



Prostate cancer on the rise

Prostate cancer is set to become the most threatening disease for Australian men. Currently it is the most common cancer found in Australian men and the second most common cause of cancer deaths in Australian males. Only lung cancer causes more male cancer deaths than prostate cancer.

Breast cancer remains the most common cause of female cancer deaths. However, last year, for the first time ever, the number of women who died from breast cancer was less than the number of men who died from prostate cancer. In this case being number one is not the best position.

Prostate cancer is set to become the most threatening disease for Australian men

Not only has there been growth in the incidence of prostate cancer over time, but also the number of men with

prostate cancer in the future will continue to increase. Overall, the incidence of prostate cancer is expected to increase by 43 per cent to 15,202 new cases of prostate cancer in 2011.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) has identified the key research areas needed to fight the growth in prostate cancer. In addition – thanks to a partnership with BHP Billiton – the PCFA, via its national audit, has identified the world class researchers in Australia who can lead the work.

The challenge now is to raise the funds to bring the research together in a united collaborative way – and to lobby the government for greater support.

To assist with lobbying the PCFA has undertaken some detailed analysis of the

economic burden of prostate cancer. Of course many of the costs associated with prostate cancer are intangible – it is not possible to replace a loving father who has died from the disease, or to quantify the costs of living in poor health and battling the myriad side effects of treatments. Other costs, by contrast, can be measured, and together they provide an estimate of the economic burden of prostate cancer on Australia.

The economic burden of prostate cancer – 2006

Medical costs	\$267,900,000
Loss of productivity and welfare costs	\$1,135,100,000
Cost of informal care	\$18,600,000
Total cost burden	\$1,421,600,000

The total economic burden of prostate cancer – including medical costs, loss of productivity and wellbeing and the cost of informal care – is estimated to be \$1.4 billion. The total cost of prostate cancer is estimated to be \$7.6 billion in real terms between 2006 and 2011.

The Collaborative Research Initiative which has already started to receive significant support from Corporate Australia, will provide some real answers to the growing problem of prostate cancer.

From the CEO

The past few months has been a period of important and enormous growth for the work of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia thanks to the initial support of our key corporate partners in this new Collaborative Research Initiative – under the leadership of Mr Don Argus AO – in building considerable momentum.

The initial funding from the BHP Billiton Community Fund enabled us to undertake the much needed National Audit of prostate cancer research in Australia. The final report detailed the great work that was going on in Australia, however it also highlighted a fundamental problem – the lack of collaboration between the various researchers and research institutions. This lack of collaboration could be seen to have caused both a certain level of duplication and regrettably, some lost opportunities.

The next stage of the Collaborative Research Initiative is to get the best researchers in Australia talking to each other. To achieve this end we are grateful for the generous support of Southern Cross Equities, Australia Post, Mayne Pharma, NAB, Brambles, Westpac, KPMG, ANZ, Smorgan Streel and Leighton Holdings. This is in addition to our existing major partners – Australian Pensioners Insurance Agency, the Commonwealth Bank and the Mazda Foundation – and our pharmaceutical partners – Novartis, AstraZeneca and Sanofi Aventis.

As well as outstanding corporate support, the PCFA is starting to have some success in lobbying the government to ensure that prostate cancer receives

a more appropriate share of the research dollar. The Federal Government's new agency, Cancer Australia, has committed to providing some matching funds to the PCFA Collaborative Research Initiatives. The PCFA hopes to build on this first small step to ensure that the necessary funds are available to fight this insidious disease and the inexorable growth of the associated economic burden.

Please join me in the fight against prostate cancer.



Andrew Giles



The Chairman of the PCFA Collaborative Research Initiative, Mr Don Argus AO, with the two PCFA parliamentary champions, Federal Shadow Treasurer Mr Wayne Swan MP (left), and The Hon Jim Lloyd MP, Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA)

Established in 1996 the PCFA is today the only national organisation that is fighting prostate cancer. The PCFA has three aims:

- To help men, and their families, deal with the diagnosis, treatment and recovery from prostate cancer through support and counselling
- To fund world class research to find a cure for prostate cancer
- To raise awareness in the general community of prostate cancer, its detection, treatment and consequences.

The Foundation was initially established by the Rotary Club of Lane Cove with the sole focus of raising funds for research. In 1999 the Foundation amalgamated with the Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups to create, for the first time, an organisation devoted to funding research and awareness as well as providing vital

support for sufferers.

In 2005 the Foundation launched, in association with the Australian Pensioners Insurance Agency (APIA), Australia's largest awareness campaign about prostate cancer. The campaign, *Be A Man: Talk to your doctor about prostate cancer*, has had an enormously positive impact on community understanding of prostate cancer.

