



# What's news

## HELLO FROM PROFESSOR ARLENE CHAN



Welcome to the first edition of 'What's News' for 2020. This year will certainly be of significance as we prepare to open our new comprehensive breast cancer centre - named 'Perth Breast Cancer Institute' (PBCI) mid-year.

We are happy to announce that PBCI will have on-site medical oncologists, breast surgeons, radiation oncologists, reconstructive surgeon, a Breast Clinical Trials Unit, breast care nurses, clinical psychologists, early and advanced breast care nurses, radiology and breast physicians.

The location of all these services in one building will greatly benefit patients and their loved ones by reducing travel times and the associated stress that can be caused by having to manage multiple appointments. More importantly, the different treatments needed for

individual patients will be personalised and patients will be guided through the phases of their care.

PBCI will be situated in Hollywood Private Hospital's new consulting centre. We are thankful to all of our patients, friends and family who have supported, fundraised or contributed in some way, big or small, towards the establishment of the PBCI.

In this edition of 'What's News' we feature a story from patient Cara Gosatti, a young woman diagnosed with Triple Positive Breast Cancer. Cara talks about her treatment, and how she came to feel the lightness of life again with some help from her 'cancer puppy'! Read Cara's story on [page 4](#).

We also feature an article by our Clinical Psychologist Mary Scott entitled 'Managing initial diagnosis - the spectrum of psychological distress'. In this article, Mary addresses some psychological responses that can occur after a diagnosis. Read Mary's article on [page 5](#).

2020 also commenced with my Annual Education Seminar on Metastatic Breast Cancer.

Over one hundred patients support and health professionals attended to hear more about what is being done for patients living with Metastatic Breast Cancer. This year I spoke on CDK (cyclin-dependent kinase) inhibitor, immunotherapy, lifestyle factors, tumour markers and the principles of management of a metastatic breast cancer patient. I would like to thank all those who attended this year's talk and particularly those who asked questions which made for an informative and engaged session. Read more about the talk on [page 6](#).

As we grow we continue to welcome new staff members along with our new Oncology Fellow, Nicola O'Neil, who commenced with us early February. We welcome all our new team members who will play a role in improving the lives of women, men and families impacted by breast cancer.

This year will be one of many milestones and I am excited to share with you the updates that our next newsletter will bring!

**Prof. Arlene Chan**  
Medical Oncologist MB BS,  
FRACP, MMed (Palliative Care)

## EVENTS

### MARCH

- WAGIN WOOLORAMA FUNDRAISER  
MARCH 6-7
- PYNKS COFFEE & CHAT  
MARCH 10
- PORT TO PUB  
MARCH 21
- CHEMO WISE  
INFORMATION SESSION  
MARCH 26

### APRIL

- WILLS INFORMATION SESSIONS  
APRIL 2
- OCEAN VIEW MUSIC & MARKETS  
TWO ROCKS FUNDRAISER  
APRIL 5
- PYNKS COFFEE & CHAT  
APRIL 14
- PERTH GLORY BCRC-WA  
CHARITY MATCH  
APRIL 26
- CHEMO WISE  
INFORMATION SESSION  
APRIL 30

### MAY

- FRASERS LUNCHEON  
SUPPORTING BCRC-WA  
MAY 8
- BCRC-WA ANNUAL  
APPRECIATION DINNER  
MAY 8
- PYNKS COFFEE & CHAT  
MAY 12
- HBF RUN FOR A REASON  
MAY 24
- CHEMO WISE  
INFORMATION SESSION  
MAY 28



Meet  
the team



We're delighted to welcome  
Gabrielle Jones, Study Coordinator



INTRODUCING

*Gabrielle Jones*

I joined the Breast Clinical Trials Unit in June 2019. As a Study Coordinator, my role is to support, facilitate and coordinate trial activities for patients and provide assistance to fellow colleagues when needed.

