March 2016

providing personalised emotional, practical and financial support and care to people affected by breast cancer

How your support helped in 2015

Reflecting on 2015, we want to share with you what was achieved thanks to the unwavering support of our community.

To ensure we could meet the ever growing needs of our clients, we appointed our fifth Breast Care Nurse who is dedicated to supporting women with metastatic (advanced) breast cancer. This has been a critical step for us as 2015 saw a 40% increase in the number of clients with metastatic (advanced) breast cancer. Every person has their own unique experience with their breast cancer and individual needs, and this new role is enabling us to provide very personalised and specific support for those faced with the challenges a diagnosis of metastatic (advanced) breast cancer brings.

The demand for counselling support continues to increase, and by year-end, our counsellors increased their support by 49%; this included home and hospital visits, family and couples counselling and over the phone counselling.

We were able to provide more dedicated online support to regional clients and those needing financial assistance through our new Client Liaison Officer, a role which is made possible thanks to the generosity of Steel Blue (meet Lucinda on page 5). 2015 also saw the creation of new specialised monthly Support Groups, including a new group for those with advanced breast cancer (based in the Midland area), a group for partners of women with breast cancer, and one for Mums with small children – bringing the total number of support groups held in 2015 to 102.

Statistics are always helpful to keep us on track but at the end of the day, it’s all about people. The people we help and the people who help us - a very sincere thank you to our loyal and generous supporters, and to every client who allows us to be part of their journey, it is an honour and privilege.

We continue to see increasing numbers of newly diagnosed clients needing our support, which we are determined to provide, free of charge, for every person in WA who needs our help. We couldn’t do this without you – and we are so grateful for your support.

Thank you, and warmest regards

Zoe McAlpine
CEO, Breast Cancer Care WA

These are just some of the 951 clients you helped support in 2015 we can’t thank you enough!

Last year, Breast Cancer Care WA provided support to 951 people going through breast cancer, a 15% increase on those supported in 2014.

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2016 is now in full swing and the Services Team are working hard to provide our clients with the best personalised support available.

Support Group changes

The times and dates of some support groups have now changed, please visit our website www.breastcancer.org.au to confirm your group. Also please note, the Southern River support group for early breast cancer has been re-located to Wilson and will be known as the South of the River Group.

Workshops for 2016

• Fear and uncertainty workshops help clients deal with anxiety, equip them with tools to assist them with their thoughts and empower them to make changes that will be better for them. Our next group is in March and is for women with secondary breast cancer. We have further groups scheduled in June and November.

• We will be running three workshops this year dealing with intimacy in our Many Shades of Intimacy series. The first was held in February and was designed for both partners. Led by Helena Green, a Clinical Sexologist, Counsellor and Breast Care Nurse, our next workshop will be on Intimacy after Mastectomy followed by the final workshop in the series on Intimacy and Self-Esteem.

• Linda Garett will be running three workshops this year using Art Therapy to help women connect their mind and body after breast cancer.

• A new series of workshops will be run by Jacqui Cairns looking at Resilience. The focus is on how to build resilience after going through breast cancer.

• Last year we collaborated with Recfishwest and held our first fly fishing and wellness weekend retreat. It was a wonderful success incorporating the benefits of fly fishing post breast cancer along with wellness activities and another retreat is planned for September.

Please feel free to contact us if you need support, would like more information or to book into any of our courses.

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<tr>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Intimacy workshops</td>
<td>May 19 – After Mastectomy</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:cathie@breastcancer.org.au">cathie@breastcancer.org.au</a></td>
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<td>Art Therapy workshops</td>
<td>March 18 – Body Tune</td>
<td>May 27 – Mind Over Matter</td>
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<td>Resilience workshops</td>
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<td>July 26 – Oct 25</td>
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<td>June 27-28 – Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fly Fishing and Wellness</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:lucinda@breastcancer.org.au">lucinda@breastcancer.org.au</a></td>
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Partner support groups

For many of our clients there is often another person in the shadows who is also struggling or suffering as a result of a breast cancer diagnosis. This may be a parent, sibling, friend or partner. The social supports that people have make such a significant impact on women’s experience of their breast cancer. As a counsellor I’ve come to understand the importance of family and friends who support these women. This is why we too want to be able to contribute to that support network, and not just for the women but for the partners of our clients too.

