

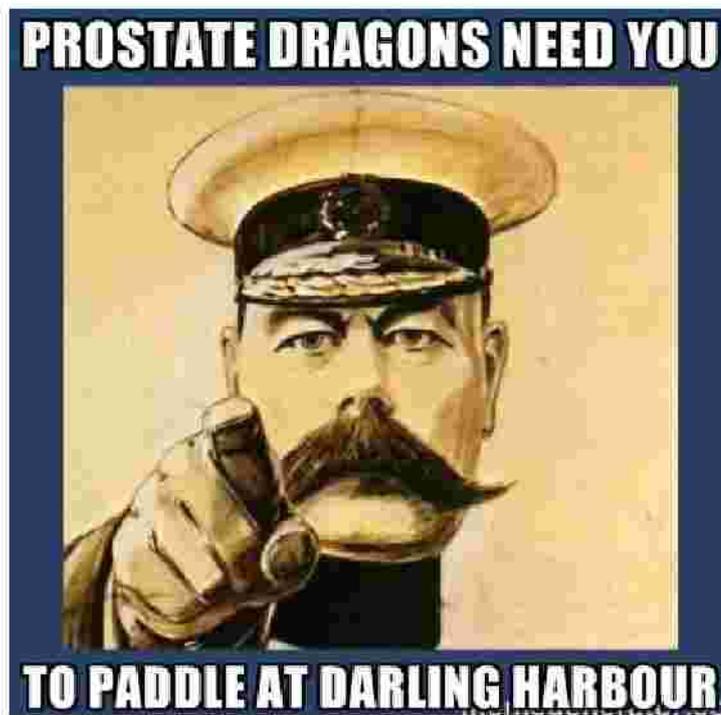


Below the Belt!

Vol. 12 No. 4

Sept – Nov, 2013.

Newsletter of The Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Inc.
(ABN No. 35 871 442 176)



That's Right

It's Dragon Boating Time Again

Darling Harbour on Sunday, October 27th. 2013

(See page 6 for full details!)

What's to Come

Group Meeting – Monday September 16th

John Thomas - Peer Educator from the Council of the Aging
"Mate to Mate: Connecting older men and HACC Services".

Group Meeting – Monday October 21st

Group Annual General Meeting
(See page 7 for details)

Group Meeting – Monday November 18th

Dr Mohan Arianayagam – (Urologist new to Penrith Area)
(To Be Confirmed)

All meetings :- Gather at 6-30pm for a 7-00pm start.

Speakers at Recent Meetings

Professor Mohamed Khadra



Professor Khadra spoke to us at our July Group Meeting. His topics included the recently established Nepean Uro-oncology Multidisciplinary Team, the newly installed Da Vinci Robotic Surgery machine. He also discussed incontinence.

The Multidisciplinary Team involving all urologists, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, pathologists, scientists, radiologists, nuclear imaging specialists, specialist nursing and allied health practitioners located in the Nepean Area, was started approximately 6 months ago. The Group meets weekly and discusses new or complex urological cases that arise through their respective practices. They discuss all treatment options and formulate a multidisciplinary management plan that each urologist can then discuss with their patient. The meetings help to expedite referrals and ensure patients receive access to all

multidisciplinary services to ensure best outcomes.

The Da Vinci Robotic Surgery Unit was installed in the Nepean Hospital as part of the massive upgrade of hospital facilities.

The Unit was officially opened in October 2012.

The Robotic Unit at Nepean is the first unit to be installed in a Public Hospital in N.S.W. and is available to patients from all over the state not just the Nepean area. Professor Khadra emphasised that there was no evidence that the Robotic unit gave a better outcome over other treatments for Prostate Cancer. It did however greatly reduce the time spent in hospital thereby enabling more patients to be treated. Blood loss was minimal and recovery from the surgery was quicker. Using the unit is also better ergonomically for the Surgeon. Surgical margins are also better.

Training to operate the unit must take place in the USA and takes ten days. The surgeon must undertake many hours of on line simulator training prior to commencing training on the unit. The first ten operations performed must be supervised by a qualified surgeon.

In his talk on incontinence Professor Khadra discussed the degrees of incontinence and how this varied greatly among all patients. This obviously affects the way that the patients cope with the problem. He again stressed the importance of Pelvic Floor exercises both before and after treatment. The AMI 'Atoms' Artificial Sphincter system for chronic incontinence was also discussed.

We have been privileged to have Professor Khadra speak to us on a number of occasions. His talks are always informative, entertaining and usually amusing.

Assoc Professor Anthony Lowe (C.E.O. of PCFA)



A/Professor Lowe addressed our group at the August Meeting. The main topic of his talk related to the drugs available for the treatment of advanced Prostate Cancer.

