

# What's News



breast cancer  
research centre-wa  
Incorporating Perth Breast Cancer Institute

WELCOME TO THE 2022 SPRING EDITION



**Prof. Arlene Chan AM**  
*Medical Oncologist MBBS, FRACP, MMed (Palliative Care)*

I am delighted to welcome you to the Spring 2022 edition of What's News.

This winter, we have welcomed two new board members, Sal Vallegonga and David Della Bona. Sal and David both have years of working experience and have a shared interest in charitable work. In this newsletter, we have featured David Della Bona's profile. To learn more about him, see [page 2](#).

The story of hope in this edition of What's News features Tania Fabris. Tania has been a patient and an avid supporter of BCRC-WA for the past 7 years. She is a remarkable artist, writer and creative soul and has been involved in multiple fundraisers for us including the Raw Colour Art Exhibition in 2021 and the upcoming 2022 Couture for a Cure event. You can read her story on [pages 4-5](#).

BCRC-WA's education team with the help of Clinical Psychologist, Francoise Ballantyne, have written an article entitled How to Talk to Teens About Breast Cancer. This article coincides with our ongoing research done through our RAYS project - Resilience in Adolescents and Young People - where we have set out to understand the emotional impact on young people aged 14-24 years who have a parent diagnosed with breast cancer. To learn how to talk to the teenager in your life, head to [pages 6-7](#).

Our education team has also been hard at work with publishing three new BCRC-WA resources. Two information sheets for teens: What is Breast Cancer? and What is Metastatic or Advanced Breast Cancer? Additionally, in place of my annual talk, there is now a PYNKS Breast Cancer Update 2022 pamphlet that covers the newest information on breast cancer treatments. All of these resources are available to you upon request on your next visit to PBCI.

On a similar note, PYNKS have restarted their monthly meet-ups. You can read more about the PYNKS group on page 8. Workshops have also begun to take place again. Our first Look Good Feel Better workshop this year took place in September and we will be holding an Advance Care Planning workshop on 18 October 2022. Patient health and safety still come first and COVID measures are still in place at BCRC-WA and highly encouraged when gathering externally.

We are grateful for the many fundraisers that have taken place these past few months. Shearing for Liz Pink Day raised funds for the BCRC-WA for the ninth year in a row. They have raised a total of over \$330,000 during these past years and we are ever grateful to the Shearing for Liz team. This is a fundraiser that is very near and dear to BCRC-WA. To learn more about the fundraiser, flip to [page 10](#).

Thank you also to the Ravensthorpe Tigers Football and Sporting Club and Erin Hanford for their wonderful contributions. And thank you to everyone who supported BCRC-WA at Grill'd Karrinyup during the month of September. I deeply appreciate the support and strive to continue to provide the very best breast cancer care and support.



Tania Fabris - [pages 4-5](#)



## NEW BOARD MEMBER

# David Della Bona

David is currently the Managing Director of the WA Limestone Group of Companies and has been working in the family business for over 30 years. Predominantly a Quarries, Concrete and Civil Constructor, WA Limestone is one of the largest raw materials supply in WA with 12 operating quarries in the Perth Metropolitan area as well a large footprint across the state with quarries in many regional locations.

David is also a National and State Board member of the Civil Contractors Federation, a key not-for-profit industry representative body for the Civil Construction Industry.

David has also served on the Villa Dalmacia Aged Care Facility board for almost 10 years and has recently stepped down as Chairperson but remains on the Board of Directors for the organisation.

*"I feel very privileged to have been asked to join the BCRC board. My mum had Breast Cancer 15 years ago and has recovered and is going very well now so in a small way, this is my way of giving something back to help such a wonderful cause and great organisation."*



David Della Bona

## FROM

# Fiona



Spring has arrived and with the warmer weather and October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, there is much enthusiasm and activity around the BCRC-WA offices. Between a flurry of fundraising activities, a resurgence of social activity for our lovely PYNKS ladies and some new initiatives on the education side on top of all our research and treatment activities, our wonderful specialists, staff and volunteers have been busy.

Echoing the sentiments of Professor Chan, I would like to warmly welcome the new board members, David Della Bona and Sal Vallegonga, and thank retiring board members Jim Giumelli and Deb Bajrovic for their invaluable support over recent years, including overseeing our move to Hollywood Consulting Centre and the establishment of Perth Breast Cancer Institute.

