Dear Supporter,

A diagnosis of breast cancer is terrible enough, but when it returns, sometimes years later, it is devastating.

Very soon, Breast Cancer Care WA will be welcoming a much needed advanced Breast Nurse to our team... and they simply can’t come soon enough. Their specialist skills will be dedicated solely to support women and men, whose breast cancer has spread and require specific care. This will make a big difference to the way we can care for clients like Lisa.

Lisa was first told the shocking news that she had breast cancer in 2000 when she was just 35. Suddenly her life was turned upside down. She knew nothing about breast cancer or where to turn for help. That was before Breast Cancer Care WA had been created for women just like her. Thanks to your generosity we have grown to be able to support hundreds of women and men in WA who are living with breast cancer. But there are still many more who need our help.

Lisa went into battle with surgery, six weeks of gruelling radiation therapy and six months of chemotherapy, backed up by five years of hormone suppression medication, and all the ups and down that go with it.

After she received the ‘all clear’ Lisa made the decision to celebrate life and live it with everything she had, setting off on a bucket list world tour. For 12 years she lived a happy, action filled life, but then came the worst possible news. The cancer was back and it had spread to her bones. This time she wasn’t going to get better. By then she had heard about Breast Cancer Care WA. At last she had someone to talk to who knew what she was going through, someone who could explain the things that were so hard to understand.

Breast care nurses Moira and Denise are now the friends who are always there for Lisa, giving her the support and specialist advice for as long as she needs it.

In spite of everything she's going through Lisa says she feels lucky.

“If I have to be on this journey I’m so glad that I have Breast Cancer Care WA at my side.”

Since she first called us three years ago, Lisa has become a special part of the Breast Cancer Care WA circle of friends. Not only has she benefited from access to expert information, counselling and support, but she's also helped give support to other women going through what she's had to face.

Being able to talk to a breast nurse or counsellor has really made a difference to Lisa as she says,
"When talking to family and friends, you try to protect them and you don’t always say what’s really on your mind.”

The funding we receive for our breast cancer nurses covers just the tip of the iceberg. Your donations are still urgently needed to help cover the cost of counselling and support groups, as well as giving vital financial support to people unable to work while they are recovering from surgery, going through therapy or have had to stop work while they care for someone with breast cancer. Sometimes just a day out for a family going through a tough time can make the world of difference.

Right now only half the people who are diagnosed with breast cancer in WA know we’re here to help so it’s vitally important to spread the ‘Be Breast Aware’ message.

Just recently, I was distressed to hear from Kathy, a newly diagnosed lady, saying she didn’t know we previously existed.

We need to do so much more more. We need to spread the word to the people who still don’t know that we’re here so they can have access to all the support and information they need, when they need us most.

You could help right now with a donation,

- $30 could help pay a phone bill to help keep regional families in touch
- $75 would help with a couple of hours house cleaning for someone recovering from surgery who can’t lift anything heavier than a loaf of bread
- $80 could treat someone to a pamper day to help them relax and re-energise during and after treatment
- $150 could cover the cost of 1000 brochures which could be distributed to GPs for their patients

We urgently need to reach out to the hundreds of women and men desperately in need of support. As more and more women and men come to us for help, the more we need your donations. There are so many ways that you can help those living with breast cancer so please give generously.

With my sincere thanks

Zoe McAlpine
Chief Executive Officer