

# Prostate Cancer Support Group - Northern Beaches

Affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Proudly sponsored by Hammond Care, Health and Hospitals Limited  
*A program of support serving men of all ages, their families, carers and friends  
before, during and after diagnosis*

**Newsletter No. 171 - August 2017**

Editor: Mary Jones

**Our next meeting will be held on  
Tuesday, 5 September 2017  
At this meeting Meredith Van Wensveen  
will present Peter's Message**

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## Monthly Meetings

All people are welcome to attend our regular monthly meetings. No notice is required - simply come along and introduce yourself, or contact us via the website.

### When:

Meetings of our support group are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month except in January.

### Usual Location:

The Cottage, Mona Vale Hospital, Coronation Street, Mona Vale.

Time: 6:30pm till 8:30pm

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## Tuesday 5 September

The late Peter Van Wensveen prepared a video for Hammond Care, who sponsor our group, and talked about the care he received during his last few weeks. His wife Meredith will be here to tell Peter's story, together with a representative from Hammond Care Health and Hospitals.

This is an evening we should all make the effort to attend to allay any fears about end of life care.

*Mark the date in your diary.*

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## August Meeting Report

### *Mens Only Night*

Whilst only nine men attended our 'Men Only Night' it proved to very successful for those who did make the effort to be there. Our thanks to John Harris, our convenor, for coming to the meeting and getting the ball rolling and encouraging the men to talk about matters that are important to them. From all accounts it was a very lively meeting with everyone able to voice their opinions/concerns. In fact the meeting went on longer than is usual and the men had to be reminded that there were refreshments available. The discussions continued over food and drinks and everyone agreed it had been a very successful evening.

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## Survey of Support Group Leaders

Earlier in the year PCFA conducted a survey of support groups and these are some of the findings:

170 support groups around Australia

78% hold face to face meetings

82% have 1–30 people attending

53% have a guest speaker

44% provide information packs and resources

27% include partners and carers

*Typical support groups -*

37% provide one to one telephone support

23% provide one to one support in person

47% host information stalls at events

40% organize social events for members

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*Typical support leaders are –*

68% 60-75 years old

64% are retired

86% are male

66% are in the role for 1-10 years

67% have been diagnosed with prostate cancer

*Diversity of support group network includes*

*leaders that identify being part of –*

7.3% Gay and bi-sexual community

27% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

1.3% Vietnamese community

*Leaders reside in –*

52% major city

46.5% regional area

1.5% remote area

*PCFA most valued assistance –*

78% access to evidence based information and resources

67% updates from PCFA via email and telephone

56% access to resources specific to role as group leader

54% access to training opportunities

53% promotion of the group via the PCFA website

*Some of the comments were –*

“A very happy group, but we find it difficult to engage younger men”

“We are only a small community group in a country town. We have a core group of members. Our aim is awareness and support”

*Where do we all fit into these statistics?*

Thank you to PCFA for providing this information

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## **PCFA Support Groups -**

### **Ask the Experts Webcast**

#### **Prostate Cancer: What You Need to Know.**

**Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) will be presenting the next ‘Ask the Experts Webcast’**

**- Prostate Cancer: What You Need to Know on Wednesday 20 September 7.00pm (AEST).**

Join us during International Prostate Cancer Awareness Month for this free, online Q&A webcast as our panel of leading health experts answer your questions about prostate cancer - from risk factors and diagnosis through to treatment and management of side effects. This webcast will also explore how to navigate the different options presented after a diagnosis and the services available to men and their families. Registration is free, and all questions will be anonymous so if you have a tricky question about your situation that you have not been able to ask here is your chance.

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*Even if you don't want to ask a question, these sessions are an invaluable source of information and well worth listening to.*

For further information and **to register** go to - [www.pcfa.org.au/asktheexperts](http://www.pcfa.org.au/asktheexperts)

Please feel free to share this information to anyone you think may be interested.

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## **Ways Dogs Help People with Cancer**

Dog people know the meaningful impact dogs have in our lives. They make us laugh, they comfort us when we're feeling blue, and they keep us engaged with the world. Our experience with the dogs we love is enough to prove that they're good for our health. Thankfully, the world of science and medicine has caught on to the healing powers of man's best friend. For cancer patients, time spent with dogs can have an incredible, lasting impact.

