

# BLUE SKY NEWS

ISSUE 76 | AUGUST 2020 EDITION

## FATHER'S DAY

Give the gift of hope

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Advocating for change



## STRONGER SURVIVORS

Seven priority actions  
can change the game

## FRESH HOPE EMERGES CLINICAL TRIAL BREAKTHROUGH

Learn more about the latest findings  
from our TheraP research investigation

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## Your donations are saving lives

Welcome to the latest edition of Blue Sky News, a magazine dedicated to you and other Australian men and families impacted by prostate cancer. For many in our community, this year has been one of the toughest in living memory, but as you turn these pages you'll discover that it has also been a time of fresh hope, new research achievements, and an expansion of our life-sustaining services.

**On behalf of the team at PCFA, thank you for your ongoing donations, camaraderie, and support – we are here for the long run, because you are.**

**Associate Professor Steve Callister**  
Chairman

**Professor Jeff Dunn AO**  
CEO

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS: WE'RE ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

As a full member of the Union for International Cancer Control, we are committed to achieving the World Cancer Declaration by enabling access to life-saving treatments and reducing out-of-pocket costs.

As such, we've recently made three submissions to the Australian Government's Medical Services Advisory Committee to support the following subsidy applications: darolutamide for the treatment of

non-metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer; PSMA PET/CT imaging for guiding treatment of men with prostate cancer; and testing of tumour prostate tissue to detect BRCA1/2 gene mutations in men with advanced prostate cancer for access to PARP inhibitors.

We're proud to be a voice for Australian men and families impacted by prostate cancer, working as part of a global movement for change.



**Proud  
member**



➔ Learn more at [www.uicc.org](http://www.uicc.org)

# TheraP: New evidence emerges

## FRESH HOPE FROM CLINICAL TRIAL

**After many years in the making, one of our most promising clinical trials is delivering game-changing findings for men with advanced prostate cancer.**

TheraP is the first randomised trial comparing <sup>177</sup>Lu-PSMA-617 (Lu-PSMA), a novel radioactive treatment, to the current standard-of-care chemotherapy, cabazitaxel, for men with metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer.

Study Chair Professor Michael Hofman explained the emerging evidence in a keynote address to the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Scientific Virtual Meeting.

“This clinical trial provides compelling evidence that Lu-PSMA represents a new class of effective therapy for men with advanced prostate cancer. The ability to see what you treat by using the same molecule for both scanning and treatment



Professor Michael Hofman

is remarkable. This enables personalised and patient-centred care where patients most likely to benefit can be carefully selected.”

The work was funded by PCFA in partnership with the ANZUP Cancer Trials Group and others. ANZUP Chair, Professor Ian Davis, said the work was leading the world in the fight against prostate cancer.

“This is a great example of an academic clinical trial that has built on work done in Australia,

supported by a large group of funders and stakeholders, performed by an outstanding group of clinicians and researchers, supported by the community, with amazing contributions from the trial participants, in a disease setting where we really need better outcomes. Just getting it done is a major achievement, but we have also shown that this new treatment can benefit men with advanced prostate cancer.”