Docetaxel, also known by its brand name Taxotere, has been used to treat Advanced Prostate Cancer for about ten years.

It is used for men whose prostate cancer has spread beyond the prostate and which has become resistant to hormone therapy. This drug is very toxic and has a lot of side effects.

A newer drug, Cabazataxel, has been available for use in treating Advanced Prostate Cancer for about 18 months. It, like Docetaxel, is also toxic and has many side effects. This drug kills cancer cells and unfortunately also damages 'good' cells. It is listed on the PBS scheme and is available to all Advanced PC sufferers.

Recent Items from Newspapers

Major listed and unlisted companies have purchased 130 "leave passes" in the past month for male employees to take time off work for health checks. The \$10 Man Date Leave Passes were developed by the PA Research Foundation in Brisbane and are part of a drive to get men to talk about and take their health seriously as well as to raise revenue for men's health research. Major listed developer Mirvac is one of the biggest companies involved so far. Its director of construction for Queensland and Western Australia, Adam Moore, said a company giving free time to men was one of the best incentives for them to check their health. "The reality is that many of our workers, particularly in construction, work long or irregular hours. On the weekend, the time is often filled with family commitments, which does not leave a lot of time for men to make their health a priority, he said. "The Man Date Leave Pass initiative encourages our guys to take time out to make an appointment with their doctor, during work hours." Five Australian men die every hour from preventable causes with one man every three hours dying from prostate cancer. PA Research Foundation chief executive Damian Topp said the first step in trying reduce those numbers was getting men to undertake a regular health check.

Putting prostate problems in non-heterosexual men on the agenda:

Interest in prostate cancer has increased over the last decade, but when researchers went looking for material on gay men and this cancer, there was hardly anything to be found. There was an almost complete invisibility of gay men in the resources available, says Anthony Lowe, chief executive of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA), which commissioned the research. Some organisations had changed the word wife for partner', but any gay man could spot the tokenism. The imagery and language assumed a heterosexual norm.' We were a little embarrassed because we realised our resources are like that too' says Lowe. The PCFA has since been working to correct this and has set up support groups for gay and bisexual men in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane and is in the process of setting them up in other capital cities too. It is developing other initiatives, including a kit which should be launched in September. While the number of men who will benefit is not known, Lowe says a recent community survey by the PCFA showed 6 per cent of men identified as gay, 4 per cent identified as bisexual and 3 per cent as non-heterosexual.

Get regular cancer checks, Schultz tells all men:

Retiring Hume MP Alby Schultz admits to being a "tough old bugger". That assessment characterised his 25-year political career but also summed up his approach to perhaps his biggest challenge yet. Mr Schultz, 74, was diagnosed in May with inoperable liver and oesophageal cancer. It came just two months after doctors told him he had prostate cancer. The political veteran did not let illness stop him delivering his valedictory speech in Canberra last Tuesday. "I had leave from the Parliament for three weeks [duetotheaftereffectsof treatment] but both sides of politics wanted me to do the speech," he said. He is using his experience to advise all males over 40 to have regular cancer tests, especially prostate. "I can assure you, if you leave it too long, it is too late," Mr Schultz said.

Less angst in the sack for country men: study:

Men in regional areas are less likely to experience erectile dysfunction than those in cities, according to research published in the Medical Journal of Australia. The study of more than 100,000 NSW men over the age of 45 concluded men in inner regional areas had a 12 per cent lower risk of erectile dysfunction than those in major cities. The risk of erectile dysfunction for men in outer regional areas was 16 per cent lower than for men in major cities. Researcher Associate Professor David Smith of the Cancer Council of NSW, said the finding was surprising and unexplained. "It's quite a clear difference but why that might be is unclear," he said.

The researchers also found a man's risk of erectile dysfunction increased by 11.3 per cent for each year over the age of 45. Among men aged 45 to 54, 11 per cent had moderate or complete erectile dysfunction, while in 75 year olds, the proportion was 82 per cent.

Fish oil supplements increase prostate cancer risk, says study

Men who take fish oil supplements or eat fatty fish may be more likely to contract prostate cancer, an international study has found. The research reported a 71 per cent increased risk of prostate cancer among men who consume omega-3s, fatty acids regularly extolled for their health benefits. Lead author Alan Kristal, of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Centre in Seattle, said the study reinforced that nutritional supplements may be harmful. Scientists cannot explain the connection, but findings indicate omega-3s are involved in the formation of tumours. Cancer Council Australia chief executive Ian Olver said: "The reality is that if something is good for you, it doesn't mean that 10 times of it is better. It is unlikely someone would be diagnosed with a deficiency of fish oil. There is a view out there that extra vitamins and antioxidants are good for you. And people take more thinking that more is better." Published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, the findings confirm a 2011 study that linked high blood concentrations of DHA, an anti-inflammatory fatty acid, to more than double the risk of highgrade prostate cancer. "The findings suggest that these fatty acids are involved in prostate tumorigenesis and recommendations to increase long-chain omega-3 fatty acid intake, in particular through supplementation, should consider its potential risks," the study said.