Currently I am coordinating the MONA 2, 3 & 7, TTAC, PUMA, LAG and CONTESSA 3 and am loving the variation between each of the trials. The best part of my job is interacting with all the lovely patients and ensuring all trial activities run as smoothly as possible for each patient. Since my mother was diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer back in 2011, cancer research has and will always be my main passion and each day I wake up feeling honoured to work with such a wonderful team to help improve the lives of those going through breast cancer treatment.

I have a Master of Biomedical Science where I researched mechanisms behind cancer-associated thrombosis. This is my first job out of university and I am loving every minute of working working at BCRC-WA.

## AUTUMN RECIPE

### Cynthia's Delicious Butter Chicken



#### INGREDIENTS FOR CHICKEN MARINADE

1 tablespoon of Chicken Tikka or Tandoori Chicken Masala (I use Shan's - but any brand is fine MDH, Everest etc.)  
1 teaspoon cinnamon powder or garam masala powder  
cloves:cardamom:cinnamon 1:2:3 ratio ground finely; alternatively can get readymade from the gourmet  
2 teaspoons cumin power  
2 tablespoons fennel powder  
1 tablespoon garlic powder  
1 tablespoon yogurt or sour cream  
1 teaspoon orange-red colour

#### METHOD FOR CHICKEN MARINADE

1. Mix the above mentioned ingredients and marinate 1kg of chicken for 3-4 hours at room temperature or overnight in the refrigerator.
2. Just before cooking the curry, grill on coal fire and pan fry the chicken on a high flame. Do not let the chicken cook much at this stage, in other words the chicken should be less than half done.

#### INGREDIENTS FOR GRAVY

1 large onion (sliced)  
1 large tomato (sliced)  
50 grams cashew nuts  
50 grams almond meal  
3 to 5 black cardamom (large & whole)  
5 bay leaves (large sized)  
1 packet Butter Chicken Masala (I use Shan's - but any brand is fine)

#### METHOD FOR GRAVY

1. Slightly heat 1 tbsp of oil in a frying pan, add the sliced onions and fry on medium heat until golden brown.

2. Add cashew nuts and continue to fry until the cashews are golden brown.
3. Cool this mix and blend to a smooth paste along with sliced tomatoes.

#### CURRY PREP

1. In a cooking pot or pan slightly heat 1 tbsp of oil. Add the bay leaves and cardamoms and fry on low heat for 30 seconds.
2. Add almond meal, blended paste and butter chicken masala and fry on medium heat for 2 to 3 mins, stir intermittently.
3. Add the grilled or pan fried chicken and cook on low heat for about 24 mins to an hour.
4. Add water if the gravy is too thick. If desired, garnish with green coriander and/or thickened cream before serving.

## CEO CORNER



All this bodes well for us to increase our profile and alert people to the fact we should be considered as the charity of choice when they are considering donating, and to remind you of a few of the reasons:

- The Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA has the busiest breast cancer clinical trials unit in Australia, having conducted over 100 international, national and local breast cancer trials involving over 1200 WA patients since 2000.
- 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.
- 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.
- We will always operate efficiently and effectively. 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.
- 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 now providing a full suite of support services, and therefore a one-stop shop for our patients and their families.

We would love you to partner with us on this journey as this is a centre of significant, impactful and unique excellence.

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.

**Carmelo Arto**  
Chief Executive Officer

Hello once again, and what an eventful time we have had at BCRC-WA in the past year. We are starting to confirm additional breast surgeons, oncologists and breast physicians to join our team as we head into our new centre.

We also have our Oncology Fellow, Nicola O'Neil who commenced early February. An additional clinical psychologist will help boost our support services as we provide a breast cancer-specific psychological service at no additional cost to patients.



The Perth Breast Cancer Institute (PBCI) will be in the Hollywood Consulting Centre.

## CARA'S STORY



Cara Gosatti & Archie

On the 9th of May 2018 I was diagnosed with stage 2a grade 3, triple positive breast cancer.