BCRC-WA has seen a small burst in fundraising in the last few weeks and we are excitedly awaiting the start of many initiatives to take place in the month of October - Breast Cancer Awareness month. We thank everyone who has volunteered their time and efforts to fundraise for BCRC-WA. Because of you, our services and life-changing research continue to move forward.

I personally would like to thank all the people and organizations involved with the Shearing for Liz Pink Day on 10 September 2022. Their ongoing contributions to BCRC-WA have now raised well over \$300,000 for breast cancer research. Deepest thanks to the Davies Family and the Reed Family for embracing the challenge every year and raising money and awareness for BCRC-WA. You are an inspiration.

Lastly, the Couture for a Cure event is just around the corner and it's looking as though it will be a night to remember! There are only a few seats left so make sure to book your seats. I am looking forward to seeing many of you there.

**breast cancer research centre-wa**

# COUTURE for a cure

Guests are invited to enjoy an evening of style and glamour, **Saturday 29th October 2022** at Pan Pacific Perth, to support Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA.

Proudly partnered with Channel 9, COUTURE FOR A CURE will bring WA's best Designers to the runway for a very worthy cause.

Tickets are limited so to avoid disappointment, secure your table today!  
[givergy.com.au/bcrcwa](http://givergy.com.au/bcrcwa)



## TANIA'S

## Story

Tania Fabris is no stranger to the Breast Cancer Research Centre – WA. Alongside being a patient, she has been one of our biggest supporters. One year ago, in October 2021, Tania, with the generosity of major supporter Minderoo Foundation with Janet Holmes a` Court, Curtin University, Leeuwin Estate and more, created The Raw Colour Art Exhibition.

Now, Tania is curating the artwork for BCRC-WA's Couture for a Cure 2022 event. She and a handful of other artists are banding together to raise more money by donating proceeds from sales of their artwork to BCRC-WA. The artwork displayed here, titled "Conscious", is one that will be auctioned during the event.

Tania will also be a guest speaker at the event – to share her personal experience being under the care of Professor Arlene Chan. For this reason, we invited her to also share her unique and artistic story of hope.

## WHAT WORKS FOR ME! MY STORY OF

## Recovery and Restoration

By Tania Fabris

I will always remember the 31st of August 2015, one day before my favourite season – Spring, it was my final chemotherapy session. We celebrated in the ward with a cake however, my journey was not yet complete as a double mastectomy was scheduled eight weeks later. I knew I was in good hands with Professor Arlene Chan, Dr Diana Hastrich and Dr Edward Van Been in my corner.

During this time, I spent many days enjoying the spring flora in our most treasured park – Kings Park! This was my walk to recovery and restoration, recording its beauty through my art practice. Like the sun rises each day so does the beauty of our flora every season, even when threatened by external forces, its resilience always comes through, as promised.

Research has come so far that we can now formulate health plans and treatments to suit each person. As Arlene explained, an individual recipe per patient, and this is all due to the amazing success of BCRC-WA and its fundraising commitment to breast cancer.

I recite my experience in my head, minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, and here I am seven years later walking into Arlene's rooms. We are on a first-name basis now. My check-ups with Arlene are now an annual routine event, which at first were attended with my husband so as not to miss any important dialogue as in the early days I was totally numb, all I could see was a mouth moving with little being registered.

Seven years on, I attend on my own and we greet each other with smiling eyes through our masks, like an old friend, that knows you deeply. As we chit-chat during my normal check-up Arlene says, "Due to our recent research and as all is well, I'm taking you off Tamoxifen and discharging you as my patient".

Hearing this wonderful news discharged an enormous weight off my shoulders and I felt my whole body lighten. I had to check, "Are you sure you don't want to see me again? Are you sure?"

"Definitely", was her reply, "but I look forward to celebrating with you and seeing you at the up-and-coming ball "Couture for a Cure".

A chapter closed, yet the path and journey will never, ever be forgotten, as it has moulded and made me the person I am today.

Feel the fear and do it anyway  
Don't sweat the small stuff  
Live in the moment  
Pollyanna, I am  
Surround yourself with uplifting people  
Exercise amongst the gumtrees  
Listen to what they are telling you  
Quiet the world's noise  
Turn off the phone  
Watch uplifting happy  
Belly laughing movies  
Spend your time with children  
Give your time to the elderly  
And above all have faith and hope in tomorrow



A Bump in the Road! Photographer – Jessica Wyld

## Hope

Aspiration, desire, wish, expectation, ambition, aim, plan and dream. A feeling or expectation for a particular happening.

"It's amazing how a little tomorrow can make up for a whole lot of yesterday."

– John Guare

"You're braver than you believe, stronger than you seem and smarter than you think."