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Hawkesbury Toy and Hobby Show

This is the third year in a row that our Group has operated an Awareness Stall at this event held at Clarendon. You will find mature men playing with their train sets. You will find men dressed in World War II uniforms (both the Allies and German). You will find stall holders plying their wares from Sydney Bus's to military memorabilia to models of trucks that you can ride on to vintage cars, to name but a few examples. In short there is a hobby for everyone. It is a great couple of days.

This year our position was outside in the sun and a great location under the roof. Our Group had a total of 6 men and 2 carer's. Over the two days we handed out almost 300 brochures, made up of 'Be a Man' and the 'Little Prick' brochures from the Hunter PSA. As in the past we have found that the 'Little Prick' brochures are received very well and certainly break the ice to start speaking to our customers about prostate cancer especially amongst the ladies.

As in the past the greater majority say that they had PSA test and DRE or knew of the tests, or comments that "you men are doing a great service handing out this stuff, but you have to tell the doctor's". This makes these events worthwhile!

There were some negative comments from two men about the refusal from their G. P's to conduct PSA tests. One man, 44 was advised that he should change his G. P. the other man at 54 found out that he had a PSA of 25 and was very angry. It was explained to them that the PCFA had developed guidelines for G. P's on PSA testing but that did not pacify these men.

As in the past Awareness Events we received unsolicited information about how one can get prostate cancer.

One man said "you can only get prostate cancer if you are gay". *(I shared this one with my wife and three children. They, like me were quite surprised!)*

Another man said "old blokes catch it off public toilet seats". *(My son raised a question about this. At what age does he officially become 'old' so that he knows when to stop using public toilet seats?)*

At a previous event one lady claimed that Prostate Cancer "was caused by metal zippers". *(I knew we should never have got rid of fly buttons!)*

We have learnt to not correct them and just say that the information is interesting.

www

Diarrhea...DiarrhoeaWhat is the correct spelling ?

I t should be "Dire Rear"

PROSTATE CANCER SURVIVORS

Join us at the

Dragons Abreast Australia

DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL



**Come and paddle
With
The Prostate Dragons
Proudly supported by
The Prostate Cancer
Foundation of
Australia**

**When: Sunday October 27,
2013**

Time: 8 am to approx. 3 pm

**Where: Darling Harbor,
Sydney**

Be part of our 6th celebration at this great event.

We invite all prostate cancer survivors or family members of survivors to come and have a great day in support of a wonderful cause.

At the same time bring awareness of prostate cancer to a wider community and let the world know we are just a bunch of normal people and still know how to enjoy life!

For further information contact:

Gary Clear Phone: 04 1766 1938

or

Alan Howard Phone: 04 1922 0858

email : prostatedragons@gmail.com

2013 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MONDAY, OCTOBER 17th

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, October 21, 2013, so here is an overview of what is involved and how you go about nominating for election to the Board of our Association .

Our Board has 10 members, with four of these members forming an Executive, These four members are President, Vice -President, Secretary (who is also the Public Officer) and the Treasurer. The other positions on the board are; Assistant Secretary, Librarian, Newsletter Editor and Committee Member (3 positions).

This year a number of Board Members have indicated that they will not be seeking re-election so we will require some 'new blood' to come forward.

If you want to re-nominate for the Board or nominate as a new member for the Board, you will need to fill out and sign the nomination form below, (or you may nominate in writing) and have two other members endorse and sign your nomination, which, when completed, will need to be handed to Alan Moran, our President or Ross Baker our Secretary no later than seven days before the date of the AGM . (i.e. Monday, October 14th, 2013)

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**NOMINATION FORM
For
ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF
NEPEAN / BLUE MOUNTAINS PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP INC.**

To The Secretary
Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Inc.,

I. Wish to nominate for election to the

position of On Board of the
Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Inc.

Signed.....

We endorse this nomination.

Name..... Signed.....

Name..... Signed.....

.....

A little anecdote to our recent BBQ at Bunnings,
We had a "Drive Through' customer.

Two 'tradies' pulled up to the back of the BBQ tent and bought a sausage sandwich.....
For their dog in the back of the ute! That was a first for us!