**WE WERE PROUD TO  
CONTRIBUTE OVER**

 **\$1.5  
MILLION**

**INVOLVING MORE THAN**

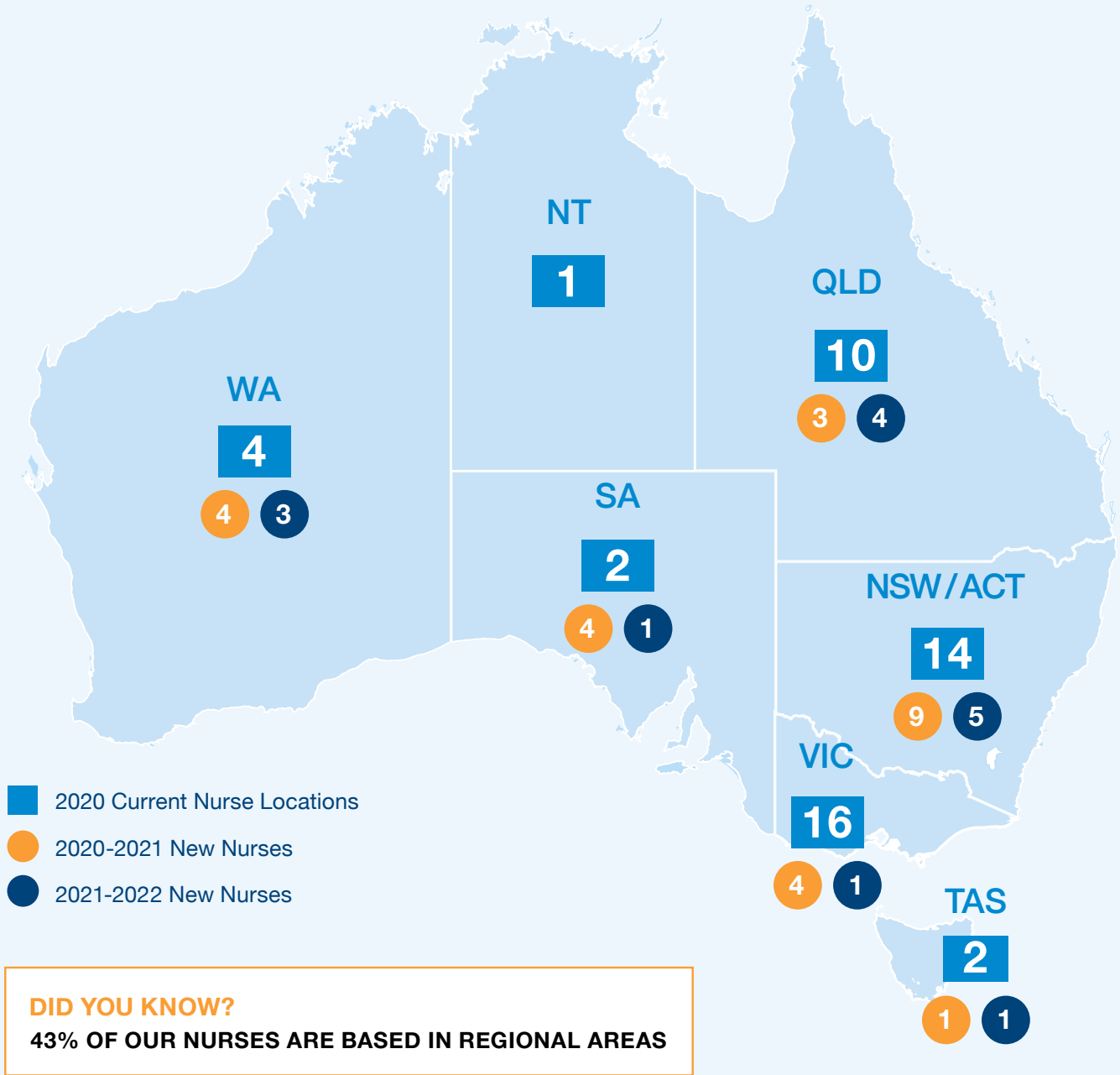
 **200  
PATIENTS**

**AND**

 **10** AUSTRALIAN  
CANCER  
CENTRES

**MAKE YOUR DONATIONS COUNT**  [pcfa.org.au/donate](https://pcfa.org.au/donate)

# Prostate Cancer Specialist Nursing Support by State



**AUSTRALIA HAS**  
ONE OF THE HIGHEST  
RATES OF PROSTATE  
CANCER IN THE WORLD

---

**1 IN EVERY 6 MEN**  
DIAGNOSED BY AGE 85

**25 NEW NURSES**

OVER THE NEXT  
12 MONTHS

**15 NEW NURSES**

STARTING FROM  
JUNE 2021

# Aussie blokes set to benefit from big BOOST TO SPECIALIST NURSING

**Thousands of Australian men with prostate cancer and their families will benefit from an expansion of our Prostate Cancer Specialist Nursing Program and the establishment of Australia's first dedicated Specialist Telenursing Service.**

Our Director of Nursing Programs, Sally Sara, says 25 new nurses will be recruited in new locations around Australia over the next 12 months, with an additional 15 nurses starting from June 2021. The Telenursing Service is set to start in early 2021.