In hospitals and homes all over the world, therapy and service dogs are called on to provide companionship and assistance to people facing this disease. Dogs can help cancer patients cope through diagnosis, treatment, and beyond.

### *Emotional Support on Four Legs*

Dogs provide much-needed emotional support to cancer patients, who are vulnerable to depression and isolation as the disease impacts their lives. Spending time with a dog—petting its soft fur, talking without fear of judgment, and being on the receiving end of all that unconditional love—can help raise their spirits even while their body is feeling awful.

A study conducted with head and neck cancer patients at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City found that although their physical well-being deteriorated during chemotherapy, **patients who spent time with a therapy dog before each treatment reported an increase in their emotional and social well-being.**

Having a dog to look after, feed, exercise, and love helps cancer patients divert their focus away from illness and onto something over which they have some control. For a sick person facing an uncertain future, that can mean the difference between giving up and moving forward.

### *The Healing Effect of Dogs*

While dogs can't magically cure diseases, the impact they have on humans in need is immense. In recent years, more and more scientific evidence has backed up what dog people have always known: spending time with dogs is good for your health. In fact, caring for a pet has been

proven to lower stress, encourage activity, and lift spirits.

For cancer patients, the healing qualities of dogs are immeasurable. Here are just a few of the important things dogs can provide to people with cancer:

- **Relaxation.** Spending time with an animal is soothing, and can be a vital respite in the course of a busy, often painful day.
- **Safety.** Dogs are great listeners, and cancer patients can talk to them about their fears (or choose not to talk and simply enjoy their company in quiet).
- **Tactile sensation.** Petting an animal releases endorphins, which reduces stress and improves mood.
- **Distraction.** Paying attention to a dog can help patients forget about their pain and frustration for a time, which invites healing and improved health.
- **Socialization.** Dogs invite conversation, and can help patients express themselves more freely to doctors and loved ones.

Of course, having a dog or access to one may not be for everyone. Some cancer patients have compromised immune systems, and exposure to a dog (plus all the stuff they can carry around on their coat, paws, and mouth) is not a good idea.

Check out things to consider at <http://tinyurl.com/y77dhtkz> before animal therapy, and be sure to **consult with a medical professional** before pursuing this or any course of treatment.

For cancer patients just to spend time with a beloved family pet can have an incredible impact on mood and health. It's something us dog people have always known: dogs improve our lives, and sometimes even save them.

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### Norma's August Quiz

1. Which Disney character made his debut in the early film Steamboat Willie?
2. What colour is the lid of a Vegemite jar?
3. Who composed the Brandenburg Concertos?
4. How many squares on a Scrabble board?
5. Trypanophobia is fear of what?
6. In which US state is Chicago?
7. Which gas is used to fill balloons?
8. Enchiladas are part of which country's cuisine?
9. If FELINE is cat-like what is URSINE?
10. What did the F stand for in president Kennedy's name?

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### Answers to Norma's July Quiz

1. Which very famous American, sung about by James Cagney, was born on the 4th of July? - *Yankie Doodle Dandy*
2. What do Americans celebrate on the 4th July? *Independence Day*
3. What aerial device was used to send messages on the battlefields of the American Civil War? *Kites*
4. The birthstone for July is the, ruby, garnet or emerald? *Ruby*
5. The month of July was named after which famous Roman? *Julius Caesar*
6. Which French National day is celebrated in July? *Bastille Day*
7. What is the date of the celebration mentioned in question 6? *14 July*
8. What is the Spanish word for July? *Julio*
9. People born in July can cross two zodiac signs, What are they called and what are the two visual symbols? *Cancer – Leo, Crab Cancer – Lion Leo*
10. Who was the leading man on the film about Vietnam called Born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July? *Tom Cruise*

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### Did you know.....

- 100% of people die
  - 75% of people never tell anyone about their end of life wishes
  - 45% of people die without a will
  - 75% of people express a wish to die at home but only 14% do
- It may seem scary to think about your own mortality, or the mortality of loved ones, but building your capacity for end of life planning can help create healthier attitudes about death.

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### SEPTEMBER -THE BIG AUSSIE BARBIE

Whilst the Northern Beaches PCSG will not be holding their Big Aussie BBQ Day this year we encourage everyone to get their friends and family together to raise funds for PCFA

**Every day 54 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer and tragically 9 a day do not survive.**

More men die of prostate cancer than women die of breast cancer.