When your partner is diagnosed with breast cancer “...you don’t admit you’re devastated...you focus on being a tough, tower of strength. You support the woman you love and don’t show, or worry about your feelings. This is how guys are supposed to act, right?” (Australian government, Cancer Australia website).

For many people, having their partner diagnosed with breast cancer can cause enormous stress. We know many men will put their feelings aside as they focus their efforts on trying to best support their partner. Often in doing this they will neglect to care for themselves, they can become withdrawn from family and friends and end up quite isolated. We are very aware of the difficulties many men will face and want to be able to bring them out of the shadows, adding to their social support and provide a respectful non-judgmental space where they can come and share their experience.

Last year we started our support group for partners of women with breast cancer at our Cottesloe office. This group is facilitated by myself and registered psychologist Kevin Hanavan who has a great breadth of experience in facilitating groups for men. What has been striking about this group is the diversity of experience and wisdom shared. It has also been very moving to watch men support one another in an atmosphere that is of mutual regard and acceptance. We encourage anyone whose partner has been diagnosed with breast cancer to come along and be a part of this great group.

For more information contact: Aileen McCaul Aileen@breastcancer.org.au or call 9324 3703
Art Therapy

The purpose of art therapy is to help you make essential connections between parts of yourself and your life experiences that feel disconnected or out of balance.

Often when we experience challenging and traumatic events in our life, such as breast cancer, our mind becomes disconnected from our body, mental activities (such as thoughts, ideas, concerns, beliefs) can be overwhelming, our relationships begin to suffer and our sense of who we are in the world has changed.

The good news is that you can benefit greatly by expressing yourself creatively through artmaking. Some of the valuable benefits to you can be:

- A greater sense of self-awareness – physically, mentally, emotionally and socially
- Gaining insight, meaning and purpose in personal experiences
- Integrating left and right hemispheres of the brain (logical vs intuitive)
- Understanding and improvement of relationships through empathic resonance
- Profound revelations
- A deeper sense of peace, harmony and wellbeing
- A feeling of belonging, stability and grounded-ness
- Improved flexibility and adaptability
- A lighter heart and sense of playfulness
- Releasing the inner artist and the creation of a piece of artwork

Optimal care pathway for women with breast cancer

The care pathway for anyone diagnosed with cancer and undergoing treatment can be challenging; it is often complex and confusing for the person and their family, and usually involves a number of health care teams working across the public and private systems.

We receive a lot of enquiries about optimal timeframes for various phases of care throughout the treatment trajectory.

Clients often ask, for example, whether waiting four weeks to start chemotherapy after surgery is usual and if this will affect the treatment outcome, in terms of reducing the risk of the cancer recurring.

The need for a concise, easy to understand, evidence based cancer care pathway is vital in promoting a consistent model of care that can be delivered in a timely, coordinated fashion, hopefully leading to an improved patient experience and care outcomes.

The optimal care pathway for women with breast cancer has been developed to improve cancer care by ‘mapping the cancer pathway’ and was authorised and published by the Victorian Government in December 2015.

These pathways can be used by health care professionals and organisations to reflect on their current service provision and identify gaps in care which can be improved upon. It is also a very informative tool for anyone diagnosed with breast cancer, as they can gain an understanding of the standards of cancer care that they ought to expect, no matter where they are being treated.

People diagnosed with breast cancer do need to realise that treatment plans are individualised and can vary for many reasons.

The full report is lengthy, but a two page reference guide and an information sheet on what to expect during your breast cancer treatment are available. These cover initial investigations and referral, diagnosis and staging, treatment, after treatment period, if cancer returns, living with cancer and questions of cost. A summary of recommended timeframes which covers all aspects of breast cancer care from initial signs and symptoms through to surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and endocrine treatment is in the full report.

