

What's news



breast cancer
research centre wa



hello FROM PROFESSOR ARLENE CHAN



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

As we approach winter I reflect on the progress we have made since our last Newsletter. While we have recently seen unprecedented times, BCRC-WA has remained focused on improving the lives of the women, men and families impacted by breast cancer.

These upcoming months will see a long-held vision become a reality as we move into our new breast cancer centre. The centre will give us the privilege to continue to provide comprehensive treatment, research and support services for the women and men affected by a breast cancer diagnosis. Our centre is discussed in greater detail by our CEO Carmelo Arto on [page 3](#).

This edition of 'What's News' features the patient story of Jane Gasteviski, a wife, mother of three young children (3, 6 and 8 years

old), sister and friend who was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 41. Jane bravely faced the many challenges that a breast cancer diagnosis can present and has come out the other end. You can read Jane's full story on [page 4](#). Her story is also featured on our website and our social media platforms.

"These upcoming months will see a long-held vision become a reality as we move into our new breast cancer centre."

We also feature an article by our Oncology Fellow, Nicola O'Neil entitled 'What does my diagnosis of early breast cancer mean for my daughter or family members?' Women diagnosed with breast cancer will often have questions about their own families, in

particular their daughter/s or granddaughter/s risk of breast cancer. This topic is covered in more detail on [page 6](#).

These recent months have seen many of us spending more time indoors than ever before, which has had an impact on our normal fitness routines. Home workouts have become one way of staying active and well. On [page 5](#) of this edition, physiotherapist Lizzie Eastwood gives some tips on how to effectively work out while staying at home.

I would also like to welcome the newest members of our staff and BCRC-WA board - we are pleased to share this exciting time with you. We would also like to thank all our donors who have continued to support us, and I look forward to sharing all our new developments in our next Newsletter.



Welcome to

SILVIE RADMIL

Silvie Radmil (CNC)

I joined BCRC-WA in September 2019 as a Clinical Nurse Coordinator. I am passionate about my work, as this profession never stops giving. Improving the lives of my patients is the core reason that I chose to study Nursing as well as Paramedicine at Curtin University, WA.

In the fourteen years of my career, I have continued to embody the main six core values of professional nursing; care, compassion, competence, communication, courage and commitment while working in the Czech Republic and Australia. For over a decade my career was to help clients in emergency situations, but as priorities and life circumstance change over time, one might take a different path in life or career, as I did. My career in emergency ended, and since 2017 my main focus has been in Oncology and clinical trials.

I would like to quote Florence Nightingale, "Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses...we must be learning all of our lives."

In my new, current role I advocate for patients' safety and trial integrity. I assist with the day to day running of clinical trials, using my critical thinking skills and scientific background. I promote teamwork, act as a resource nurse, and provide the best possible care and support to patients and their families. Every day I am grateful that I can be part of a passionate, knowledgeable, and caring team of BCRC-WA colleagues!

ALMOND COCONUT CAKE

Recipe by Rachael Chow – The Kind Method | Gluten free. Dairy free.

One of my favourite things to do is bake and make sweets (obvs, because even though we do fitness here, there's A LOT of sweets here too).

This recipe works for any occasion (or just cos!) I've made it for Christmas, Easter, birthdays – it's always a hit!

Winter
Recipe

INGREDIENTS

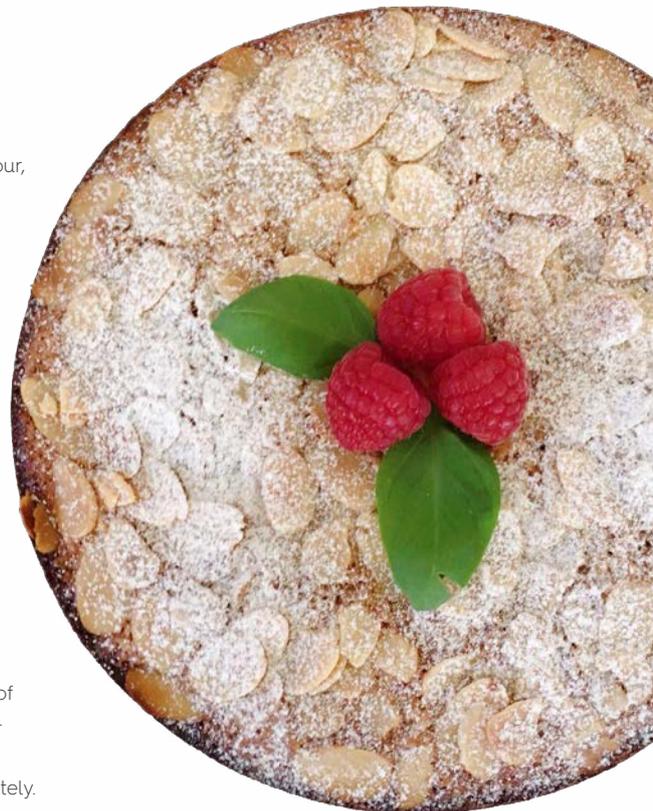
- 1 ½ cups almond flour or ground almonds
- ¾ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¾ cup coconut oil, melted and cooled slightly
- ½ cup sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2 tsp vanilla essence
- ½ cup honey (if using raw, soften first)
- ⅓ cup flaked almonds
- icing sugar for dusting

