

the Daffodil

Cancer Council Queensland **July 2020**

COVID-19 & Cancer

How COVID-19 affects those
living with cancer

Childhood Cancer

Research is shaping our understanding
of paediatric cancers

Anita's Story

Your support is helping cancer
patients find their confidence
during treatment





As we reach the halfway point of the extraordinary year that has been 2020 so far, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you for your generous support of Cancer Council Queensland. As a member of our Accelerator 1000 program, your dedication to our cause is more important than ever in these uncertain times.

COVID-19 may be increasing the need for our support services right now, but your generosity ensures that lifesaving research continues to progress every day. The reality is, cancer doesn't stop, and neither can we.

In this edition of *The Daffodil*, we share some information on how COVID-19 impacts those living with cancer, and ways they can minimise their risk. If you, or anyone you know, has been impacted by cancer and has concerns, please contact our Cancer Support and Information line on 13 11 20.

I'm also extremely pleased to share details of some groundbreaking research into childhood cancers being conducted right here at Cancer Council Queensland. A recent paper published by our research team shows that survivors of childhood cancer have a five-fold increased risk of being diagnosed with a secondary cancer before the age of 30. It highlights the need for better, less harsh and toxic treatments for children.

This work is only possible because of your incredible support. Thank you for helping us to accelerate cancer research and create a cancer free future, sooner.

Chris McMillan,
Chief Executive Officer, Cancer Council Queensland

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We'd love to hear from you about the stories you would like included in upcoming issues of *The Daffodil*.

2019

what we achieved



7899 contacts were
made with our **13 11 20**
Support and Information line.



2570 wigs and turbans
were distributed to cancer
patients experiencing hair loss.



1104 Queenslanders
were assisted with financial
support through Practical
Support Programs.



283 hours of support
were provided by our Nurse
Counsellors.



\$8.7 million was
invested in lifesaving research.



55 papers were published
on research findings by Cancer
Council Queensland researchers.



19 research projects
received Cancer Council
Queensland funding.



Four cancers – prostate,
melanoma, breast and thyroid – now
have five-year relative survival rates
higher than 90% in Queensland.

*Your support and generosity allows us to help thousands
of Queenslanders impacted by cancer – thank you!*

COVID-19 and Cancer

WHY ARE PEOPLE WITH CANCER MORE VULNERABLE TO COVID-19?

Our immune systems defend our bodies against illnesses and infections such as those caused by COVID-19. For those with cancer, the immune system may not be as strong as it is normally, which means they are at higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and its associated respiratory problems. People with cancer may experience more severe symptoms, so it's important that we all do what we can to avoid contact with infected persons and prevent the virus from spreading to those most vulnerable.

HOW CAN I MINIMISE MY RISK OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19?

Practice good hygiene

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing 'Happy Birthday' twice in your head).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands as this can transfer the virus from surfaces.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow.

Adhere to restrictions and advice issued by the Queensland Government.

- If you are sick, stay at home.
- Avoid contact with those who are sick or who have been exposed to the virus.
- Do not exceed the number of visitors allowed in your home.
- Do not exceed the number of people allowed to gather in a group in public.
- Leave at least 1.5-metres clear between yourself and other people.

For information, visit www.covid19.qld.gov.au

I AM A FRIEND, FAMILY MEMBER OR CARER OF A PERSON WITH CANCER. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you have been in contact with a person who has COVID-19, avoid any contact with the person who is receiving cancer treatment until you have a confirmed negative test result. If you would like to be notified if you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, download the COVIDSafe app.

Talk to your health care provider about receiving the influenza vaccination as early in the flu season as possible. By doing this, you will avoid passing on other infections.

HOW IS CANCER COUNCIL QUEENSLAND CONTINUING TO SUPPORT THOSE WITH CANCER DURING THIS TIME?