A brief synopsis of the recommended timeframes are:

- **Signs & symptoms** – someone with possible signs of a breast cancer should be seen by their GP within two weeks
- **Assessments by a GP** – tests ideally should be organized within two weeks of seeing a GP
- **Initial referral** – surgical review of someone with a diagnosed cancer or suspicious features ideally should take place within two weeks.
- **Multidisciplinary team meeting** – results of all pertinent tests/diagnostic studies should be available for this meeting
- **Surgery** – breast surgery should ideally take place within one month of the decision that surgery is necessary – this is for invasive breast cancer

- **Chemotherapy and systemic therapy** – chemotherapy ideally should begin within four weeks of surgery. Chemotherapy prior to surgery (neoadjuvant) should be commenced as soon as possible
- **Radiation therapy** – radiation therapy ideally should commence with eight weeks of surgery (for people who do not require chemotherapy)
- For people undergoing chemotherapy treatment, then radiation ideally should start 3-4 weeks after chemotherapy has ceased

These timeframes provide interesting reading for clients who have already started their breast cancer treatment pathway, however it is important to understand that patient care does not always happen in a linear fashion and is dependent upon individual situations.

If you have any questions about any of your proposed treatment and management plan, it is vital that you discuss them with your treating team as soon as possible.

**References**

- look under more information – Cancer Council Victoria – Optimal care pathways
- Clinical OCPs (optimal care pathways) – Breast cancer and quick reference guide
- Consumer OCPs – ‘what to expect’ – Breast cancer
“How would you cope with eight children, a breast cancer diagnosis and your husband is made redundant?”

This was the confronting reality facing mum of eight Salena when she discovered the tennis ball sized lump in her breast.

“I’ll never forget that horrible morning in the shower when I found a lump the size of a tennis ball under my arm. It had suddenly popped out of nowhere. It was so big I could hold it in the palm of my hand. No. Please no.”

With no income and a long recovery ahead, donations from generous people like you in the local community ensured Breast Cancer Care WA could be the safety net her family needed for IMMEDIATE and PRACTICAL support.

Last year 951 families just like Salena’s relied on donations to pay the rent, put food on the table, provide babysitters, and seek counselling and support. Another 268 relied on our team of five dedicated breast care nurses to support them in their homes after surgery and during chemo to ensure they had the care they needed.

“The team at Breast Cancer Care WA were amazing. Counsellor Shelley and Breast Care Nurse Moira visited my home and helped me through the times I felt most alone. Yes, these beautiful ladies had a huge impact on my recovery. I just hope others in my situation get to experience the same.

When Kenneth lost his job we had to move house and Moira helped us find solutions financially through Breast Cancer Care WA charity partners. We received financial support for a full 6 months which included rent, books and uniforms for the kids’, utility bills taken care of to keep services connected, food and petrol vouchers and my first prosthesis and bra.

Kenneth and I were in tears a lot of the time just wondering how we were going to get through it all. We will never forget what Moira and Breast Cancer Care WA did.”

All our services are funded entirely through donations from generous people like you and provided free of charge to anyone in need who has breast cancer.

For a mum like Salena, your gift today would provide much needed relief during a time that is as tough as it gets...

$20 would provide a light lunch for a family of eight.

OR

$200 would cover a utility bill to keep a family cool during these hot summer days.

This year, the demand is higher than ever and we are at capacity.

No person should have to face breast cancer alone and the immediate and practical support we are able to give families like Salena’s is limited.

“I don’t know what we would have done or where we would have turned if it wasn’t for Breast Cancer Care WA. I will never forget them.”

And in turn, we will never forget who made it all possible. Generous people like you in our community. If able, please consider making a gift to Breast Cancer Care WA using one of the easy options listed here.

To support mum’s like, please consider a donation today to Breast Cancer Care WA.