– Christopher Robin (A.A. Milne)

"You may say I'm a dreamer  
But I'm not the only one  
I hope someday you'll join us  
And the world will live as one"

– John Lennon

"Don't stop think about tomorrow...  
It will be better than before"

– Fleetwood mac

"I'm pickin' up good vibrations  
She's giving me excitations"

– Beach Boys

**Artwork Title – Conscious – Tania Fabris**

A Bump in the Road!

"Sturt, the pea is what I found in a mass, why am I so attracted to you, I found you in the desert by the side of a road. Your brightness so old. Your beauty attached itself to ice, oh please tell me you will go and leave me be. This bump in the road is over and you will see."

Tania Fabris 2022



## HOW TO TALK TO TEENS

# About Breast Cancer

A diagnosis of breast cancer in the family can be a difficult time for everyone. The thought of talking to your teenager may seem overwhelming, with often an initial instinct to want to protect them from the strong emotions that this news can bring.

As part of our research here at BCRC-WA, in 2018 we set about understanding the emotional impact on young people aged 14-24 years when a parent has been diagnosed with breast cancer. We found that out of the 120 young people we talked to, most wanted more, clear information about their parent's breast cancer and how their family would cope with the changes the diagnosis might bring.

This finding is consistent with research evidence that shows having open and honest communication supports young people's adjustment and well-being. There is a wealth of information available to help this process of sharing information, and we have summarised some general tips and advice below.

Be mindful, that every teenager's needs around the type and amount of information about their parent's breast cancer will be different. At BCRC-WA we have designed information sheets specifically for young people aged 14-24 explaining breast cancer, including what it is, how it can be treated and possible side effects.

If you feel that your teenager will benefit from further accurate information in relation to your specific experience, we encourage you to talk further with your treating PBCI specialist. Our specialists are happy for you to make a family appointment so that your teenager(s) can attend with you and ask questions.

### Be honest and open as soon as you are able

Young people are observant and have a natural barometer that tells them something is not right. Being honest helps build trust between you, which is an essential part of secure family relationships.

### You are the expert on your teenager

Trust your judgment on the best way to approach your teenager based on their unique personality, temperament, and emotional needs. Often talking individually can be more supportive for initial conversations.

### Talk regularly

Regular and open communication is important to maintain trust and have space to answer any questions and worries they have. It is also a chance to clarify any misconceptions (e.g. "will I catch it too?")

### Build understanding with reliable facts

Teenagers' first instinct is to google! Provide access to reliable and accurate information specific to your cancer. This may include the BCRC-WA information sheet, speaking with your PBCI specialist, and the resources listed below.

### Teenagers can cope

While it can be an incredibly challenging time. Acknowledging and normalising the strong emotions of sadness, fear, anger, frustration and guilt that will arise for them and others in the family, will not harm them emotionally. In fact, it will build their resilience to cope with difficult situations.



Even after being open with your teenager and providing further information about your breast cancer, you might want additional support and guidance. As part of our RAYS project, Resilience in Adolescents and Young people Study, a Clinical Psychologist is available to meet with your child aged 14-24 years to determine what further support or information may be helpful.

If you are interested in learning more about RAYS please talk to your specialist about how to get involved or email [RAYS@bcrc-wa.com.au](mailto:RAYS@bcrc-wa.com.au) or phone 6500 5576.

### USEFUL RESOURCES

#### BCRC-WA resources:

- What is Breast Cancer? Teen info sheet
- What is Metastatic or Advanced Breast Cancer? Teen info sheet

#### Podcasts:

- The Thing About Cancer Podcast – Episode 5: Explaining Cancer to Kids
- UPFRONT About Breast Cancer Podcast – Episode 6: Telling Your Children You Have Cancer

#### Information Guide:

- Cancer Council – Talking to Kids about Cancer: A guide for people with cancer, their families and friends



## OUR PYNKS GROUP

# is Back!

After a long COVID hiatus, the PYNKS support group has, at last, recommenced.

PYNKS is a supportive social group for patients under the care of the Perth Breast Cancer Institute living with metastatic or advanced breast cancer.

Every second Tuesday of the month from 10:00, PYNKS members gather at Zamia Café in Kings Park for coffee and chats. The months of August and September, we saw many of our returning members again at these gatherings and we were happy to welcome some new faces as well.