Chef's tip

This cake freezes well and will last in the fridge for up to 5 days.

METHOD

1. Preheat your oven to 180 C.
2. Grease and line a 23cm spring-form cake tin.
3. In a large bowl whisk the almond flour, coconut and salt until combined.
4. In a smaller bowl, whisk together the coconut oil and sugar until smooth.
5. Whisk in the eggs and vanilla essence until light in colour, then whisk in the honey.
6. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until just combined. The batter will be quite loose.
7. Pour the batter into the cake tin, shake to disperse evenly. Use a spatula to spread and smooth if needed. Scatter the almond flakes on top.
8. Bake for 40 minutes or until the top of the cake springs back when pressed.
9. Let the cake cool for 5 minutes, then turn onto a wire tray to cool completely. Dust with icing sugar before serving.



CEO'S

COMMENT

I am pleased to say that shortly Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA will move into our new premises within the recently completed Hollywood Consulting Centre at Hollywood Private Hospital. This will be a comprehensive treatment centre incorporating research, treatment and support services for men and women diagnosed with breast cancer.

The Centre will have on-site medical oncologists, breast surgeons, radiation oncologists, reconstructive surgeons,

Breast Clinical Trials Unit, clinical psychologists, early and advanced breast care nurses, radiologists, geneticist and breast physicians.

You may have seen us on TV and radio recently discussing what makes Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA world class in breast cancer research, treatment and support;

- We are at the forefront of research and treatment for breast cancer which contributes significantly to patient outcomes.
- We are patient focused which allows us to provide comprehensive support.



Carmelo Arto
Chief Executive Officer

- We are clinician lead, and have other leaders joining our team in the new building.
- We have minimal administration costs and your donation goes directly to improving the outcomes for breast cancer patients.
- We aim to further improve the lives of women, men and families impacted by breast cancer by providing our comprehensive treatment centre in August 2020.

We would love you to partner with us on this journey as we move to the next level in research, treatment and support for women, men and families impacted by breast cancer.



PYNKS

A group for women living with Metastatic Breast Cancer

For more information please email:
info@bcrc-wa.com.au



breast cancer
research centre-wa

Jane's story



I'm Jane... a wife, mother, sister, friend... a member of the cancer club, this is my story.

Cancer was not new to me, I lost both my parents at a young age to cancer and had a family history of the big 'C' that made any health professional I told look slightly horrified. As a result, I was scanned, poked and prodded on a regular basis from the age of 20 to check all was well. The one cancer they were not too concerned about was breast cancer. I had no family history and genetic testing showed I was not positive for the BRCA gene so all in all I was feeling pretty confident my boobies were going to be fine.

It was a normal day in October 2018 when I felt a small lump in my right breast and then another and then another. I very clearly remember the sinking feeling in my tummy - like I had swallowed a lead balloon. They were not "maybe that's a lump" they were "oh yes, that is definitely a lump" kind of lumps.

Off I went for an ultrasound and biopsy and even though the ultra-sonographer and Doctor didn't say anything one way or the other, I left the appointment pretty sure it wasn't going to be good news. My husband was on a work trip in China. I must have sounded worried on the phone as the minute he finished work he drove straight to the airport and jumped on the first flight home.