I was 29 years old. My story started with me living in Dubai, where I had been for the past five years, and I was about to move home to Perth to start a life with my partner. Two weeks before I left I was having a shower and randomly felt a lump under my arm. When I moved home, my GP sent me for an ultrasound, all the while assuring me that due to my age I had nothing to worry about. Fast forward one week, one ultrasound, one core needle biopsy, one mammogram later - and I heard the word I never thought was coming - Cancer. I did eight rounds of chemotherapy over four months and I finished three weeks before my 30th birthday. I then had a double mastectomy two weeks after I turned 30. I recently finished 18 months of Herceptin in November 2019, and this week I have started a trial for the drug Neratinib.

I feel so lucky to have received amazing care and treatment from both Professor Arlene Chan and Dr Peter Willsher. Prof. Chan is always so patient

when I spend an hour in her office each visit running through all that I had read on 'Dr Google'.

When I was first diagnosed, I felt like my world was falling apart, and I was angry. Statistically speaking, this shouldn't have happened to me, and it felt so unfair that it had. I feared for my future, I feared I would never be a mum, grow old with my partner, enjoy my life. I feel that so many people who get diagnosed say that cancer teaches them to appreciate life, but I already appreciated my life and lived my life to the extreme! I remember wondering if I would ever feel so carefree again that I would sing in the shower, or if I would ever really laugh at something again, and at my hardest times after diagnosis none of this felt possible. Then, as time moves forward, you adjust to the new normal, and life goes on. I remember finding myself laughing at things again, and one day I was driving down the freeway with my music blaring, and I found myself singing and dancing in the car. I remember stopping and realising how far I had come from when things seemed so dark.

I often found myself looking for answers to why this all happened and what have I gotten from my cancer diagnosis. Besides my beautiful puppy Archie, who was bought for me as I started chemotherapy (I highly recommend getting a cancer puppy), there are three things cancer has taught me:

1. Life is too damn short. I have no time for hearing first world problems anymore. Surround yourself with real people who are all about having fun, loving life and not sweating the small stuff. Take that trip, hug your loved ones and appreciate your life. You are so blessed to be on this Earth, and if you have your health you have everything!
2. That you will discover who your friends are, but also what you want in your friends. Some people who have already faced cancer in their lives might find it hard to support you, and that's something you learn to understand. Then there are the friends who can't understand the changed you as you are moving on with your life, or who constantly feed you toxic positivity which is not supportive. People who haven't experienced cancer themselves will never really understand what you are

going through, that's where you find yourself some cancer friends. I met one at a young support group, and one in Arlene's waiting room, and these girls are amazing, they get you and it's a friendship like nothing else!

3. If you are young like me, make sure you find an even wider support base so you don't feel so alone. The cancer club is one that nobody wants to be a part of, but everyone in it makes it so much better. I found a huge community on Instagram, although sometimes it gets a bit much so you have to be careful what content you follow. A really great account for young people is "the cancer patient", a satirical view of life as a cancer patient. It's full of cancer memes and to be honest they are hilarious. My motto in life is if you're not laughing you will probably end up crying, and I know which one I would rather be doing!!

**Cara Gosatti  
Patient**

## MANAGING INITIAL DIAGNOSIS - THE SPECTRUM OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS



For most people a cancer diagnosis is unexpected and unwanted. There can be feelings of shock and anxiety. Some of the psychological responses that occur soon after diagnosis are described below:

### **Fear of the unknown**

This is greatest between diagnosis and getting a treatment plan. There have been significant advances in breast cancer treatment in recent years, making it more effective and with fewer side effects. Once people have a plan and start treatment, they often feel a sense of relief.

### **I need to care for others**

If you have caring or managerial roles, your first thoughts might be about how the illness will affect those who depend on you. You may have concerns about how to tell family members, including children. Most people cope

better than expected and will find sources of support for themselves. However, if you are concerned, a session with our Clinical Psychologist can reduce your anxiety and assist you to support yourself as well as others.

### **Why me?**

You may want to know what caused this so that you can make sense of it and prevent it from happening again. Only about 10% of women have a known genetic mutation that puts them at high risk for breast cancer (e.g. BRCA 1 or 2). Researchers are working to discover other genetic and environmental causes but the triggers for cancer are extremely complex. What we do know is that the biggest risk factors for breast cancer are being female and getting older.