Your donation today will do so much to help us support these very deserving women, men and their loved ones when they really need it most.

Please choose from one of two easy donation methods below.

1. Phone (08) 9324 3703.
2. Donate Online: Go to www.breastcancer.org.au and make your donation quickly and securely via our website.
What is Zen tangling?

Zentangling is a way to create structured designs through drawing various patterns and is a technique our Counsellors use in Therapy Groups. Using the standard format of a 3.5-inch square title, the artist creates a structured pattern according to his or her whim following a basic set of guidelines. No technology, special materials, or educational background are necessary. The process may look intricate, but it's a great way to help our clients to relax, create inner focus and self-awareness.

How to Zen Tangle:
1) Start with a plain white paper 3.5” square
2) Lightly draw a ‘string’ which is a curved line that will lend structure to your design
3) Start creating a pattern (tangles) along the contours of your string. Draw whatever pattern comes to you; there is no right or wrong
4) Things to note: Tangles should be simple shapes. Don’t erase mistakes. Focus intently on your work.

Introducing your new breast friend: Q&A with Lucinda Watts

- Name: Lucinda Watts
- Age: 26
- Role: Client Liaison Officer at Breast Cancer Care WA
- Do you have a personal connection to breast cancer? My aunty went through breast cancer three years ago. After a routine mammogram, she discovered a lump and followed up with her doctor. Luckily, they caught it early and she made a full recovery.
- What does your role entail? My role stretches across three main areas, including; managing our online support community, www.breastcancerclick.com.au, financial assistance for Breast Cancer Care WA clients and operating our new Triage system. This allows us to effectively manage the high volume of incoming clients and connect them with our services including counsellors and breast care nurses.
- What is the most rewarding part of the job? Being able to help people when they are facing one of the most difficult things a person can go through.
- Take us through a normal day for you at Breast Cancer Care WA. It varies so much day-to-day. In the morning I’ll support clients on The Click and then manage any new enquires. Usually throughout the day I could be doing anything from researching a local tailor for women with Lymphoedema to investigating ambulance cover options for a client.
- How will your new role benefit Western Australians affected by Breast Cancer? Since 2014, we’ve seen a 27% increase in the number of clients we support and this puts added pressure on our services team. Thanks to the generous support from Steel Blue, my newly created role ensures we continue to meet this increasing demand and that all clients are given the best support possible, at no cost to them.
- What do you see as one of the biggest issues impacting Western Australians affected by Breast Cancer? Definitely a lack of awareness of the support available. Over 1,500 people will be diagnosed with breast cancer in WA this year and our goal is to ensure everyone who needs our support, knows we exist.

Lucinda’s role is made possible thanks to the generously of Steel Blue.
The Fundraising Team are excited to be back in the swing of things for 2016. We’ve already received some great support from the community through different fundraising activities and are excited for you to get involved through the year. If you would like to host your own fundraiser, whether is a head shave, bake sale, fun run or something completely different, get in touch with us on 9324 3703 or visit www.breastcancer.org.au for more details.

Sisterly support

Lee, a 37-year-old mum of three was diagnosed with breast cancer late last year when a lump was discovered in one of her lymph nodes. When her twin sister Kylie found out, she decided to lose her locks and fundraise for Breast Cancer Care WA to show her support.

“We were devastated. Lee is the most precious person in my life. We have been by each other’s side since day one and our bond is incredibly strong,” said Kylie.

Kylie has raised $12,570 in total by shaving her hair at her gym, Train Transform in Port Headland. She kept it a secret from Lee and then surprised her with a newly shaved head at her second round of Chemo in Perth!

“We raised over $5,000 in just 24 hours which was truly remarkable. I can’t thank the community enough for getting behind me and supporting this worthy cause.”

“Lee has always had beautiful long hair and losing it is one of the toughest parts of the breast cancer experience. No matter what happens in life we are always there for each other so if she has to lose her hair, this is the least I can do.”