A few very long days later, at the age of 41 years, I was given the breast cancer diagnosis. There are a couple of key things I remember the most about this time. Firstly, was how quickly your world can change. One day everything was fine, actually way better than fine, pretty damn great. I probably could not have been happier. I had a wonderful husband, three beautiful children, lots of amazing friends and a fabulous lifestyle. Then, literally overnight, everything was not fine, in fact it was really, really not fine. I went from feeling perfectly healthy one day to being told I was sick... really sick... the next day. I found that part very tough to get my head around.

The other was fear - pure, intense, agonising fear that I was going to leave my young children without their mother and leave my wonderful husband the monumental job of raising them alone, and a widower before the age of 40.

It took me a couple of days, but then I remembered my motto, "focus your energy on the things you can change and control". I couldn't change the breast cancer bit, but I could control how I dealt

with it. I was smart enough to realise that I was no-where near an expert on cancer and neither was Dr Google. My husband and I decided the best strategy was to search globally (if needed) for the best experts to help us through this. The Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA with Dr Peter Willsher and Professor Arlene Chan was the unchallenged winner in being at the forefront of Breast Cancer Research and management and, luckily for us, they were based in Perth.

It was then that my journey through the incredible maze of breast cancer really began. From the first appointment we felt like BCRC-WA were guiding us through with the ultimate care, empathy and expertise. The CEO, nurses, administration staff and Clinical Trials Unit are always kind and supportive. Professor Chan and Dr Willsher are true nurturers of the soul and never left us with any doubt that we were in the best possible hands.

My treatment consisted of a mastectomy, six months of chemotherapy followed by another mastectomy and subsequent reconstruction, and followed with the removal of my ovaries. Not a walk in the park but by no means horrific.

I made the decision to "keep moving, keep fighting and keep a smile on my face". I had three young children (3, 6 and 8 years old) to think about. I figured if I wasn't frightened, if I kept up as much of my normal routines as possible and I continued to be the happy mummy they were used to, things would be ok. I am proud to say it worked.

I knew this most when my close friend was recently diagnosed too. I overheard my boy telling her son and his best mate, "don't worry, your mum will be ok, she will

have to have the yukky medicine but it's actually fine and no big deal".

I said at the start of this story that before the moment I found my lumps I couldn't have been happier.. Well, I'm pleased to say I am just as happy today. Perhaps a little more appreciative of the wonderful family

and friends I have, perhaps a little less tolerant of the stuff that just doesn't matter in life, and definitely a whole lot more grateful for people like Professor Chan, Dr Willsher and the wonderful team around them.

Please support breast cancer research at BCRC-WA, your gift will help save more lives.

Jane Gastevski, patient.

"I went from feeling perfectly healthy one day to being told I was sick... really sick... I found that part very tough to get my head around."



STAYING ACTIVE WHILE STAYING SAFE AT HOME - *Part One*

During the COVID-19 pandemic we are all making changes to our daily lives. More time spent at home could mean we are participating in less incidental and less structured exercise. A recent study of over 2000 Australians found that 1 in 3 of us have reduced our usual amount of exercise since the physical distancing laws commenced.

Although we may need to be more inventive about how we exercise, keeping active is still within our reach. Keeping active plays a key role in boosting our immune system, maintaining a strong mental and physical health and reinforcing positive and healthy lifestyle habits.

People with cancer should be as physically active as their ability and condition allows. Research shows that exercise benefits you before, during and after cancer treatment.

Exercise can:

- Strengthen your muscles and bones
- Help you maintain or achieve a healthy weight
- Improve your fatigue and energy levels
- Improve your mobility and balance
- Improve your appearance and self-esteem
- Help you cope with stress, anxiety and depression

Australian Guidelines recommend that you should aim to be active on most, if not all days. You should minimise the amount of time spent in prolonged sitting.

Your weekly activity should include a combination of:

- Moderate intensity aerobic exercise totalling at least 150 minutes per week. This could be broken down into 30 minutes 5 times a week. This may include walking, cycling, jogging, dancing, energetic housework, gardening, step ups or marching on the spot.

- Strength training 2-3 session per week. This may be lifting weights, using resistance bands or your own body weight (such as squats or push ups).

If you currently do no physical activity, it is best to start slowly. Exercise at a low intensity with plenty of rest intervals. Gradually build up to the recommended amount.