At Cancer Council Queensland we are focused on doing what we can to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Queensland. We're continuing to run key services whilst abiding by government health regulations to ensure the safety of our community.

Our transport and accommodation services continue to operate, supporting Queenslanders who need to travel for cancer treatment. The 13 11 20 Information and Support line is open and taking calls daily to assist those impacted by cancer in these uncertain times. Our Wig and Turban service is also functioning remotely, providing turbans via post, to people undergoing cancer treatment.

Your support is what allows us to maintain our vital services for Queenslanders with cancer, when they need them most. Together, we are ensuring those most vulnerable to the virus receive the care they need. Thank you so much for your generosity during this time.



Wig and Turban Service

Following a diagnosis of breast cancer earlier this year in January, Anita (inset photo) began searching for services that could help her when she inevitably lost her hair.

'I was looking on the Cancer Council Queensland website and came across the Wig and Turban Service, so I phoned up and was given all the information I needed to make the appointment go ahead as smoothly as possible: where to park, what to bring, what to expect.'

Anita said she was blown away by the dedication of the volunteers and Cancer Council Queensland.

'I was actually assisted by a volunteer who previously had breast cancer and so it was a pleasant surprise to be helped by someone who had been through a similar experience to what I'm currently going through.'

She was also astounded by the selection of wigs and turbans we had on offer.

'It was a real joy being able to try on as many as I like in a private room that was set up in such a nice way. There was no time pressure, so I could try on many different colours and lengths until I found a wig that I thought suited me best and made me feel comfortable.'

'It was a positive experience and made something as terrible as losing your hair so much easier to deal with.'

'It also made me feel far less alone knowing how much support I had - not just from family and friends - but from services offered by Cancer Council Queensland.'

'The fact that it's a free service is an added bonus. Not everyone can afford wigs or turbans, which is a shame because they help cancer patients feel confident again after losing their hair.'

Anita also said that knowing the service was available and so easily accessible really helped her prepare mentally for losing her hair.

'I just want to say thank you to Cancer Council Queensland employees and volunteers for all their hard work. And also a big thank you to everyone who donates because your money does go to a good cause and the people affected by cancer, and their families, truly appreciate it.'

At Cancer Council Queensland, we are focused on doing what we can to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and so are temporarily ceasing face-to-face wig appointments state-wide. Our Wig and Turban Service will continue to provide turbans via post to those experiencing hair loss as a result of cancer treatment. If you need headwear, please call our team on 13 11 20 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Fighting for Children's Futures

With your help, we're committed to finding the most effective ways of reducing the impact of childhood cancers

Childhood cancer is rare. But every week, an average of 15 Australian children are given that devastating diagnosis. For these 15 kids, 'rare' is a heartbreaking new reality. With your help and support, we're committed to finding the most effective ways of reducing the impact of childhood cancers.

Sixty years ago, cancer was often a death sentence for a child. Today, more than 84% will survive for five years or longer.

Thanks to you, we've come a long way – but there is still so much to do. To achieve a future free from the pain and suffering it causes, we need more research into every aspect of childhood cancer.

Research is absolutely key to unlocking the answers that will stop childhood cancers taking the lives of Australian children.

Where does change begin?

To inform the decisions of policy makers and direct the focus of researchers, data is essential to showing how prevalent a cancer or its impact is and also highlights where attention is most needed. For those working in cancer research, the Australian Childhood Cancer Registry is one of only a few national registries of childhood cancer in the world, and the only Australian population-based registry specifically for childhood cancer.

New research from the Registry illustrates the need for survivors of childhood cancer to be closely monitored for second primary cancers, for early diagnosis and treatment.

We need urgent funding for this to occur.

This research shows that survivors of childhood cancer have a five-fold increased risk of being diagnosed with a second cancer up to 25 to 30 years of age. This was the largest study of its type and reveals that there is a desperate need for further research of better, less harsh and toxic treatments, without reducing their benefit for survival.

How does the Registry help?