We believe men and their families deserve better and that's why we ask for your support.

Big Aussie Barbie is a great way to get people together, whether with friends, family or colleagues to raise funds to help reduce the impact of prostate cancer on Australian men and their families.

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## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- Sign up to register your BBQ
- Invite friends, family, neighbours and work colleagues to come along to your *Big Aussie Barbie*
- Collect donations - no matter how big or small
- Follow PCFA's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to get the latest Big Aussie BBQ news
- Inspire others by sharing your own *Big Aussie Barbie* photos with **#BigAussieBarbie**
- Remember to serve lean meats, fresh salads and vegetables and keep the consumption of processed meats and alcohol to a minimum

For information and support

visit [www.pcfa.org.au](http://www.pcfa.org.au) or phone 1800 22 00 99

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## Future Meetings

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct – Max Walker, Solicitor

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> Nov - Dr Katharine Hodgkinson,  
Headway Health

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec - Christmas Celebration

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## Publicity

One of the main aims of the NB Prostate Cancer Support Group is to reach out to men and their families and provide information and emotional support for those diagnosed with Prostate Cancer. PCFA Ambassador Programme we may be able to reach more men's groups and clubs and spread the word about the importance of regular testing for prostate cancer.

This year, we are hoping that with the support of the PCFA Ambassador Programme we may be able to reach more men's groups and clubs and spread the word about the importance of regular testing for prostate cancer.

If you know of any organisation that may benefit from having one of the Ambassador Speakers visit them please let one of the committee members know.

We are always seeking ways to reach the public and articles about our Group have appeared in Pittwater Online News and the 'What's on Pittwater' website provides information about our meetings.

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## Disclaimer

From time to time in our newsletters we provide information about developments in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, research articles, documents, presentations and other interesting materials. However, the Group's Executive and the editor of this newsletter do not have the medical expertise required to make an informed evaluation of the conclusions and recommendations presented in such materials, and we have not verified such conclusions and recommendations through

appropriately qualified medical professionals. The information presented in this newsletter must not be interpreted as being endorsed or recommended by the Executive or the editor. Any recommendations made in such materials may not be applicable in your particular case. Before implementing any recommendations made in the materials that are reported, it is essential that you obtain advice from appropriately qualified medical professionals. The view of the Group's Executive is that no two prostate cancer cases are alike and that no single treatment option is better than any other in all cases. While the information in this newsletter should be of interest, there is no substitute for getting informed medical advice from your own GP, specialists and other medical professionals.

## Contact Us

### Postal address

Northern Beaches Prostate Cancer Support Group  
PO Box 324, Mona Vale, NSW 1660

### Web site

Our web site provides details about the activities of the group, meetings, contact persons and lots of other useful information:

[www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org)

### Personal support

If you would like support, advice or assistance contact any of the committee:

Treasurer - Alan Taylor Phone: 02 9981 2616

Library - Ron Jones Phone: 02 9997 2709

Programme Organiser -

Denise Taylor Phone: 02 9981 2616

Catering - Jo-Ann Steeves Phone: 02 9918 6575

Eleanor Swansbra Phone: 02 9918 6428

Norma Norman Phone: 02 9918 4929

Committee member, newsletter editor and web site manager:

Mary Jones Phone: 0409 909 356

Email: [info@prostate-cancer-support-nb.org](mailto:info@prostate-cancer-support-nb.org)

### Useful websites:

[www.pcfa.org.au](http://www.pcfa.org.au) Telephone: 02 9438 7000

See PCFA Newsletters online at:

[www.pcfa.org.au/articleLive/pages/PCFA-Newsletters.html](http://www.pcfa.org.au/articleLive/pages/PCFA-Newsletters.html)

Other useful links-

[www.prostatehealth.org.au](http://www.prostatehealth.org.au)

[www.cancerCouncil.com.au](http://www.cancerCouncil.com.au)

[www.acf.com.au](http://www.acf.com.au)

[www.prostate-cancer-support-act.net](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-act.net)

[www.prostate-cancer-support-sydneynorth.org](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-sydneynorth.org)

If you are aware of news, products, publications, web sites, services or events that may be of interest to members of the group I'd be happy to be informed of them. If you have received this newsletter indirectly and would like to be emailed a copy directly please send me an email. I'm happy to also add any of your friends to the email list.

Past issues of our newsletters can be viewed on our website: [www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org)

