removed at the end of the implant of the seeds and the patient is given antibiotics and Flomaxtra. After five or six hours in hospital, or an overnight stay in some cases, the patient can go home. One patient was playing golf two days after his operation. The side effects are typical LUTS (lower urinary tract symptoms) due to temporary swelling of the prostate gland. To aid in urinating, Flomaxtra is sometimes given for several months. It is uncommon for urinary retention to occur, but this has occurred in several patients so far. This resulted in one patient having to wear a catheter for about 6 months. This was very unfortunate, to say the least. It is also rare for any adverse bowel symptoms to occur. There is a 30% chance that you will have erection dysfunction problems, but in a recent



study carried out at the St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney, the results showed that there was a 50% chance of you suffering from some sort of erection dysfunction problem.

Precautions:

Denby said that as a precaution, you should not be in close proximity to children and particularly babies or pregnant women, for two months. For example don't bounce babies on your lap. This is because of the radio-active seeds you have in your prostate. The radioactivity diminishes sharply after a couple of months. They give you a lead jar when leaving hospital. This is to collect any stray seeds that you may pee out. These are returned to the hospital. Use a condom during intercourse for the first 2 weeks after the procedure. This is also to collect any stray seeds. (*We learn something every day don't we? - Reg.*) After about a month, a CT scan is taken to check on the where-a-bouts of the seeds. They should all be in your prostate!

Some really good progress has been made in brachytherapy over the last 2 and ½ years. It is now quicker to perform. We have better implants. If the prostate is too large, then it can be shrunk by hormones to the acceptable size. There is real time planning. No dexamethasone is now used. It can be done in day surgery. We can open the bladder neck a little bit by surgery to increase the urine flow if necessary. This reduces your reliance on Flomaxtra and fluid tablets.

“Sex after Treatment, Prostate Cancer”: - A Booklet

The Queensland Cancer Trust has just published an excellent 29 page booklet dealing with the subject of “Sex After Treatment, - Prostate Cancer”. If you would like a copy of this booklet, ring the Cancer Help Line on 13 11 20 and ask them to post out a copy to you. They will be only too happy to do so. If you are having any sexual difficulties, particularly after having had a prostatectomy, radiotherapy, brachytherapy or hormone therapy, **this booklet could be very useful.** Erectile dysfunction is a common problem. It is not unusual to see large advertisements in newspapers and magazines or on the internet for products and services

High dose brachytherapy can be used in conjunction with conformal beam external radiotherapy. This can reduce the radiotherapy treatment from 37 day to 27 days thus minimising any burns to the rectum. In high dose rate brachytherapy a high dose radioactive source is left in the prostate for several seconds in each of several dwell positions in each of about a dozen catheters inserted through the perineum into the prostate and then removed. Usually this procedure is repeated again after 24 hours so it is a one night stay in hospital. It can be given to higher risk patients. E.g. a grade of T2b to T3b and a PSA of 10 to 20 with a gleason score of from 7 to 8. The volume of the prostate can go as high as 60cc instead of only 50cc. Your peak urine flow should not be too poor. With HDR there is a shorter duration of side effects. There is no risk of seed migration as they are withdrawn and not left in the prostate like in LDR treatments. We can treat a more advance prostate disease than with LDR treatments.

Denby accompanied his lecture with a really excellent PowerPoint presentation which he had prepared himself. Well done Denby! At the end of his very interesting lecture, Barry thanked him on behalf of the members and presented him with a large tin of Walker's nutritious buttered shortbread biscuits, guaranteed not to contain too much cholesterol. 

offering treatment for this condition. These treatments range from herbal preparations and natural therapies to nasal sprays, lozenges and cheap Viagra. **Some of the costs are pretty steep!** All we can say is that a man needs to be **very cautious about using testosterone or natural products and herbs that may act like testosterone in the body. You should talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the matter and what you propose to put into your body, if anything.** We have heard that **some of these so called erectile remedies will push up your blood pressure. If you already have high blood pressure, then anything can happen! Be warned!** 

Movember - What is it?



Movember (the month formally known as November), is a charity event held throughout Australia during November each year. At the beginning of Movember, guys register with a clean shaven face then have the remainder of the month **to grow and groom their moustache,** and along the way, raise as much money and awareness about male health issues as possible. The

participants are known as “**Mo Bros.**” Movember culminates at the end of the month at gala parties where the winners are judged. The money raised goes towards prostate cancer, and other male health research programs such as testicular cancer which affects men from the ages of 18 to 35. This is

the second most common cancer in young men. Some of the funds raised goes towards male depression as one in six men is affected by depression. Untreated depression is a leading risk factor for suicide.