The Australian Childhood Cancer Registry collects data on childhood cancer—such as incidence, survival and mortality—from a number of sources, and puts it all in one place where researchers, clinicians, health planners, and families can easily access it.

This is an invaluable service that your donations help to manage and fund. The true potential of the Registry is continually expanding, as our researchers are looking to streamline their data acquisition, and add to the information they provide so that it includes more specific measures of survival outcomes and patient treatment types. To realise its full potential to save lives, the Registry will require more funding from our incredible donors.



Danny Youlden
Cancer Council Queensland Senior
Manager of Childhood Cancer Research

'The Australian Childhood Cancer Registry identifies what the areas of need are. So, we might put out information to show that children in a particular group have worse outcomes than other children. And that might then prompt clinical researchers to investigate why that sort of thing is happening.'

'It's important to realise that behind each of the numbers that I'm dealing with, there's a child with cancer and their family, and the struggle that they're going through.'

'We can never lose sight of the fact that 15% of children are still dying from their cancer within five years of the diagnosis. And we just need to get that down as low as possible, and a zero would be good.'



Daffodil Day 2020

Daffodil Day is Cancer Council's most iconic and much-loved annual campaign. Donations collected on 28 August each year fund world class cancer research that saves lives.

Daffodil Day is more than a fundraising initiative. It's a time of hope. On this day we come together to show our support for the 29,000 Queenslanders diagnosed with cancer each year. We gather as a community and commit to our mission of working towards a cancer free future.

This is why it's so important for Daffodil Day to go ahead this year. The COVID-19 pandemic will change the way the day looks and operates, but it will not alter our determination. Maintaining hope during these uncertain times is vital for all Queenslanders, and especially those living with cancer.

Traditionally, Daffodil Day has been driven by the selling of fresh daffodils and other merchandise available for purchase throughout the Queensland community. These stalls, run by volunteers from schools, businesses and community groups, were supported by various fundraising activities which created a feeling of connectedness. We don't want to lose this feeling in 2020, but rather, cultivate it in a new and exciting way.

Despite limitations on group gatherings and physical contact, Daffodil Day will flourish. We'll be following government advice concerning social distancing, to keep everyone safe and healthy. So, we're going virtual. Daffodil Day 2020 will be on your computer and radio. We'll be in your homes across the state, aiming big and asking for your support to reach our goal of raising \$1 million for cancer research.

We're excited to continue spreading the hope in 2020, when it is needed most. Your support is vital to making this happen. Cancer research saves lives, and money raised this Daffodil Day Appeal will help fund some of the brightest researchers in the country, who are dedicated to discovering the next cancer breakthroughs.

Throughout August, please keep an eye on your mailboxes, inboxes, social media and radio and join us in creating hope for our community in 2020. Please support Cancer Council Queensland this Daffodil Day. Find out more by visiting www.daffodilday.com.au



An update on Sam: 'My determination for my children is to live'

You may remember Sam from our recent tax appeal. Diagnosed with cervical cancer at 44 and told she only had a year to live, Sam is the Mum of two young boys and understandably, her biggest fear is leaving them without her love and guidance.

Last time we shared Sam's story with you, she was undergoing trial immunotherapy in the hopes that this would give her more time to create memories with her boys. Not long after we wrote to you, Sam found out her tumours are growing again, and she is unable to continue with her immunotherapy treatment.

Support for cancer research must continue so we can find new ways for people like Sam to have more time with their loved ones.

During Sam's treatment, she has told us, 'I am scared to die, but I feel that's a good thing because I'm not ready to go anywhere.'

After the initial shock of receiving the news that her tumours are growing again, Sam was filled with even more determination to live.

'My oncologist asked me if I want to hear about my future and I said, "no thank you." My voice in my head said, "I will make my future begin."'

'My determination for my children is to live, but also my determination is to help them live if I don't... this is the scariest time of my life, but the time I need to live to my fullest and that is what I am going to do for my beautiful boys.'

