



Prof. Arlene Chan
Director – BCTU
Vice-Chair – BCRC-WA

Welcome to Issue 11!

An important month in the national calendar is October for “Breast Awareness”, calling all women to be more aware of breasts symptoms or breast lumps.

Perth Radiological Clinic (PRC) is a wonderful supporter of BCRC-WA and our clinical trials program. They have announced once again their plan to fund raise for us in the month of October for Breast Awareness. This support is invaluable to us, and we appreciate the effort that the PRC clinics and staff make in organising the event to fundraise, and the decorating of their clinics in pink and purple. Thank you.

This month Western Diagnostic Pathologist, Dr Jespal Gill, explains their involvement receiving consented samples from patients for our Helen Sewell Tumour Bank and the process in storing them.

what's inside

Mind-Bender	2
Meet the BCRC staff	2
Celebrating an Outstanding Achievement	3
CEO Corner	5
Dealing with adverse diagnosis	6
2016 Mother's Day Pink Round	7
Helen Sewell Tumour Bank - A Pathologist's view	8
Fundraising Fun	9
PYNKS with SolarisCare	10

We already have over 2000 samples, and this explains what happens to your sample, once it leaves the operating theatre.

We have fundraising stories in this issue plus the Hockley family has kindly permitted an article from their Irene - a loving mother, wife and friend - on dealing with an adverse diagnosis in breast cancer, which the family hope will benefit other breast cancer patients. An inspirational article.

Mind-Bender



In a certain family, each girl has as many sisters as brothers but each boy has twice as many sisters as brothers. How many children are there?

Answer: three boys and four girls



Did you know...

BCRC-WA is a
**Not-for-Profit,
Charitable
organisation?**
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on Facebook

 facebook.com/bcrc-wa

Meet the BCRC staff



Introducing: Deb Davis
Position: Accounts Officer

What does your role involve?

I work at Breast Clinical Trials Unit - BCRC-WA one day a week.

My role is to provide accounting support to the managers of the Breast Clinical Trials Unit and liaise with the BCRC-WA CEO and bookkeeper.

This includes accounts payable, accounts receivable, preparing payroll and recording patient payment information for each separate trial. As we are a not-for-profit organisation, all records require complete accuracy for audit.

Each Clinical Trial has a different financial contract, so it is my job to ensure all agreed payments from the sponsor are invoiced.

It is a pleasure to work with such dedicated nurses, researchers and managers at the Breast Clinical Trials Unit.

Tell us about yourself..

I began work as a Cyto Technician in a medical laboratory and continued to work in this field for 25 years.

I changed career path to work in the accounts department in the laboratory and found I really enjoyed it. I have worked with Professor Chan in Clinical Trials for nearly 10 years.

I have been a volunteer for Silver Chain Hospice – something I plan to recommence on retirement.

Outside of the medical field I have also run a business that organised corporate golfing holidays for international tourists, and I ran a business, in partnership with a friend, which imported outdoor furniture and homewares.

My husband is a geologist and we have lived in Namibia (where we had our first child, living in a caravan in a remote location), Leinster, Greenbushes and Darwin.

In our time in Darwin, I became very interested in the Australian Aboriginal culture and continue to enjoy learning about this fascinating race.

I have a great love of travelling, and particularly loved holidays I spent in Spain, Portugal, Croatia, China, several trips along the NSW coast, and more recently having camped along the Gibb River in the Kimberley.

We have three children and four grandchildren, so life can be pretty hectic – especially in the holidays.

Celebrating an Outstanding Achievement

On June 3rd 2016, Prof Arlene Chan was the prestigious winner of the “Professions Division” of the “Western Australian of the Year Awards”.

There were 7 award categories in total and a winner was chosen for each, ranging across Arts and Culture, Community, Sport, Youth and of course the Professions Division in which Prof Chan was entered. The overall winner for 2016 was Adrian Fini OAM and we extend our warm congratulations to him.

Prof Chan’s award recognises the impact her research has made on state, national and international levels through our Breast Clinical Trials Unit. This excellence has made a significant impact on and contribution to Western Australian breast cancer patients and their treatment going forward.

Prof Chan established our not-for-profit organisation, BCRC-WA, in 2009, and heads the busiest breast cancer clinical trials unit in Australia. She has recruited more than 1000 patients into 79 trials, where several results have led to a world-wide change in standard of care for breast cancer. She also established the first breast-cancer-specific tumour bank in Western Australia, in conjunction with Western Diagnostic Pathology.