“Our nurses deliver more personalised care, whereby an independent evaluation of the program found that many patients said their specialist nurse had the biggest impact on their overall health and wellbeing.

“We know that about one in five men with prostate cancer experience long-term anxiety and depression and some will have an increased risk of suicide, although few seek support for their mental health needs.


“It’s common for patients to struggle with understanding their treatment options and many are unable to access evidence-based information about the pros and cons of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation treatment or hormonal therapy.

**“The expansion of our existing face-to-face service and launch of a new Telenursing Service will vastly improve access to care Australia-wide, giving men much greater confidence that they can navigate the challenges of prostate cancer with all the support they need.”**

Australia has one of the highest rates of prostate cancer in the world, with one in every six Australian men likely to be diagnosed by age 85.



Ruby Hilario, our nurse in the NT

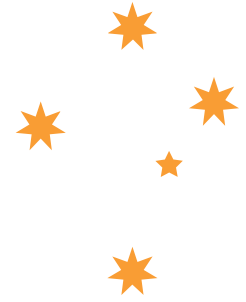
 **ONE MAN  
DIAGNOSED  
EVERY 25  
MINUTES**

**THANK  
YOU!**



**Thanks to you,  
we met our target  
to raise \$420,000  
for Australia's first  
Prostate Cancer  
Telenursing Service,  
so we can be there  
when you need us.**

# BLUE SKY TOURING



*“Men with a family history of prostate cancer have double the risk of being diagnosed, and men in regional and rural areas of Australia face a 24% higher risk of death. Investment in new solutions is urgently needed and we’re here to drive that work.”*

*Professor Jeff Dunn AO, CEO*

## **Jeff Dunn has lost track of how many thousands of kilometres he’s travelled over the years in his mission to help reduce Australia’s cancer burden.**

A Professor and Officer in the Order of Australia, his work in cancer control has seen him drive the length and breadth of Australia.

“I’ve probably done hundreds of thousands of kilometres over the past 25 years – and the road won’t end until we defeat this disease,” he says with a characteristic Australian smile.

An internationally esteemed researcher, Director of the Union for International Cancer Control, and World Cancer Leader, Dunn was born and bred in Queensland, where geographic decentralisation is a barrier to cancer control.

He championed one of Australia’s first research projects to map regional variations in cancer survival, a project that culminated in the publication of Australia’s first Atlas of Cancer, proving that distance in Australia can be a matter of life or death.

It’s work he now continues at Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, having commenced as the CEO in March 2019.

“By 2040 we predict there will be 372,000 men living with or beyond prostate cancer in Australia, representing a 76 per cent increase from 211,000 today and the greatest number of men or women diagnosed with any single cancer. Alarming, men in regional and rural areas of Australia face a 24 per cent higher risk of death, a trend we must change.”

Dunn says we all have a role to play in cancer control, and credits recent improvements in survival to the support of community and corporate partners, such as Tyrepower Australia, who are partnering with us to deliver a major new awareness initiative.

**“Over the past 30 years prostate cancer survival rates have increased from 58 per cent to 95 per cent, which is a remarkable achievement. In the Australian context, this is credit to rapid advancements in research, awareness, and support for patients – much of which has been enabled by public and private investments to fund life-saving work.”**

“Through the years PCFA has been fortunate to be benefit from partnerships such as our collaboration with Tyrepower, who have helped us stay on the road

in more ways than one. That’s the beauty of the partnership for me – over the years they’ve kept me safe on the road and helped keep us in the driver’s seat to ensure Aussie blokes don’t die before their time of prostate cancer. The partnership exemplifies the Australian spirit.”

Tyrepower National General Manager Simon Bateman says it’s a winning deal that gives back great benefits to Tyrepower customers and the community.

“With over 270 independent stores within our network, a customer and community focus is key to everything we do. We place strong value in loyalty and trust, ensuring that beyond the best brands and expert advice, we can confidently say we strive to keep our customers healthy and safe. Like PCFA, we’ve got a strong regional focus and are positioned to meet the needs of Australian men, women, and families, irrespective of where they live or whether they drive a small car or a caravan.