Sam plans on taking her sons on a holiday as soon as COVID-19 restrictions have eased. Her conviction to show

them the love and support she herself has received from her close friends and family, is incredibly heart-warming.

'In my mind and my dreams, I am going to take my boys to a place of smiles, laughs, hugs and a lifetime of memories. I will be the best Mum I can be.'

Your generous donations fund research into treatments that can give people with cancer more time to create memories with their loved ones. Our researchers hope that one day, they will find a cure so mothers like Sam will live to see their children grow up. With your support, we must continue to fund lifesaving research so we can create our vision of a cancer free future.

'I need to live to my fullest and that is what I am going to do for my beautiful boys.'



A Garden Show for a Good Cause

Juliet Thottunkal was just 16 years old when she was inspired to raise both funds and awareness for Cancer Council Queensland following a close family friend's diagnosis with leukaemia.

'When I went to visit him in Princess Alexandra Hospital, he was just as bright as ever, but it was really shocking to see the toll it had taken on him. From then I realised that cancer was a disease that can affect anyone, even if they were really healthy or young,' said Juliet.

After discussing it with her parents, Juliet decided to fundraise as part of our Do It For Cancer campaign by hosting a garden show within their own backyard. Juliet and her family prepared by planting cherry tomatoes, sunflowers and gourds, composting and even building a gazebo and wishing well.

To achieve her goal of raising \$5000, Juliet offered attendees a variety of ways they could donate.

'We held a barbecue and also had an Indian food stall. We had a raffle with prizes and I also came up with the idea of propagating plants from the garden and selling them in handmade pots. As an avid artist, my brother donated some ceramic works too.'

'The level of support I received from the community was astounding,' said Juliet. 'Not only did people give more than the gold coin entry fee, they also personally thanked me for fundraising for such a good cause. Rather than a fundraiser, the show felt like a big festival.'

Juliet was overwhelmed and very grateful for the level of community support she received in order to make her event a success. She far exceeded her fundraising target and raised more than \$5200 to help us continue providing vital support services for people affected by cancer and fund research for a cancer free future.

'I was really touched by the support I received from the community. It was especially moving to hear personal stories from other people who had also been affected by cancer in some way. The most fulfilling part was sharing the story with the family friend who had leukaemia.'



Free Will Service



For your peace of mind and a cancer free future.

Anyone leaving a bequest in their Will to Cancer Council Queensland is eligible to use our Free Will Service. For your peace of mind and a cancer free future, enquire today.

Free Will Service

Phone 1300 66 39 36 or visit cancerqld.org.au/bequests to find your local Free Will Service law firm.



More ways you can help

Volunteer with us

Find out more about volunteering opportunities by visiting our website www.cancerqld.org.au or by calling our volunteer support line on 1300 851 957

Host a fundraiser

Discover our exciting upcoming fundraising campaigns by visiting our website or by calling our fundraising hotline on 1300 65 65 85

Sign up to give a monthly donation

You can do this by visiting our website or calling 1300 66 39 36

Purchase a Play For Purpose raffle ticket

You can buy your ticket at www.playforpurpose.com.au/charities/cancer-council

Support a Workplace Giving Program

Find out more on our website or by emailing corporatepartnerships@cancerqld.org.au

THANK YOU for taking part in our most recent donor survey. Your answers help us understand what inspires you, what's important to you, and how we can best work together to create a cancer free future.

YOU TOLD US:

- You are concerned about all cancers, in particular brain, breast, and bowel cancer
- 68% of you have had loved ones directly impacted by cancer
- 25% of you have used Cancer Council Queensland's support services
- You want to know more about research and how your donations are spent

We hope this edition of *The Daffodil* has helped you understand more about how we use your donations. You can also read more about our work in our 2019 annual report, now available on our website at cancerqld.org.au/about-us/our-annual-report