The feedback we’ve had about this win, through our Facebook pages of BCRC-WA and Celebrate WA, has been wonderful. Some of the comments are below:

“A wonderful, caring oncologist who has helped so many women beat breast cancer. I feel extremely fortunate to have had Arlene as my oncologist nine years ago. Thank you so much for all you have done for me and so many other women”.

“A most beautiful woman with a compassionate heart. I don’t think I have ever seen her without a smile regardless of how busy her clinic is. So very lucky to have her as my oncologist. Many blessings to you Arlene”.

“Arlene has given so many the greatest gift of all.....time. Arlene’s commitment and dedication to making a difference on so many levels is beyond words, the world is a better place with her in it”.

“As well as Arlene’s amazing academic and medical qualifications, she is also a hugely compassionate and caring person providing much needed emotional support and guidance to her patients and their families. So blessed to have her as my oncologist”.

This award is testament to Prof Chan’s commitment to her patients, and looking to the future, the team at BCRC-WA will continue to be passionate about their goal to improve breast cancer outcomes for all patients and their families.



Photo courtesy of ‘Celebrate WA’



Pynks

POSITIVE • YOUNG • NURTURING
KIDS/FAMILY-FOCUSSED • STRENGTH-GIVING

Do you have secondary cancer?

*Like to talk to like-minded people,
who really understand?*

Pynks is a support and information group for younger women and those who are young at heart. Pynks provides facts and topics relevant to advanced secondary breast cancer.

For more information telephone **6500 5501**
or email info@bcrc-wa.com.au



Pynks is a BCRC-WA initiative

CEO Corner

Without being at all biased, I can state that BCRC-WA is a most wonderful place to work.

Our specialists and our staff are here united in the one goal: making the breast cancer journey one where our patients are the prime focus in all we do. We remain at the forefront of research and treatment, and allow our patients access to new and improved regimes. As our research is directly translatable there is the potential for quick and significant impact.

BCRC-WA prides itself on being a highly accountable and efficient organisation. Our funding comes from two key streams. One is from generous patient donations and the second is from the income we receive for conducting pharmaceutical sponsored national and international clinical trials. We do not receive any government funding. As a clinician-driven organisation we are best placed to understand what patients' needs are, and consequently to assess the most effective research and treatment provision.

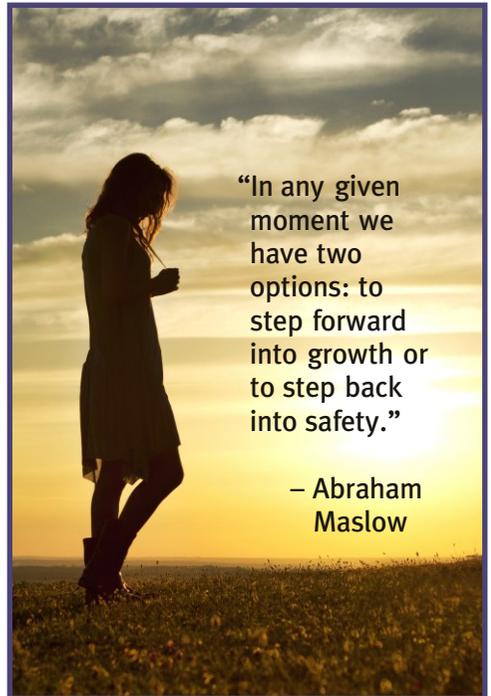
BCRC-WA has a number of key initiatives over the next 12 months for enhancing our funding base as we move towards our comprehensive breast cancer centre. We will always operate lean and mean, and fare well against other charities, as BCRC-WA has an exemplary record of minimal bureaucracy, and all donations are well spent in improving treatment and survival rates for breast cancer patients. We have achieved 50% increase in survival rates for over 167 families, and more than 10 of our research projects have led to improved breast cancer treatment worldwide. All donations are treated as precious, and go towards making a significant difference to the breast cancer patient journey. We aim to further improve on this by providing a full suite of support services, and therefore a one-stop shop for our patients.

We would love you to partner with us on this journey as this is a centre of significant, impactful and unique excellence that does stand apart. Our patients are our best ambassadors, and the constant wonderful feedback is appreciated, but we will not rest on our laurels, and intend to constantly improve and benchmark what we do against the world's best. Come along for the journey!



To discuss this further, please feel free to contact me on 0488 554 779

Mr Carmelo Arto BSc MBA
Chief Executive Officer



“In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or to step back into safety.”