### **Determination to "beat it"**

Some women are determined to stay positive and powerful. They tend to mobilise their own resources and encourage others to support them in their determination. When they do feel down, they seek support from those they trust.

### **Coping with the emotional reactions of others**

Sometimes it can feel very

supportive to have a good cry with a close friend. At other times, the behaviour of others might feel intrusive or draining. A helpful role for someone you trust is to be a "gate keeper" to update friends and to buffer you from people who might not be helpful at this time.

### **Coping with Dr. Google and others' opinions about treatment**

Your breast cancer diagnosis is unique to you. Not only is breast cancer different to other kinds of cancer, there are many different subtypes of breast cancer which require different treatments to obtain the best possible result. So we advise "don't google," because you are likely to read incorrect information. Once you've read something incorrect which distresses you, it is hard to "unread". Your treating team can provide the best advice to treat the specific cancer found in your body, taking into account your overall health and psychosocial situation.

### **Feeling alone**

For women who don't have a supportive partner, going through a stressful time can be hard. It can be even harder if you are coping with grief from a recent bereavement or

relationship breakdown. While some people have the urge to withdraw, try to be open to supportive connections as they often come from the people you'd least expect.

### **I'd like more information and support**

At BCRC-WA, we provide a range of free support options and a specialised breast cancer clinical psychology service. Please ask our staff for more information.

### **Final words of encouragement**

As best you can, try to keep some balance in your life by keeping up activities and connections that are not about cancer.

It can be comforting to keep in mind the community of people who have experienced and managed cancer treatment before you. Even if you've never met them, you can imagine that they know what you are facing, they've gained wisdom and friendship along the way and they wish you well.

**Mary Scott**  
BCRC-WA Clinical Psychologist



## PROFESSOR ARLENE CHAN 2020 TALK ON METASTATIC BREAST CANCER



On Saturday 1st February Professor Arlene Chan held her Annual PYNKS Education talk on what is being done for patients living with Metastatic Breast Cancer.

The seminar was held at the Hollywood Private Hospital Lecture Hall with 113 patients, support and health professionals in attendance. Prof. Chan's talk addressed topics relating to Metastatic Breast Cancer.

These topics included CDK (cyclin-dependent kinase) inhibitor, immunotherapy, lifestyle factors, tumour markers and the principles of

management of a metastatic breast cancer patient. Following each topic the audience was able to ask questions to gain a better understanding of the information that had been presented. The audience was engaged, and asked some great questions which Prof. Chan was able to elaborate on. We would like to thank Prof. Chan for once again providing this educational seminar. We would also like to thank all those who attended.

This year's session was recorded for all those who could not attend. Visit our website for more information.



# PYNKS

A group for women living with Metastatic Breast Cancer

Join our PYNKS meetings each month to share and connect with others like-minded people who can provide understanding, friendship and support.

Our free program involves casual coffee catch-ups and chats, fun activities and outings.

Our regular event is a coffee and chat morning on the second Tuesday of every month from 10am until 11.30am.

For more information please email:  
[info@bcrc-wa.com.au](mailto:info@bcrc-wa.com.au)



## THANK YOU FROM BCRC-WA

### Perth Glory Kicks for Cancer



BCRC-WA has partnered with Perth Glory Football Club to raise awareness about the importance and impact of breast cancer research that benefits current patients having treatment and future generations with breast cancer. Recently Austin's dreams came true (pictured with referees and Team Captains of Perth Glory and Brisbane Roar). Austin, whose mother has been through a breast cancer diagnosis, is a huge football fan and a very talented young player. Austin was very excited to be asked to help with the coin toss and he did an awesome job.

Perth Glory Football Club are once again supporting BCRC-WA during their match against the Central Coast Mariners on Sunday 26 April 2020, 4pm at HBF Park, Perth. It will be a great family afternoon with activities in the Kids' Zone pre-game and on-ground entertainment. Come along with your family and friends, enjoy the match and visit us at the BCRC-WA gazebo in the Kids' Zone.