The PCFA is well placed to provide a unified and cohesive vision for the treatment of prostate cancer in Australia. The PCFA has a small, dedicated staff of six full-time and six part-time employees, as well as a small army of volunteers, working out of offices in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. The PCFA works with other not for profit organisations in the men's health and cancer prevention areas to ensure it continues to achieve its main mission: to reduce the impact of prostate cancer on the Australian Community.

Do viruses cause prostate cancer?

The recent development of a cervical cancer vaccine by the 2006 Australian of the Year, Professor Ian Frazer AM, has raised the question: do viruses also cause prostate cancer?

Initial research has shown that the human papillomavirus (HPV) could play a role in the development of prostate cancer. Certain cancer-causing HPV types are found in close to 100 per cent of all cervical cancers. Previous studies have also found these HPV types in prostate cancer.

In a joint project with the Mazda Foundation, the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia has established a new research fellowship to investigate this vital area. The Fellowship has been awarded to

Dr Annika Antonsson who is based within the Centre for Immunology and Cancer Research under the supervision of Professor Frazer.

According to Dr Antonsson, “we think that undiscovered HPV types might be involved in the development of prostate cancer and will use a new technique to try and further identify them. We have been able to detect over 150 new papillomavirus types with this new method and the previously unknown HPV types will be tested in several different ways to see if they cause prostate cancer.

“Identification of a virus linked to the development of prostate cancer would be a very important discovery. We would then be able to design a

test to detect these HPV types, and this would make it possible to identify men at risk of developing prostate cancer at an early stage. It also opens up the possibility of developing a vaccine against this cancer.”

As well as being a vital research project this is also a wonderful example of the difference that corporate Australia can make to the fight against prostate cancer. According to Mazda Foundation Chairman, Mr Doug Dickson, “the Foundation was delighted by the opportunity to play such an active role in this important cause. As a company with a large male workforce we felt that we had a great interest in supporting the work of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia through this vital Fellowship.”

PCFA funded research finds new marker for aggressive prostate cancers

Of the more than 12,000 men who will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year 1 in 5 will develop life threatening, metastatic prostate cancer (when the cancer spreads to other parts of the body such as the bones) within 10 years of surgery.

The current way to monitor whether a man’s cancer may metastasise is through regular testing via the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test to see the rate of increase. The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia believes that new markers are needed urgently to identify which men are at the highest risk of metastatic disease at the time of their initial surgery. This will result in more tailored treatment for individual prostate cancer sufferers, something that is not currently possible.

A recent discovery by Associate Professor Susan Henshall, the inaugural Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia Fellowship recipient, looks hopeful. Dr Henshall reports that “We have discovered recently that men

who have low levels of a marker called AZGP1 in the prostate at the time of surgery have a greatly increased risk of developing metastatic cancer.

This means that these men could benefit from more aggressive treatment such as radiotherapy or chemotherapy around the time of surgery when they still have potentially curable cancer, and gives patients with a low risk of developing metastatic disease the option of deferring treatments that have a negative impact on quality of life.”

This exciting development is currently being validated in other cohorts of prostate cancer patients, and it is hopeful that a prospective trial of this marker will begin in New South Wales early this year. Dr Henshall is confident that the research – made possible by PCFA funding – is on the right track and ultimately will allow doctors and patients to make better informed decisions about prostate cancer treatment options.



PCFA thanks its partners in the Collaborative Research Initiative



Leighton Holdings Limited



UBS Investment, Envestra

These new corporate partners are in addition to our existing corporate partners who are funding our other vital programs:



Principle Sponsors of our National Awareness Campaign – *Be A Man: Talk to your Doctor about Prostate Cancer.*



Principal Sponsor of our Rural Health Initiative to extend Support Services in key rural and regional areas.



Joint Partner for the new Postdoctoral Biomedical Research Fellowship



Joint Partner for our Distance Nursing Scholarship Program

Pharmaceutical partners



Facts about Prostate Cancer

- Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Australian men after skin cancer and the second highest cause of male cancer deaths.
- 2,700 men die from prostate cancer in Australia each year.
- More than 12,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year in Australia.
- Although men's awareness of prostate cancer has increased over the past two years, only approximately 15% of men are appropriately tested with a combination of the blood test, Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA), and the physical examination, Digital Rectal Examination (DRE).
- Australian men have a 1 in 12 lifetime risk of developing prostate cancer.
- Prostate cancer research attracts a fraction of the funds devoted to breast cancer in Australia, despite the fact that as many men die from prostate cancer as women die from breast cancer.
- If your brother or father has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, the risk to you is increased three fold.
- Early, curable prostate cancer is without symptoms.
- Early stage prostate cancer is treatable and curable.

STOP PRESS *NO*vember continues to grow

November 2006 has proved to be an outstanding success. More than 60,000 men and women signed up in November 2006 to raise funds for PCFA and for Beyond Blue the national depression initiative by growing moustaches and raising funds. The response was overwhelming with close to \$3,000,000 being raised to enhance our research programs.