Key tips for a home workout:

- Create a designated workout space
- Set realistic goals and reward yourself when you achieve them!
- Schedule your sessions in your diary or smartphone
- Train in the morning before the day escapes you
- Put your exercise clothes or gym kit on to mean business!
- Chart your progress
- Tune into some energetic, uplifting music
- Mix it up
- Recruit a workout buddy (friend or family) to join you

Warm up, cool down and stretch

Before you get into your workout, it's important to warm up. Just a few minutes of light activity is all you need. Walking or jogging on the spot, deep breaths, leg swings, shoulder rolls, pumping your arms, controlled punches, body windmills will loosen your joints and warm up your muscles.

After your workout, cool down in the same way but at a slower tempo. This is also a great time to stretch any tight muscles, holding each stretch for 20-30 seconds.

In the next edition of 'What's News' we will cover; Home Aerobic Exercises, Home Strength Exercises, Activate in your Workspace, Virtual Exercise and how to stay motivated.

If you feel unsure of where to start, the oncology physiotherapists and exercise physiologists at Ramsay Health Plus Hollywood can tailor a specific home exercise program for you, either in our clinic or via Telehealth. Contact us on 9346 6932 to learn more.

Acknowledgements:

<https://www.petermac.org/services/cancer-information-resources/coronavirus/keeping-well-during-covid-19>

<https://www.healthier.qld.gov.au/fitness/exercises>

<https://www.cancerwa.asn.au/articles/news-2020/staying-fit-while-staying-at-home>

<https://livelighter.com.au>

About the Author

Lizzie Eastwood is a physiotherapist and advanced lymphoedema practitioner. She has worked in oncology, palliative care and rehabilitation at Hollywood Hospital for 13 years. She is passionate about partnering and empowering her patients along their cancer journey. Lizzie is the lead oncology outpatient physiotherapist at Ramsay Health Plus Hollywood.



LOOK GOOD *Feel Better*



In this edition we invited Look Good Feel Better to contribute an article on makeup tips and tricks for women and men undergoing treatment for breast cancer.

Look Good Feel Better Makeup Tips and Tricks

For 30 Years, Look Good Feel Better has been dedicated to teaching cancer patients how to manage the appearance-related side-effects caused by treatment for any type of cancer.

Below are a few tips and tricks covered in the workshops, to help you face cancer with confidence!

- Always apply sunscreen as part of your morning routine to help avoid incidental sun damage.
- Using a moisturiser morning and night will keep the skin hydrated while protecting from environmental damage caused by pollution, sun, wind and everyday living.
- Colour correctors and concealers are useful tools to help balance obvious colour changes to skin tone.

- Foundation will help even out the complexion and provide a perfect base for other makeup products.
- To set liquid foundation, a finely textured powder in a sheer, natural or translucent shade should be lightly and sparingly applied to the face.
- Using a pencil or liquid eyeliner will help define the lash line and create the illusion of eyelashes that may have been lost through treatment.
- Eyebrows can be brushed, smudged, or pencilled on to look natural and very flattering. Using short feathery strokes will give the illusion of natural fullness, or an entirely new brow line can be created.
- Your lashes might be thinning but mascara will colour and define any small hairs that are present, creating a thicker and fuller look.
- Blush can instantly freshen the face, give a vibrant, healthy look, and define the cheekbones.
- Applying colour to the lips brightens and creates balance between the eyes and lower face.

Live and interactive Look Good Feel Better Virtual Workshops are currently running to demonstrate the 'how-tos' on the above tips. Two options are available:

Skin care and make-up (1 hour): addressing common side-effects of cancer treatment like dryness and sun sensitivity; correcting and concealing redness, sallowness, pigmentation and dark circles; and techniques for drawing on eyebrows and eyelashes.

Wigs and headwear (1 hour): offering advice on wig selection, wig care, scarf styling and alternative headwear options.

Home-Delivered Confidence Kits are also available and contain a range of skincare and make-up products, and an information booklet and supporting DVD that guides you through the skincare, cosmetic and headwear techniques normally covered in a workshop.

For more information, visit lgfb.org.au.

What does my diagnosis of early breast cancer mean for my daughter or family members?



Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in Australia with 1 in 8 women up to the age of 85 being diagnosed at some point in their life. Many women after dealing with their diagnosis are often concerned about the implications this will have on their own families, in particular their daughter/s or granddaughter/s and the risk the diagnosis of breast cancer within the family may impose on them.

It is important to note however that studies have shown that the majority of breast cancers are not due to inherited or genetic mutations, with less than 5% of all breast cancers being attributed to a genetic predisposition. Even if women have a first degree relative (mother, sister, daughter) who has been diagnosed with breast cancer it does not necessarily mean that they have a significantly higher than average risk of developing breast cancer.