Upcoming Events

After the amazing success of last year’s event, the Breastfed Breast Cancer Care WA fundraiser returns to The Standard.

Ladies and Gents, gather your mum, sister or lady friend for an afternoon of pink, parasols and rosé at The Standard’s ‘Breastfed’ garden party fundraiser for Breast Cancer Care WA. Come dressed in your finest pink for an afternoon of fun and frivolity in The Standard Wine Garden, with wine connoisseurs showcasing a range of their rosé wares from around the globe while you graze on a selection of The Standard’s applauded menu.

Where: The Standard, 28 Roe Street Northbridge, WA 6003
Visit www.thestandardperth.com.au or call 9228 1331 to purchase tickets.
Upcoming Events

You are invited to take a step back into the roaring twenties and join us for the 13th annual Long Table Lunch.

The Long Table Lunch is Breast Cancer Care WA signature fundraising event. Guests will be treated to the ultimate luncheon; a five course menu delivered by top WA chefs, with produce of the highest quality and matched with, award winning wines. There will be a live and silent auction, spot prizes, lucky dips, live music and much more.

The day will celebrate the strength and resilience of those affected by breast cancer and raise much needed funds, so Breast Cancer Care WA can provide free personalised emotional, practical and financial support to everyone who needs our help.

WHEN: Sunday April 3
WHERE: Claremont Showground

You can purchase your ticket via www.breastcancer.org.au or phone the office on 9324 3703

HBF Run for a Reason
Sunday, 22 May 2016

If you’d like to improve your fitness, get active and support people affected by breast cancer then why not sign up for this year’s HBF Run for a Reason for Breast Cancer Care WA?

Whether you’re walking, running, jogging or skipping to the finish line, we will be cheering for you every step of the way.

All the funds you raise will allow us to continue providing vital support services to women, men and families affected by breast cancer.

For more information and to register visit www.hbfrun.com.au
Low Fat Dairy to Combat Osteoporosis

Dairy is one of the five components that form the guide to healthy eating, providing a valuable source of calcium and protein. Following a breast cancer diagnosis and treatment a woman may be thrown into early onset menopause, putting her at risk of developing osteoporosis. In order to protect your bones, getting enough calcium and Vitamin D are important to minimise bone loss. Unfortunately, some women try eliminating dairy from their diet during the menopause in an attempt to avoid gaining weight.

Scientific studies have produced inconsistent and conflicting results regarding a link between dairy and breast cancer, however there is some evidence to support a link between saturated fat intake and breast cancer. When choosing your dairy, try selecting reduced or low fat varieties of milk, yoghurt and cheese rather than ‘No Fat’ because fat soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K need an amount of dietary fat to be absorbed by the body.

Daily physical activity combined with adequate dietary intakes of nutrients is required as part of a lifestyle approach to weight loss but also to maintain muscle mass, bone health and strength as we grow and age. It’s important to consume dairy throughout the lifecycle to support the musculoskeletal system and to minimise risk of developing osteoporosis. Bone mineral density peaks at around age 30, having an impact on osteoporosis risk into our 50s.

If an allergy or intolerance is present a dairy alternative such as lactose-free milk, rice milk or coconut yoghurt can be used. Ensure the product is enriched with calcium, vitamin D and iron to maximise your nutritional status.

Try a Super Smoothie

This delicious, well balanced smoothie contains vitamins, antioxidants, minerals, protein, calcium, omega 3 & 6, fibre, and probiotics for digestive health. However, feel free to modify the components according to taste. For instance, replace the orange with banana if you feel it is more palatable and easier to prepare, or use fresh berries if you prefer drinks that aren’t too cold. Blend well for best result and a fast, easy clean-up!

Ingredients:
1 Orange
or 1 Banana
1 Apple
3 tablespoons mixed frozen or fresh berries
1/2 cup Low fat milk
4 tablespoons low fat natural yoghurt
1 teaspoon chia seeds optional
2 tablespoons almonds

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