– Abraham Maslow



Dealing with adverse diagnosis (Renie's thoughts)

Tips on survival in adverse diagnoses: From someone who has been there.

- 1 Don't panic. It has already happened, so it's a matter of what do we do now.
- 2 Don't look far ahead. Wake up each day and deal with what you must for that day.
- 3 Take heart in the fact that technology has advanced so much that we all stand a pretty good chance these days, and all the medical people are wonderful.
- 4 Don't listen to any bad outcome stories, you can sympathise, but that is someone else's story – NOT YOURS
- 5 It's up to God, the Doctors and you, so put your trust in the first two and do your own best and things will work out well.
- 6 Have life go on as normal as possible – fun and your favourite music etc. That's really important.
- 7 It is amazing how much caring support is around you from all your family, friends, and even people you don't know, in the form of prayers in church communities.
- 8 Do let people help you. They need to do that sometimes as much as you need them to do so.

By **Irene Hockley** (1941 - 2015)

2016 Mother's Day Pink Round

Swans District Football Development Council member, Leah Stupar, once again helped to organise the Mother's Day Football Round between the Demons, Royals and Swans.

Club presidents, Committee members, Coaches, Team Managers and – most importantly – the players got behind the drive to raise money for Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA.

Thank you to all the hard working Mums who donated baked items such as cakes, slices, cupcakes and muffins for all the stalls. Thank you to all the people who manned the sausage sizzle stands and sold the raffle tickets. It was great to see pink flags being used, pink socks being worn by the players, and the respect shown by the players wearing pink armbands so proudly.

We would like to express our gratitude to the junior football clubs for supporting us.



Helen Sewell Tumour Bank - A Pathologist's view

In April 2014 Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA (BCRC-WA) launched the first breast cancer specific tumour bank in Western Australia in conjunction with Western Diagnostic Pathology (WDP).

WDP is committed to providing a long term collaboration with BCRC-WA for the Helen Sewell Tumour Bank, which has been named in honour of a generous benefactor, Helen Sewell, whose donation enabled this project to progress from concept to reality. Throughout the world, cancer centres of excellence are establishing Tumour Banks of solid cancers, affecting both men and women, in a collaborative effort to understand cancer behaviour and ultimately improve survival.

WDP has a dedicated pathology service for breast cancer patients. Their role is to process breast tissue samples provided by surgical colleagues, and, importantly, to provide the diagnosis of cancer.

A Pathologist's View

A "Breast Tumour Bank" comprises of a storage site of small samples of breast tumour and surrounding tissues that were removed at the time of breast cancer surgery. Dr Jespal Gill, Pathologist from WDP, explains the procedure performed by staff at their labs for surgical colleagues and for the Helen Sewell Tumour Bank:

Upon receipt at our laboratory, the breast cancer samples are first provided with

identification numbers and then "fixed" in formalin to preserve the integrity of the tissues.

Small samples, measuring approximately 20mm x 20mm, are then placed in a plastic cassette. These samples will include the tumour and surrounding tissue, all accompanying lymph nodes, and random samples of breast tissue.

The small cassettes are then processed overnight and made into paraffin blocks (wax blocks in which the tissue is held).

Thin sections are sliced with a fine blade and placed onto glass slides which are then stained. The stained slides are analysed under a microscope by a pathologist. Special immuno-histochemical stains are used to characterize the features of individual cancer cells.

As part of the routine management of women and men diagnosed with breast cancer, the tumour samples are shown at our weekly multidisciplinary meeting. At these meetings, the details of the patient's case are discussed with radiologists, oncologists, breast surgeons, breast physicians and pathologists.

The pathologist's role at this meeting is to demonstrate, using a microscope attached to a screen, the important features of a tumour, the tumour relationship to the surgical margins, whether lymph nodes are involved, and the immuno-histochemical features of the cancer. All this information then allows the ongoing treatment recommendation to be conveyed to the patient, usually by the treating breast surgeon or medical oncologist.

After a case is completed the paraffin blocks are stored by WDP. Patients are routinely invited to consent to their blocks being kept separately in the Helen Sewell Tumour Bank. Unlike other specimen paraffin blocks, which are discarded after a certain period determined by governing committees, these blocks are kept indefinitely. Hence the Helen Sewell Tumour Bank provides a large volume

of breast tissue samples which will be available for future research, where the tumour molecular characteristics will enable a greater understanding of which drug treatments may be of value, or providing information as to the behavior of the cancer, with the ultimate aim of improving survival for breast cancer patients.