**“For both our organisations, being on the road to beat prostate cancer is a worthwhile mission.”**



**Keep an eye out for our STARGATE project, which is set to launch later this year.**



# the LONG run



David with his wife Sonia and their two children

## LEAGUE LEGEND GEARS UP For our new event: The Long Run



### David Shillington knows what it's like, in more ways than one, to be up against the odds.

At just 37 years of age he has 215 National Rugby League games under his belt, 14 tests for Australia, four games for the Prime Minister's XIII, eight for his home state of Queensland, and two NRL All Star matches.

Forced to retire due to injury in 2016, he's found a new purpose, giving back to the community who gave him so much to be grateful for through his football career.

"I thought whatever job I choose, I can't just do something that doesn't have purpose."

It's a motto he lives by, and a mindset that has inspired him to register for our new fundraising and awareness event, The Long Run.

"My grandfather and uncle have both had prostate cancer, and my dad recently had a scare, so there's a high chance I'll be hit too.

"I want to help my family prepare for it, and getting involved in PCFA's work seemed like a good opportunity to take action towards developing a better game plan for all Australian men and their families."

The Long Run calls on Australians to run, walk or wheel 72km over the month of September so that fewer fathers, husbands, sons and mates have to suffer.

"As humans, especially in sport, we work so hard on our physical ability – we want to run faster and longer, we want to lift heavier and more powerfully, we want to have a six pack and big biceps, but often we overlook what's most important," David says.

**"That's learning to appreciate things, supporting our loved ones, giving back, and reaching out when we're hurting. I'm in The Long Run for my family and for our community."**

We're proud to have David as an Ambassador for our work. Check out his portfolio via [athletementalhealth.com](http://athletementalhealth.com)

**HELP LOVE GO THE DISTANCE  
and register for The Long Run  
today via [thelongrun.org.au](http://thelongrun.org.au)**



# STOPPING THE SPREAD OF PROSTATE CANCER: RESEARCH HOLDS THE KEY



**In a ground-breaking discovery for men with aggressive prostate cancer, Australian scientists have found a new way to make cancer cells that have spread to bone more visible, so the immune system can recognise and kill them. The finding is the latest research delivered as part of our major grants program.**

*By Dr Jacqueline Schmitt, Manager of Research Programs*

The research, led by scientists at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in collaboration with Garvan Institute of Medical Research, LaTrobe University and the University of Melbourne, found that reprogramming cancer cells to re-express a protein that made them visible to immune cells could block the growth of cancers in bone and establish immune memory should the cancer ever return.

Growth of prostate cancer cells in bone, known as bone metastases, occurs in up to 90% of men whose prostate cancer has become resistant to treatment. Bone metastases can occur many years after a man is first diagnosed and treated and scientists believe that these tumour growths are due to dormant prostate cancer cells or sleeping cancer cells.

Interestingly, the real challenge lies not just in detecting these dormant cancer cells, but in stopping them from “waking up” and growing into large destructive tumours.

Impressively, the therapy not only blocked the growth of cancers in the bone, it also established immune memory, serving as greater protection against cancer recurrence. While further research is needed, this approach may one day be used to make immunotherapy more effective for the treatment of aggressive prostate cancers.



**LEARN MORE!** Check out our research blog at [onlinecommunity.pcfa.org.au](https://onlinecommunity.pcfa.org.au)



## MORE ACTION NEEDED TO RAISE COMMUNITY AWARENESS

**New research has revealed about 70 per cent of Australians don't know the signs and symptoms of prostate cancer, with greater public investment in targeted community awareness activities urgently needed.**

The findings have been reported in the Not All Prostate Cancer is the Same report, released by the Prostate Cancer Patient Coalition – Asia Pacific (PCPC).

Chair of our National Support and Community Outreach Committee, Associate Professor Tony Walker, says the research is a call to action.