The beneficiary partners are the PCFA and “Beyond Blue.” The major sponsors are Motorola, Polaroid, Remington and VB Victoria Bitter. To find out more about this important charity event, check out the web site <http://www.movember.com.au> to register, and have a look at the **Beyond Blue** site if you are suffering from depression <http://www.beyondblue.org.au> There is also a write-up about the project on the last page of “**The Prostate News**” which is enclosed with this Newsletter. Incidentally, in last year's event, **9,000 men and women** signed up by growing moustaches (men) and raising funds. **They managed to raise the magnificent total of more than \$1,000,000 and this is not to be sneezed at!** Be in it and start growing that moustache on 1st of November – but register first. 

BHP BOSS LEADS PROSTATE FUNDRAISING

BHP Chairman Don Argus is leading a charge by some of the nation's biggest corporate names to put prostate cancer at the top of the Government's medical priority list.

Mr. Argus and Melbourne University urologist Professor Anthony Costello are set to meet federal Health Minister Tony Abbott today to lobby for increased funding for prostate cancer research, which kills about 2700 Australian men each year – equivalent to the number of women killed by breast cancer.

He and Professor Costello will ask Mr. Abbott for funding

to set up two Prostate Cancer Foundation centres in Victoria and N.S.W. which would offer scholarships and fund research projects into prostate cancer. Under the plan, funding of about \$10 million per year from government and corporate sources would be directed by doctors.

Mr. Argus said a BHP-funded audit of Australian prostate cancer research found that a lack of industry-wide coordination meant many scientists were duplicating other's work – a problem the research centres are designed to overcome.

(The Australian, 28/8, p29)

Be a Man – Talk to your doctor about Prostate Cancer

Be a Man – Talk to your doctor about Prostate Cancer

It is now 18 months since the launch of the BE a Man campaign, funded by Australian Pensioners Insurance Agency. The campaign has certainly been successful in raising the profile of prostate cancer in the community and, probably, in persuading more men to discuss prostate cancer with their doctors.

It was assumed that this would result in more men being tested for prostate cancer.

From my observations this probably means that more men are seeking a blood test to determine their PSA. **My very great concern is that the other test to detect prostate cancer, namely the digital rectal examination, has been relatively neglected. WHY?** The answers I am getting are that talk of DRE scares men off – **just when we are urging men to BE MEN.** Surely there is a contradiction here! Is a real man frightened of his GP inserting a finger up his bum??

The real issue is that there are some men whose prostate cancer can only be detected through a DRE (I was one of them – my PSA was perfectly normal and staying that way.) My GP told me last week that another of his patients is currently being treated for prostate cancer after it was detected through

a DRE, while his PSA blood test showed nothing! There must be hundreds throughout the country every year in this same situation. Some of those men will die if they rely on a blood test alone.

This is a call for a change of attitude – Let us stop diminishing the value of the DRE.

Let us stop referring to the procedure as the “dreaded” DRE; let us stop making jokes about it or referring to it with an embarrassed giggle. After all, women endure a similar procedure without a murmur of protest or embarrassment. Let us loudly and earnestly educate men to approach the DRE as a potentially life-saving procedure. Let us reassure men that it is not in the slightest painful, only mildly uncomfortable and, when you get used to it, not even embarrassing.

While both tests are not perfect, at least there are two distinct tests available. Let us encourage men to use them both. Let us educate, not avoid or prevaricate. That surely is what the BE A MAN campaign is all about!!!!

Alan Hall 12th September, 2006 An article written by Alan Hall of the Barossa Valley/Gawler Prostate Cancer Support Group and which appeared in their Sept. '06 Newsletter.

Health Tips for this Month - Strokes!

It certainly pays to recognise the signs of either yourself, or someone else, about to have a minor or major stroke. “**Stroke Safe for Life**” advises that you should keep a sharp look-out for the following signs:-

- * Weakness, numbness or paralysis of the face, arm or leg (e.g. can a person raise both arms? Can they smile? Has their mouth or eyes drooped?)
- * Have they difficulty in speaking or understanding?
- * Do they suffer from dizziness and loss of balance?

- * Have they suffered from a loss of vision?
- * Have they an usually severe and abrupt headache?
- * Do they have difficulty in swallowing?

Seek immediate medical help if you notice any of the above signs. Prompt action can prevent further damage to the brain and help someone make a full recovery. For more information, **phone 1800 787 653** or visit <http://www.strokefoundation.com.au> on the internet.