Left to Right: Alison Stone, Lyn Hill, Katarina Maric, Karen Taaffe, Rama Arun, Di Macpherson, Silvana Washbourne and Robyn Dunlop

### Our next Coffee and Chat Sessions are:

- Tuesday, 11 October 2022
- Tuesday, 8 November 2022

If you are a patient at PBCI and would like to join a group of like-minded people who can provide understanding and support, email [info@bcrc-wa.com.au](mailto:info@bcrc-wa.com.au) or call 08 6500 5501.

Alternatively, you can download a registration form on our website and email it to us.

### PYNKS Breast Cancer Update 2022 Information Pamphlet

The BCRC-WA education team, led by Linda Armstrong and Dr Louisa Lo, have put together a PYNKS Breast Cancer Update 2022 pamphlet. Inside, patients can find updates on treatments for Hormone Positive Breast Cancer, HER2 Positive Breast Cancer, HER2 Low Breast Cancer and Triple Negative Breast Cancer.

Make sure to pick up a PYNKS pamphlet on your next visit to our offices.

## MY FUTURE CARE

### Introduction to Advance Care Planning Workshops

On Tuesday, 18 October 2022 from 10:00 AM -12:00 PM, the Breast Cancer Research Centre – WA will be hosting an Advance Care Planning workshop.

We all want to have a say in what happens in the last part of our lives. By making plans that cover your future care, lifestyle, health and finances, you're not only working out what you want, but you are also making things easier on those around you. This process is called Advance Care Planning.

This FREE Palliative Care WA workshop will cover information on what's involved in Advance Care Planning, how to get started, and how to talk about your wishes for the last stage of your life with your family, loved ones and health care providers.

All patients of PBCI are welcome to join.

#### What will be covered:

- What is Advance Care Planning?
- Exploring what matters to you and what your priorities are for the last stage of life.
- How to have a conversation about your wishes with your family, loved ones and health care providers.
- What is involved in palliative care and when it should be offered
- How to complete documents such as Advance Care Plan, Advance Health Directive and Enduring Power of Guardianship.

If you are interested in attending, please register your interest by emailing [info@bcrc-wa.com.au](mailto:info@bcrc-wa.com.au).

## LOOK GOOD FEEL BETTER

### Workshops

Breast Cancer Research Centre – WA has proudly partnered with Look Good Feel Better to offer their much-loved free workshops exclusively to patients under the care of PBCI.

Look Good Feel Better is a free national community service program, run by the Cancer Patients Foundation, dedicated to teaching cancer patients how to manage the appearance-related side effects caused by treatment.

Several workshops were held at BCRC-WA throughout 2021 and were well-received with rave reviews by all who participated. However, with COVID looming, we have not been able to hold the workshops, that is, until now.

On 6 September 2022, six patients of PBCI took part in a face-to-face workshop. The Look Good Feel Better team was able to demonstrate a skincare routine to assist with side effects like dryness and sun sensitivity; provide make-up tips as well as demonstrate techniques for drawing on eyebrows and eyelashes; and offer advice on headwear options, including scarf styling and wig selection.

BCRC-WA will continue to partner with Look Good Feel Better with the next workshop being held in November. Dates for 2023 are already being discussed. If you would like to attend a workshop, please let your PBCI breast care nurse know. We hope that we might be able to increase the number of participants in the future but, in the meantime, we will try to accommodate all interested parties as best we can.

Look Good Feel Better also provide virtual workshops online and are very active on social media. Make sure to follow them on Facebook or visit their website to learn about additional ways you can engage with them.



## SHEARING FOR LIZ

# Pink Day

The Shearing for Liz Pink Day was held on Saturday, 10 September 2022 in the Cardiff Merinos shearing shed in Yorkrakine, 3 hours east of Perth. An auction, freshly made pizza, beer on tap, live music and great company ensured another fantastic night dedicated to raising funds for Breast Cancer Research Centre - WA.

Sponsors and donors of goods, whose contributions resulted in fifty-two diverse auction items on offer, saw some very competitive bidding. The items were expertly auctioned off by Auctioneer, Jim Sangalli.

In addition, a number of merino studs across the State have generously offered the proceeds from the sale of one of their very valuable rams towards the Shearing for Liz Pink Day. Agricultural companies Elders and Nutrien coordinated this initiative alongside Quentin Davies and Tom Reed, for which we very grateful. This element of the Shearing for Liz fundraising activities is new this year and the support from merino studs across the State has been simply overwhelming.

The biggest thank you goes to EVERYONE who came along, enjoyed the day/night, supported the event and bid on items. Donations and ram sale contributions are still rolling in. However, we are very proud to announce that the Shearing for Liz Pink Day and Auction raised around \$80,000 and this, in conjunction with the Ram Sale contributions, should see a total of over \$100,000 heading to BCRC-WA!