“With a growing Australian population and increasing life expectancy, the number of men diagnosed with prostate cancer will continue to increase. It's vitally important that we do more to improve awareness of the disease and raise understanding of options for early detection and treatment, while supporting survivors with the long-term side effects of their illness.”

The report is based on first-of-its-kind patient perception research just published in the British Journal of Urology International and developed by the Coalition, which includes PCFA as the lead organisation for Australia.

“The detailed findings suggest that low awareness of the different stages of prostate cancer and available management options at each stage of the disease can adversely impact each patient's ability to make informed decisions about their care,” Tony says.

**“In the Australian context, 70 per cent of men did not know the symptoms and 67 per cent of men reported unmet needs for information on prostate cancer prior to their diagnosis, saying they wished they had known more about it.**

“Of particular concern, only 13 per cent of the Australian men surveyed said they knew how to distinguish between the different stages of prostate cancer, a lack of understanding that can be detrimental to early diagnosis and effective care.”

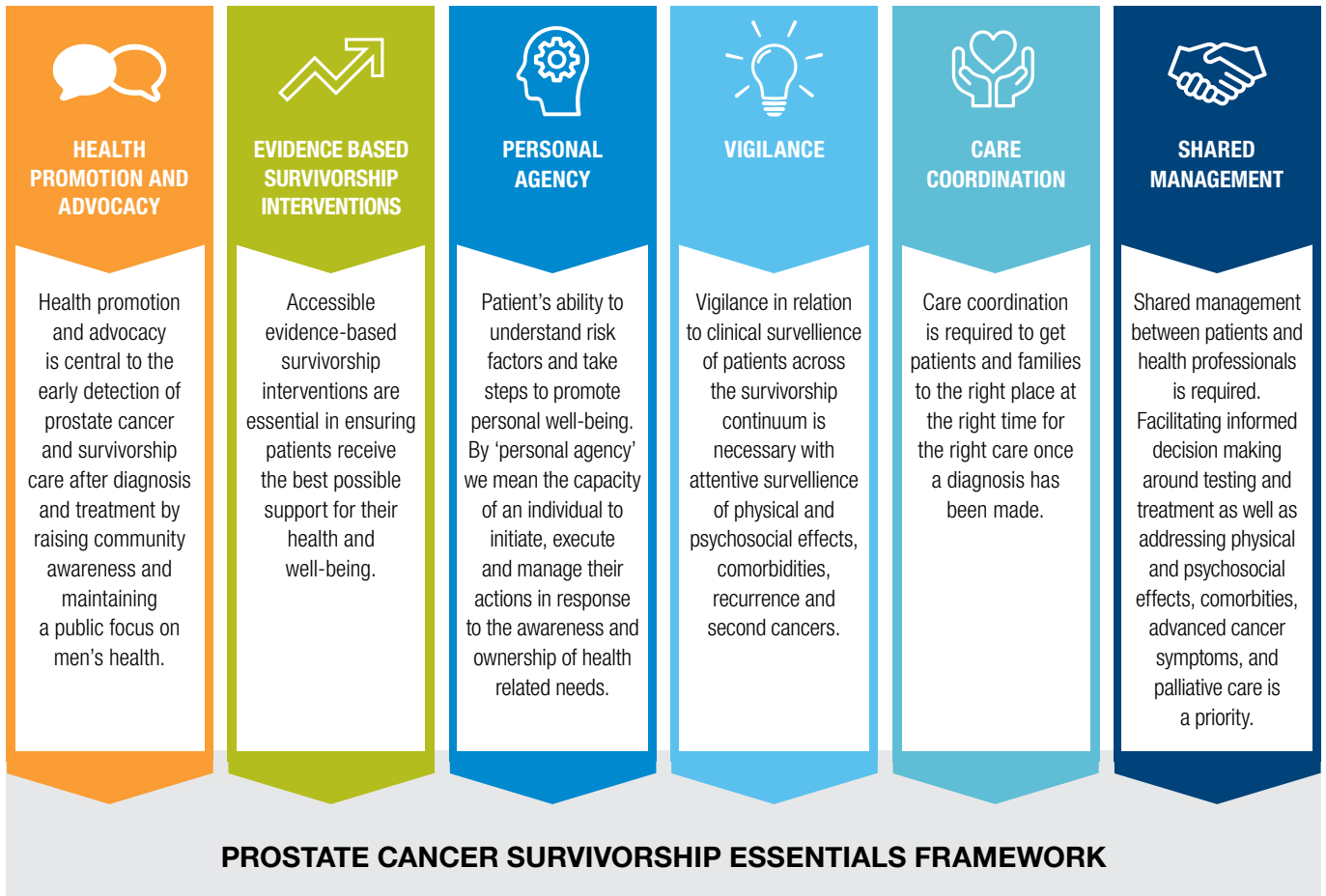
While 53 per cent of Australian men surveyed indicated their doctor provided in-depth information on the stages of prostate cancer at diagnosis, many reported feeling overwhelmed at the time and unable to recall the information provided.