### Perth Radiological Clinic



#### Raised \$18,880

Perth Radiological Clinic has again supported Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA in 2019 by donating \$10 for every mammogram performed in October during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Their clinic staff across greater Perth were very enthusiastic supporters and brought attention to the aim of their fundraiser by decorating their offices in purple and pink and creating themed baked goodies.

Over the past four years, Perth Radiological Clinic has raised and donated \$45,842 to BCRC-WA for breast cancer research.

A big thank you to Caryn Fong, Customer Relations Manager, staff and donors who showed their support and donated.



### An Afternoon Tea in Memory

#### Raised \$7,338

Susanna DeCastro lost her fight to breast cancer in May 2018. Her mother Ester and sister, Linda have continued to hold an annual 'Susanna's Afternoon Tea' fundraiser in her memory. Susanna had previously held the afternoon tea for seven years raising funds for breast cancer research.



### WA Italian Club

#### Raised \$16,100

During 2019 the WA Italian Club organised several events to fundraise for BCRC-WA. These included Let's Catch Up Ladies events and a very successful Gala Ball where well-known fashion designer, Steph Audino presented a fashion show that was very well received.

A big thank you to everyone who organised and attended these events. More fundraising events are being planned for this year and we urge you to support the WA Italian Club.

CONSIDERING DONATING TO BCRC-WA?

Thankyou x

Thank you to the following organisations for their generosity



- Atwell Gallery
- Bedford Bowling Club
- Brian's Bootscooters Bullcreek
- The Castellorizian Ladies Association (Megisti)
- City of Kwinana
- Direction Psychological Services
- Entertainment Publications of Australia
- Floreat Ladies Golf Club Inc.
- Geographe Garden Club
- Gwelup Medical Centre
- Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

- Karnup Nursery
- Karratha Country Club Inc.
- Kolbe Catholic College
- Midland Police
- PayPal Giving Fund
- Perth Radiological Clinic
- St Mary's Anglican Girls' School
- Subsea7
- Swing Golf Club
- WA Italian Club Inc.

**There are many ways to help us achieve our aims at BCRC-WA.**

**What are we trying to achieve now and in the near future?**

- Establish our new Perth Breast Cancer Institute (PBCI)
- Continue our ground breaking research via clinical trials
- Find new and better treatments for breast cancer
- Enhance patient wellbeing and increase survival rates
- Become an education/information hub for patients, GPs and the community

**Why do we need your help?**

- To help establish comprehensive services at our new PBCI
- To facilitate our care and support in the form of:
  - More metastatic (advanced) breast cancer nurses
  - More early breast cancer nurses
  - An additional two oncologists

**Donate today**

You can donate online at [bcrc-wa.com.au](http://bcrc-wa.com.au), or by direct deposit (ANZ BSB: 016-080 Acct No: 2973 55098), or contact us on (08) 6500 5501, or in person at BCRC-WA, Hollywood Private Hospital, Entrance 3, 101 Monash Avenue, Nedlands WA (EFTPOS is now available).

BCRC-WA is self funded.  
We do not receive any government funding.



**Wills and Powers of Attorney Information Sessions**

• Thursday 2 April 2020, 10AM & 6PM •

Perpetual with Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA are pleased to offer two opportunities, 10am and 6pm, to attend a free session which will comprise an information component followed by a Q & A session.

A Will is an important document that protects your family and assets. We'll explore what you need to consider when making a Will.

We'll also discuss Enduring Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Guardianship.

Join our presenter, Michael Crowe, Senior Lawyer and Estate Planning Specialist at Perpetual to gain a better understanding of these processes. Our CEO, Carmelo Arto will also provide up to date information on recent developments at BCRC-WA.

VENUE: Perpetual, Level 29, Exchange Plaza, 2 The Esplanade, Perth. (Entry via Sherwood Court)

For more information, please contact Ann Chan, Fundraising & Bequests Coordinator on (08) 6500 5501 or email [fundraising@bcrc-wa.com.au](mailto:fundraising@bcrc-wa.com.au)

Please RSVP by March 30 and note your session preference as 10AM or 6PM. Light refreshments will be provided.