Not only that, but the breast cancer awareness opportunities the Shearing for Liz activities have provided throughout regional WA are priceless. Our only wish is that the women and men who have seen and read about the activities feel more informed about the prevalence of breast cancer and the amazing work being done to better the lives of those who are fighting it.

There really are not enough ways to say "Thank you" but we are so very grateful, and we heartily thank Quentin and Di Davies, Tom and Lucy Reed, Tim Spicer from Elders and Mitchell Crosby from Nutrien and everyone involved in putting on this fundraiser over the past years. Your generosity and support mean the world to us.



**Raised \$100,000 (this year!) and counting**



## FUNDRAISING

# News

### TIGERS FUNDRAISER FOR BREAST CANCER RESEARCH

**Raised \$8,423**

On the 16th of July Tigers and our local sporting competition, Southerners from Hopetoun and the Lake King sporting club came together for the Tigers Fundraiser for Breast Cancer Research night.

Tigers had recently lost a beloved member, Theresa Francis, to a long battle with breast cancer. We decided we wanted to fundraise for breast cancer research in her memory as she had given so much to the club in her life. In deciding which organisation to fundraise for her family suggested we raise funds for the Breast Cancer Research Centre WA, an organisation they couldn't speak more highly of and a group that has helped Theresa immensely throughout her battle.

The night was organised by the Tigers Social Committee and supported by all corners of our community and the surrounding communities with many local businesses donating towards the raffle which helped raise much of the funds for the night and local hairdresser, Brydie from Hair by Brydie, volunteered her time and expertise on the night.

It was a great night with a night netball game held between the Ravensthorpe Tigers and Hopetoun Southerners netball teams whilst the Tigers woman's hockey team cooked up a potluck night to remember. It was our biggest turnout for the season as so many people wanted to support the cause.

Of course, the main draw of the night was the beard and head shave and dye. We were blown away by all of the community members that were willing



### ERIN'S MULLALOO SUNSET COAST HALF MARATHON

**Raised \$8145**

On 2 September, BCRC-WA patient, Erin Hanford, started a Facebook fundraiser hoping that everyone's support and donations would help keep her accountable and push her to get over the finish line. And she did!

On 18 September, on her 37th birthday and just over halfway through her chemotherapy treatment, Erin ran the half marathon and crossed the finish line. Photos show that she was lovingly supported by her friends and family and by the looks of it, the weather as well!

"I am so pleased to somehow give a little bit back to the centre that has provided me with world-class treatment and care!" - Erin Hanford

Thank you, Erin. You are truly an inspiration!







During the month of September, Grill'd Karrinyup supported BCRC-WA through their Local Matters program.

Local Matters began in 2011 to support local communities. The program has given back to over 30,000 community groups, organisations and projects.

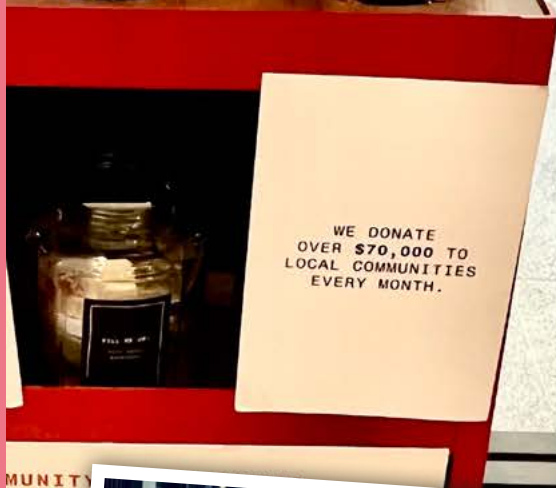
**How does it work?**

Every burger or salad ordered equals a vote. Every person is given a token for their order which then can be placed in one of three jars. The jar with the most tokens receives \$300.

The best part of this initiative is that the local community gains awareness of organizations that were previously unknown to them. The delicious food is a bonus!

This was BCRC-WA's second time being a part of the program and we are thankful to Grill'd for reaching out to us and giving us another opportunity to take part. We hope we can take part at yet another local Grill'd in the future.

Thank you to everyone who supported us and dropped a token (or FIVE!) into our jar. We appreciate you.



(BCRC-WA staff left to right: Lia Green, Aashi Pankaj, Jeanette De Voto, Cynthia Gregory, Deb Davis, Kanata Vekaria)