BREAST CANCER Subsidies for drugs

FOUR drugs for the treatment of early breast cancer will be subsidised by the Federal Government at a cost of \$36 million over four years, benefiting 3000 Australian women.

The drugs Taxotere, Taxol, Anzatax and Ebewe will be listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme from October 1 to treat women in the early stages of the disease. Experts say the funding means more women will have greater access to treatment and improved chances of survival. *From The Advertiser 28 Sept '06*

Dairy food and Prostate Cancer

On Page 6 of our August Newsletter it was reported from the Advertiser that Australian Research has forced Harvard University to back down on surprising claims of a link between dairy products and prostate cancer. The report went on to say that a large scale study by Victorian researchers has disproven the U.S. theory that men who eat more dairy are 11% more vulnerable to the disease. On reading this the journalistic hyperbole of “forced Harvard University to back down” immediately raised my suspicions as research controversy does not work like this, moreover the use of the words “surprising claims”, by Cancer Council Victoria researchers, was quite worrying as the problem of Dairy Foods intake and Prostate Cancer has been a ‘hot topic’ in the Research Literature since at least 1997. If it was surprising to Cancer Council Victoria researchers, what have they been doing all this time? If Harvard needed to ‘backdown’ then so would Research Institutes scattered across the USA, Canada, the UK and Europe, all would need to ‘backdown’ and disown a great many research studies over the last decade.

The Cancer Council of Victoria Website reveals that data from the ‘Health 2020’ as it applied to 14,600 Victorian Men between the ages of 27 and 75 years were studied. It was pointed out that when the Harvard researchers repeated their meta-analysis using this data, they had reported in the June issue of the JNIC that the association between dairy food and prostate cancer had lost statistical significance. This is a long way from being a “backdown” as the journalist would have us believe. It merely means that the statistical analysis that gave one result before is different when aggregated with the Victorian study. If one goes to the reports of the original article from Harvard researchers in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute Dec. 7, 2005 vol 97:pp 1768-1777, it emerges that it was a meta-analysis of 12 studies from 1966 to 2005 which examined dairy and calcium intake and prostate cancer. The risk increases in the study were described as modest with men who ate the most dairy products having an 11% increase in risk and men with the highest calcium intake were 39% more likely to develop CaP than the lowest.

One problem with meta-analysis which is an attempt to look for common trends in a number of diverse studies that usually have different population samples and different methodologies, is that even if the studies are concerned with the same thing, it is incredibly difficult to correct for those differences so that valid statistical results can be derived. The Harvard study is a case in point. From the Victorian Website it is clear that the Cancer Council Victoria’s Health 2020 study was set up in the early 1990s to determine why migrants from

Southern European backgrounds held a 30% decreased risk of developing cancer or heart disease, had lower morbidity levels than people born in Australia and lived four or five years longer on average. The data bank consists of one third people of Italian and Greek background and 2/3 Anglo Saxons.

It does not take much thinking to work out that if you have a sample that is not only composed of people 33% of whom have a 30% lower cancer rate and live 4-5 years longer than the other 66% and if the sample also ranges from 27 to 75 years in age with arguably a distribution of men where up to 50 to 60% are too young to usually exhibit a CaP diagnosis, then one has a highly skewed sample that is well able to ensure that when aggregated with the original Harvard study, the original ‘modest risk profile’ could vanish into statistical insignificance. One wonders what became of the Harvard concentration also on calcium levels in the Victorian study? One could also safely assume that the 33% of the sample from Southern European backgrounds would keep to traditional habits such as using good quality extra virgin olive oil copiously in their diets. We now know that powerful antioxidants such as hydroxytyrosol and anti-inflammatory such as oleocanthal in the olive oil would most likely tend to counter any pro-CaP effect from dairy products consumed by that 33 %.

The bottom line is be very wary of journalistic hype regarding any negative association of dairy food and prostate cancer. We have two books in our Library that indicate that there is indeed a relationship between CaP and Dairy products. Stoff’s book ‘The Prostate Miracle’ and Jane Plant’s book ‘Prostate Cancer understand, prevent and overcome’. Plant’s book in the latter part of chapter 2 and all of chapters 3 and 4, presents an exceptionally well documented argument as one would expect from a distinguished scientist who used her ‘discoveries’ to save herself from end stage terminal breast cancer with a prognosis of three months of life. It is important to remember that the Harvard study now aggregated with the highly skewed sample from Victoria, is now considering a statistically insignificant risk profile for developing prostate cancer, not whether it is OK for men with diagnosed CaP to continue eating lots of dairy food. In light of what Plant writes and documents, I personally would wonder about one’s common sense if one continued to consume a lot of dairy food.