Do we need to be tested for genetic mutations?

At the time of your diagnosis of breast cancer your medical practitioner will take a detailed family history regarding any history of cancer in both your mother and father's side of the family. They will advise you, discuss your case or potentially refer you to a clinical genetics service or familial cancer centre if they believe that you need further counselling or investigation. It is important to note that family history can also develop following your diagnosis so it is recommended that you update your practitioner if any further diagnoses of cancer have occurred in your family during your follow-up

appointments as this may change your risk and the threshold for testing.

What imaging surveillance should be recommended for them if any?

There is currently no strong evidence of the effectiveness of mammography or breast ultrasound as a screening tool in women without a confirmed genetic mutation under the age of 50 even with a family history of breast cancer. However, BreastScreen WA will offer annual (as opposed to every second year) mammograms and breast ultrasounds to women from the age of 40 with a first degree relative with a breast cancer diagnosed before the age of 50 or a first degree relative with breast cancer involving both breasts (any age) or two or more first degree relatives with breast cancer (any age). There is no evidence for increased surveillance above the normal recommended for the general population in women with a first degree relative who was diagnosed over the age of 50.

It is strongly recommended that your daughter or granddaughter speak to her own doctor in order to gauge her individual risk of breast cancer and advise the appropriate surveillance method. They may recommend commencement of mammograms at a younger age than 40 if there is a history of breast cancer in family members under 40. They may be recommended to have annual MRIs in addition to mammograms and ultrasounds if determined to be high risk (as confirmed by a

familial cancer clinic or known to have a genetic mutation) and under the age of 50. If a breast cancer susceptible gene is proven in the females of a given family, the cost of the MRI is covered by Medicare when it is requested by a specialist.

All family members should be vigilant to any changes in their breasts and report this to a medical practitioner if there are any deviations from normal.

Are there other health issues that my diagnosis may cause in my daughters?

The Breast Cancer Offspring Study study, conducted at BCRC-WA demonstrated that there was a significantly higher level of psychological distress reported by female offspring compared to male offspring of patients with breast cancer. Distress tended to be highest soon after the diagnosis in the mother. Some of this distress is likely in part due to a fear of a perceived heightened risk of developing breast cancer which can be managed with reassurance and education. However further supports and medical advice may need to be sought to assist your family through what can be a difficult time.



Nicola O'Neil
Oncology Fellow

Thank you FROM BCRC-WA

South 32 Rottnest Channel Swim

There were three groups who participated in the Rottnest Channel Swim on 22 February and did a fantastic job fundraising for Breast Cancer Research Centre-WA. They dedicated time to training in preparation for the Cottesloe Beach to Rottnest Island swim and were able to rally their friends and families to support them and donate.

**Raised
\$21,734**

Bernard Schortinghuis 'Just Keep Swimming' raised \$4,183 from the swim, and with his wife Julia, organised a wine and olive oil appreciation night fundraiser at home, raising an additional \$9,411.

"Having had several close family members and friends cared for by the team at BCRC-WA, we have been incredibly impressed by Professor Chan and the incredible work that the team undertakes. The world-leading thinking and innovation that this local team is driving is remarkable and something that all West Australian's can be proud of. It has been a privilege to support BCRC-WA," said Julia.

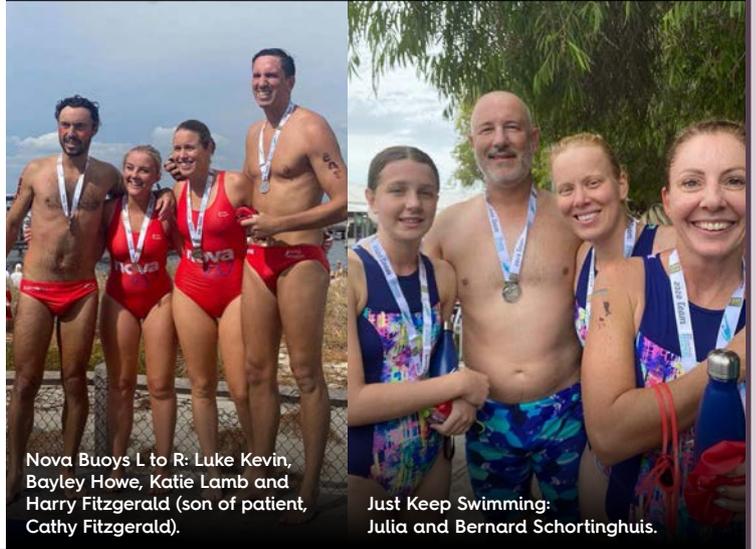
Charlie Sampson with Michael Spadaccini, Thomas Stanicich and Aiden McLaughlin, known as 'The Breaststokers', placed 17th in the Lavan Charity Challenge section and raised \$6,925. Charlie's heartfelt reason for fundraising was to support ground-breaking research into a cure for breast cancer as his mum Natasha undergoes treatment.