We have written to the Federal Health Minister to seek public funding for a review of Australia's PSA Test Guidelines and to increase public awareness activity.

# TOGETHER WE'RE STRENGTHENING SURVIVORSHIP

**Earlier this year we brought together a multi-disciplinary expert and consumer panel to better understand the nature of prostate cancer survivorship in the Australian context.**

The panel reached a consensus view that prostate cancer survivorship remains a challenging experience, identifying six new domains to broaden the focus of care beyond the clinical realm.



## 7 PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR MEN WITH PROSTATE CANCER

Action on each priority can be expected to have impact for men across the six survivorship domains, and cumulatively could make a measurable difference in the face of prostate cancer in this country:

- 1 Enhance patient-clinician communication**
- 2 Develop a comprehensive survivorship toolkit**
- 3 Grow the availability of multi-modal care**
- 4 Reduce out-of-pocket costs**
- 5 Promote the uptake of exercise**
- 6 Harness technology to increase access**
- 7 Build the capacity and outreach of specialist nurses**

New partnerships across disciplines, fully involving consumers, are needed in order to respond to these challenges.

This work was made possible by the generosity of Gandel Philanthropy.



# MatesCONNECT

## TO BEAT PROSTATE CANCER

**We're boosting our support for Western Australian men with prostate cancer, thanks to a \$100,000 grant from Woodside.**

The funding will be used to establish MatesCONNECT, a peer-based support program for more than 2000 WA men who are newly diagnosed each year.

Our Head of Community Services, Chris McNamara, says the pilot project will be used to develop a national approach.

"The program will enhance peer support for men in regional and rural areas, building stronger supportive care networks for men and families, close to home."

The new program is set to start in September this year for Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.

"Research shows that peer-run self-help programs deliver significant improvement in psychological and psychosocial quality of life, resulting in decreased hospitalisation, enriched social support networks, and enhanced self-esteem and social functioning," Chris says.

"This grant will be a game-changer for men affected by prostate cancer. Importantly, the program responds to the evidence that men who have a lived experience of prostate cancer can be a source of great strength and support for those newly impacted by the disease.

"Those who understand what it's like to live through a prostate cancer diagnosis are well-placed to offer emotional and informational support to other men, providing solidarity throughout survivorship, when many men face ongoing side-effects from their treatment.

**"MatesCONNECT will build on foundations of shared personal experience and empathy, with a focus on survivorship, wellbeing, and recovery. We anticipate strong community support for this life-changing service."**

**To find out more and get involved**

 [MatesCONNECT@pcfa.org.au](mailto:MatesCONNECT@pcfa.org.au)

# WORLD-LEADING STRATEGIES

## REGIONAL ACTION

“Country blokes are different,” says Allan Cunningham, one of the founding members of the Latrobe Valley Prostate Cancer Support Group in Victoria.

Allan has seen first-hand the toll that prostate cancer takes in regional and rural areas, losing four of his friends to the disease.

“I’m not going to sugarcoat things, as an old country kid I’ll tell you what we feel out here in the sticks: Many men are not taking care of themselves properly, and we need to do more to get their attention.”

Allan is right. Men in regional and rural areas of Australia face a 24 per cent higher risk of death than city blokes, a staggering statistic.