In the next Newsletter Editor permitting, I will explain just what is the problem with dairy products.

John Mayes Research Librarian.



Breaking taboo of prostate cancer

CRAIG BILDSTIEN

THE “taboo” surrounding prostate cancer is the target of a group of prominent South Australians who want to lift the profile of the deadly disease.

The group includes Channel 7 newsreader Graeme Goodings, Adelaide Crows chief executive Steven Trigg, real estate

agent Michael Brock and arts and tourism personality Nicky Downer.

Called ProstateSA, it is the brainchild of some of the state’s pre-eminent urologists and the Cancer Council of SA.

Aimed at lifting the profile of men’s prostate to that of women’s breast cancer, the group will be chaired by former

Health Commission chief executive Ray Blight.

Latest figures show 1030 SA men were diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2003 and 267 died.

Cancer Council spokesman Brent Frewen told The Advertiser yesterday the aim was “not so much to scare men” but lift awareness.

“We’ve fallen a bit behind women’s health and breast cancer and it’s time to rectify that,” he said.

Independent MP Bob Such, who had surgery for prostate cancer last year, says most men “need to be jolted” into action.

“It is no good trying to be macho and tough it out, because if you get this cancer, it will tough you out,” he said yesterday.

“A lot of men are a walking time bomb.”

“They either have it, or they are likely to get it, and it’s important they come out of the Dark Ages.”

“It is better to be cautious now than regretful later.”

Dr Such attended the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia’s first men’s health conference in Melbourne last month. He has urged the foundation chief executive, Andrew Giles, to run a similar event in Adelaide.

According to Mr Frewen, prostate cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death in Australian men after lung cancer.

He said causes were still poorly understood, but research was focusing on possible risk factors including diet, weight and physical activity.

Also involved in ProstateSA will be urologist Dr Peter Sutherland, Karen Thomas of Fisher Jeffries, Rod Buchecker of Clemenger BBDO and Professor Villis Marshall from the Royal Adelaide Hospital. It will be officially launched at the Classic Adelaide rally on Wednesday, October 11, where it will be named the event’s official charity for 2006.

<http://www.prostatesa.org.au>

from Advertiser Oct 3, 2006



Poem from Darrell Mulberry

Comes the time in the life of a man
When getting close to Forty
It’s time for a fling while he can
To have fun and be a bit naughty
Then when he’s getting near Fifty
In the life of this sporty gent
He starts thinking of being thrifty
To show something for all he has spent
Then, when Sixty is getting a bit close
He wants his five minutes of glory

Among friends he gets quite verbose
Telling all his sad little story
At Seventy he’s going quite nicely
Though the nights are starting to drag
He’s having to get up twice nightly
To empty his colostomy bag
Then comes that great EIGHT_O
Just believe me he’s still quite a threat
As strong as Atlas and as wise as Plato
There’s life in the old dog yet!



Goobledygook

In our PSA Newsletter we try to write in plain English with not too much “Goobledygook”. We thought that you would be interested to learn who won the “Gold Bull Award” for 2005, presented by Britain’s Plain English Campaign. Well congratulations to our very own Australian Taxation Department who won the global goobledygook award for this piece of GST legislation:-

A part of the Taxation Act stated “that the Taxation Commissioner may treat a particular event that actually happened as not having happened and treat a particular event

that did not actually happen as having happened.” Wow! Well what does that all mean? Taxation Lawyers have been having a field day with this ever since.

Whilst on the subject of English, my school teacher way back in 1943 told me that the worst piece of English that she had come across was the sentence, “I eyed an eye.” And who wrote this drivel? Well it was William Shakespeare in his play “A Midsummer’s Night Dream.” Or was it in “Much Ado about Nothing?” Some of you Shakespearian experts might know!



Malfunctioning penile implant raises embarrassment and \$400,000

From the Queensland Prostate Cancer News – Sept. ’06 edition.

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) -- A former handyman wins more than 400-thousand dollars from a medical device maker’s insurance company.

Charles Lennon received a penile implant in 1996 that he says has caused him to have an erection for ten years.

The Dura-Two was designed to allow impotent men to have

sex, but also be positioned so it wouldn’t be noticeable at other times.

But after Lennon had the operation, he couldn’t position the implant downward. His lawyer says Lennon is embarrassed to go out in public.