To find out if you are eligible or if you would like to assist with funding this project, please go to:

<http://bcrc-wa.com.au/our-research/helen-sewell-tumour-bank/>

Dr Jespal Gill
Western Diagnostic
Pathology



Fundraising Fun

Secret Harbour Girls, Chrissy Oliver and Gail Wharton recently stopped by our offices wanting to do a small bit of fundraising for our Clinical research into breast cancer.

They organised an Envy Jewellery party among their friends which was facilitated by Angela Cleary. Envy Jewellery was a perfect fit for this fundraiser as they have beautiful pieces and great prices that are easily affordable. Everyone had a fantastic time and even though Gail was unable to attend, she was happy with the money raised of \$254.00.

Thank you Chrissy, Gail and Angela for your support.



PYNKS with SolarisCare

We invited SolarisCare to join us at our first meeting at Hollywood Private Hospital since moving here in April.

SolarisCare, like BCRC-WA, is a not-for-profit organisation that continues to provide support, information and education to cancer patients and their primary carers.

Our guests were Dr Anna Petterson (PhD), a qualified Art Therapist, and Veronica Watson, a specialist in the art of Hand Therapy (amongst her many skills).

Sharing her skills with charcoal and soft pastels, Anna joined us in creative expression, encouraging the use of our emotions and thoughts to express our feelings onto paper. Several drawings were made in the session, with different themes that Anna asked each of us to express. Firstly, picking out a trinket to link to our drawing and then, as the morning progressed, we moved on to different emotions. Creatively, Anna looked at everyone's drawings individually, and then turned each drawing on its side and then finally upside down, asking if the meaning of the drawing had changed. The answers were very surprising, with the workings of the subconscious mind at the forefront, with different interpretations of a simple drawing by placing it in a different rotation. Thank you, Anna, for your calm ways, and for your thoughtful comments to the PYNKS group. Many of the ladies left feeling inspired with the skills they had learnt, and Anna encouraged them to purchase their own pastels, and to keep a notebook beside the



Veronica Watson and Dr Anna Petterson

bed when a creative thought might transpire in the night. Anna also believes in sharing art with loved ones, grandchildren or god children as a wonderful way to connect together.

Veronica came to us with beautiful soothing skills in hand massage. Each Pynks member had a wonderful 15 minute session of hand therapy, with scented essential oils of lavender and juniper berry. Hand therapy offers respite for sore, stiff and painful joints, as well as promoting relaxation and assisting with circulation. Sitting in a comfortable



chair and beautifully scented room, feeling relaxed and soothed, it proved to be a wonderful transition between hand and art therapy. An information pack about SolarisCare, the types of services offered and the monthly planner were also given out on the day.

We are planning for ongoing collaborations with SolarisCare, and can see that our patients would benefit from our services being aligned. Our Chief Executive Office, Mr Carmelo Arto, hopes that future collaborations

will bring improved benefits to our patients, by ensuring a smooth transition from consultation, surgery, treatment and post care, and aligning this with all the services offered by SolarisCare to provide a cohesive formula. This will ensure that all patients are aware of what is available to them once they leave our offices.

We strongly believe that not-for-profit organisations should work together, as we share the same common goal. We will ensure that each patient who comes to Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA, either through the private practice of Prof Chan and Dr Willsher or through our Breast Clinical Trials Unit, will know of the services offered by SolarisCare. To find out more please go to their webpage at www.solariscare.org.au or phone 6383 3475.

If you have secondary breast cancer and would like to find out more about our PYNKS group, please go to our webpage at <http://bcr-wa.com.au/about-us/pynk/> to find out more or phone 6500 5501.



Did you know...



Did you know... we are Australia's largest and busiest breast cancer research centre?

At least 10 of the research trials that we have been able to offer patients, have resulted in enhanced treatment for breast cancer internationally, as well as improved survival rates for patients



Did you know... we generate all our own funding?

We receive no government funding.

BCRC-WA conducts and initiates our own research which are often performed to answer a clinical question or clinical needs which are important to patients.



Did you know... you have the opportunity to contribute to a world-leading comprehensive breast cancer centre that we plan to move into 2019?

BCRC-WA's goal is to conduct research into the causes, prevention, and treatment of breast cancer, and enhance the multidisciplinary care to individuals with breast cancer and their carers.



Did you know... you can walk in anytime and have a coffee with our CEO?

Sit down with the CEO of Breast Cancer Research Centre – WA, **Carmelo Arto** (pictured right) and he would be more than happy to discuss our wonderful journey towards this dedicated comprehensive breast cancer centre.