The reasons for the gap are many, but include factors such as lower rates of access to diagnostic and treatment services, lower awareness of risk factors and symptoms, and a higher likelihood of being diagnosed with more advanced cancers, lowering overall prospects for survival.

“Many of us feel very alone in this,” Allan says, “And it’s unacceptable – we can’t keep letting country blokes die.”

We couldn’t agree more and are taking action to deliver a new nationwide Telenursing Service at the same time as we grow our peer support programs and awareness activities, including expanded research into geographic disparities in prostate cancer survival.

Much of this work is made possible through partnerships with regionally-focussed organisations such as New Holland, providing steadfast support for the men and families of regional and rural Australia.



**➤ GET INVOLVED** You can provide support and comfort to other men and families by joining our Prostate Cancer Support Group Network, go to [pcfa.org.au/find-a-support-group/](http://pcfa.org.au/find-a-support-group/)



FATHER'S DAY

# GET INTO GAZMAN THIS SEPTEMBER

## “We’ll walk with you.”

It’s a simple statement that speaks to the strong commitment of GAZMAN to our mission over many years.

This September, for the first time, GAZMAN stores will be selling PCFA socks for Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, with all proceeds towards research, awareness and support.

“This is a legacy project for us,” says CEO Will Austin, the son of GAZMAN’s founder, the late Garry Austin, who died of prostate cancer in January last year.

“He passed away just one-month shy of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday and was known for his generosity and kindness, his fun-loving spirit, and his passion for life.”

You can help us honour Garry’s memory and support Australian men and families by walking in GAZMAN socks this September – creating hope for a future free of prostate cancer.

# WE LOVE OUR DADS

## \$5 From Every Pair of Pants

Goes to PCFA

Shop in store & online  
[gazman.com.au](http://gazman.com.au)

### GAZMAN

Proudly Supporting  
Prostate Cancer  
Foundation of Australia



## SEND HIM HOPE

This Father’s Day send the man you love a gift from our new Interflora Father’s Day Collection.

With a range of hampers to choose from, 5% of all purchases will be donated to our mission.



Go to [interflora.com.au/occasions/father-day-flowers-gifts](http://interflora.com.au/occasions/father-day-flowers-gifts)

# MATT HAYDEN LINES UP TO BAT FOR THE BIG AUSSIE BARBIE



**Former world champion batsman and Australian icon, Matt Hayden, is firing up the barbeque in our quest to beat prostate cancer.**

Matt's father Lawrie is a prostate cancer survivor, placing Matt at double the risk of the disease.

"When we were told Dad had prostate cancer, my whole family was effectively given a cancer diagnosis. You go through treatment and recovery together, just like teamwork in cricket, and it teaches you the importance of banding together to fight this dreadful disease.

"My family understands first-hand the devastating effects of a prostate cancer diagnosis. I believe we need to get to the point where discussing health issues, like prostate cancer, is a normal part of our conversations with friends and family."

Matt says his career as a professional cricketer has opened up many opportunities for him to make a difference.

**"When family and friends are gathered around the barbie and enjoying a game of backyard cricket, I see the love and delight in each face, and remember the lesson my father taught me, that when you look after other people, you're also taking care of yourself."**



Matt at home with his dog Archie



## Matt Hayden's Fresh Snapper BBQ Marinade

**Fresh quality ingredients and simple cooking techniques.**

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon salt flakes
- 1 teaspoon white pepper
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons rosemary
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

### PREPARATION

Chop and combine ingredients. Mix well through fish fillets and refrigerate for one hour before cooking. Enjoy!

**Sign up for the  
2020 Big Aussie  
Barbie and help us  
bat back against  
prostate cancer.**

[bigaussiebarbie.com.au](http://bigaussiebarbie.com.au)



THELONGRUN.ORG.AU

HE'LL BE  
THERE FOR THE  
LONG RUN.  
*Because you are.*

Run, walk or wheel 72km in September and raise funds to support men with prostate cancer.

HELP LOVE GO THE DISTANCE. SIGN UP NOW.



Prostate Cancer  
Foundation of Australia

theLONGrun