Today’s decision by the Rhode Island Supreme Court awards Lennon 400-thousand dollars from the manufacturer’s insurer. Company lawyers had argued the implant worked properly.



The Health Minister, the Hon. Tony Abbott, is wrong

Just recently, the Health Minister, the Hon. Tony Abbott, said on Channel 9 that **“If you haven’t got symptoms (of prostate cancer), you probably don’t need to get tested.** We all know that this **statement is incorrect** and that there usually are no symptoms at all for early prostate cancer. **If you have symptoms** such as restricted urine flow, peeing blood, or have numerous unexplained aches and pains in your bones, **then most likely it is too late** as these signs are a good indication that you **may** have prostate cancer. Furthermore it might have escaped from your prostate capsule.

Mr. Abbott’s colleague, Road Minister, Jim Lloyd, (a prostate cancer survivor), said that the sad fact is that **prostate cancer is an insidious disease, which in the early stages often does not have symptoms.** Mr. Lloyd said in his own case he was 48 years old with no symptoms whatsoever when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. He said he would give Mr. Abbott **“A good ear-bashing about the matter.”**

A spokeswoman for Mr. Abbott clearly tried to lay the blame on the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and said the Minister was following the PCFA position on testing. **What a load of balderdash!** She said Mr. Abbott’s and the

Government’s position was that it was extremely important that men with prostate cancer symptoms see their doctor. (from, *The Australian Newspaper*, 1.9.06). **Well for her information it is extremely important for men over 50 years of age with no symptoms whatsoever, see their doctor for a PSA and a DRE test.** It’s obvious that the Minister and his spokeswoman, has not read **the PCFA’s Policy Statement, which outlines and emphasises this comment.** The background comments to the **Policy Statement** states that **“Many men are dying from prostate cancer because they did not have a timely PSA test. We think that the Minister should correct his statement as early as possible as it is definitely misleading.**

(Many thanks to **Trevor Hunt** of the Prostate Cancer Action Group (SA) Inc. for bringing this matter to our attention. A short article about it appears in the PCAG Sept ‘06 Newsletter) Should any member like to contact the Health Minister about this article, on getting “taxotere” or “Flomaxtra” onto the PBS List, his e-mail is Tony.Abbott.mp@aph.gov.au and his phone No. is (02) 6277 7220. “Flomaxtra” was mentioned in our last Newsletter. 

No alcohol, prostate cancer risk: study

DRINKING does not appear to be associated with the overall incidence of prostate cancer, according to findings published in the *International Journal of Cancer.*

However, men who drink alcohol may have a lower risk of having an aggressive prostate cancer and dying from this cancer.

“Although there is little evidence to support an association between alcohol consumption and prostate cancer risk, questions remain concerning the effect on aggressive and non-aggressive tumours and the pattern and type of alcohol consumed,” Dr Graham Giles and colleagues from the University of Melbourne, Australia, write.

To investigate, the researchers analysed data on 16,872 men followed from 1994 to 2003.

The participants ranged in age from 27 to 70 years at the beginning of the study, when questionnaires were used to obtain detailed information on alcohol consumption.

A total of 732 cases of prostate cancer occurred, including 132 aggressive cases and 53 prostate cancer-related deaths.

Overall, no association was observed between alcohol intake and the development of prostate cancer.

Also, the pattern of drinking and type of alcohol were not significantly associated with prostate cancer risk.

Compared with abstainers, men who consumed one to 19 grams per day of alcohol, (no more than about one and a half drinks per day), had a slightly reduced risk of aggressive prostate cancers (34 per cent).

Prostate cancer mortality was also reduced in this group (44 per cent).

If it can be confirmed that moderate alcohol consumption protects against aggressive and fatal prostate cancer, it would have a “major impact,” Dr Giles and colleagues point out, because “there are no established modifiable risk factors for this common type of cancer”. *Article from Reuters. Oct 3* 

We are still on the **look-out** for cartoons, and interesting news items about prostate cancer which might be suitable for publication in future PSA Newsletters. **Even a story about yourself and your P/C experience could be OK.** Just drop Reg a line(or email to secretary@psaadelaide.org) at 39 Greenfield Rd., Seaview Downs, SA 5049 if you have anything of interest.

We are also still looking for more members who are on the Internet and wish to have **“The Newsletter”** delivered via the internet, instead of a hard copy via post. If you would like to save us postage and printing, **please e-mail your email address** to our Webmaster, Ian Fisk, at info@psaadelaide.org

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