Harry Fitzgerald who is the son of Cathy, a patient, was part of the team at Nova 93.7 which included Katie Lamb, Bayley Howe and Luke Kevin - aptly named the 'Nova Buoys' - raising \$1,215.

We sincerely congratulate 'Just Keep Swimming', 'The Breaststokers' and the 'Nova Buoys' teams for their hard work, preparation and success.



The Breaststokers L to R: Charlie Sampson, Michael Spadaccini, Aiden McLaughlin, Thomas Stanicich and Joey Laugharne, support kayaker.



Nova Buoys L to R: Luke Kevin, Bayley Howe, Katie Lamb and Harry Fitzgerald (son of patient, Cathy Fitzgerald).

Just Keep Swimming: Julia and Bernard Schortinghuis.

The Lovely Smocking Ladies

The Lovely Smocking Ladies are a group who are always busy throughout the year making beautiful smocked items. Funds are raised by selling items during the Jacaranda Festival, sales through Ma Cuisine in Applecross, fortnightly contributions from West Coast Community and individual commissions.

**Raised
\$2,625**

Pam Seligmann is part of this group and a patient, "myself and my band of 'The Lovely Smocking Ladies' love knowing that our small efforts are supporting such a great cause."



Channel 7 Port to Pub

The Channel 7 Port to Pub with Hotel Rottnest swim event was scheduled for 21 March, however due to COVID-19 and public safety requirements, the event was cancelled. This disappointing but necessary development did not deter the 'Dad's and Lad's' team. Paul and Mitch Keppel with Macca and Hamish McCarthy raised \$7,747 on their Everydayhero fundraising page and ran a Carwash and Cookies event at Dalkeith Primary School adding \$1,363 to their fundraising total.

**Raised
\$9,110**

We hope that 2021 will give the Keppel and McCarthy families another opportunity to participate in the Port to Pub.



CONSIDERING DONATING TO BCRC-WA?

Thankyou x



Thank you to the following organisations for their generosity

Catholic Youth Ministry Perth

Christmas Island District H S

Craig & Lorraine Fitzgerald

Dad's & Lad's Rotto Swim

DDHI Drilling

Entertainment Publications of Australia

HBF

In Memory of Katy Dymond

Joe Tedge

Just Keep Swimming, Bernard & Julia Schortinghuis

Lions Club of Cowaramup

Nova Entertainment

Ocean View Music & Markets, Willimena Campbell

PayPal Giving Fund

Pink Ribbon Books

Shout for Good

The Breaststokers

The Loose Threads

Tri for a Cure, Kate Herbert

Wagin Woolorama

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, or by direct deposit (NAB BSB: 086-006 Acct No: 73798 6097) or contact us on (08) 6500 5501, or in person at BCRC-WA, Hollywood Private Hospital, Entrance 3, 101 Monash Avenue, Nedlands WA. Gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

BCRC-WA is self funded.

We do not receive any government funding.

Do you have a Will or have you updated your Will?

It is recommended to review your Will every five years or whenever you have significant changes to your circumstances. Writing a Will is important as it could help ensure your assets are distributed as you would like.

7 Reasons why you may need to update your Will

- A significant financial change
- Creation of any new business, company or trust
- Marriage
- Death of a partner
- A divorce or separation
- Disablement of any person mentioned in your Will
- Have children or grandchildren

We encourage you to seek legal advice to ensure that your Will is valid and will achieve everything that you wish. It is important to firstly consider your family and special friends and to inform them if you decide to leave a gift to BCRC-WA. Please contact Ann Chan, Fundraising & Bequests Coordinator on (08) 6500 5500 or fundraising@bcrc-wa for confidential enquiries.

Please note that our free Wills & Powers of Attorney Information April Sessions have been rescheduled for September, and we will communicate the date closer to the time.

