

Welcome...

Welcome to the December edition of the YCS Matters for 2015.

The last edition for 2015 is a bumper one! With the Youth Summit and the inaugural International AYA Oncology Congress being held earlier this month, please see an overview and highlights together with photos which capture the spirit of both events.

Since September, we have been progressing a range of key projects on clinical trials, fertility preservation, validating the distress thermometer and launching the new Nursing Mentorship Research Program. Earlier this month, we released the Survivorship Report, which provides the current evidence, Australian context and recommendations for effective survivorship care for the AYA population. Articles on all these topics are included in this edition.

Find out more about the key successes and news from each jurisdiction through the Youth Cancer Service Updates. News includes outreach visits to regional NSW locations, expansion of the secondary consultation service in Victoria, new starters and a successful YCS Study Day held in Perth.

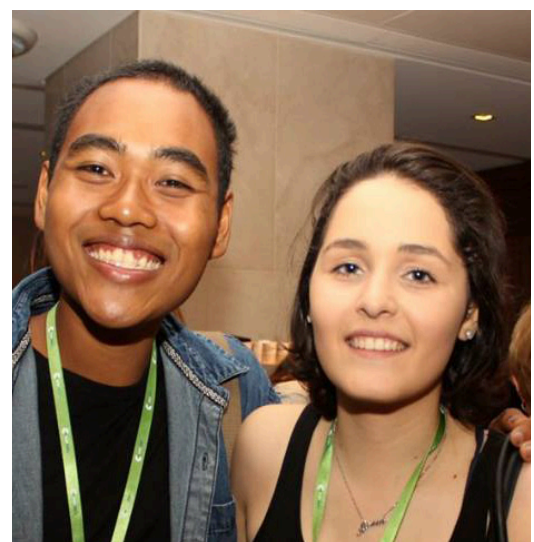
There is a new look YCS team at CanTeen with the departure of Janine MacDonald and Alex Crowley in October and November. We'd like to acknowledge their significant contribution and efforts – we wish them well for the future.

The YCS team is:

- Pandora Patterson – General Manager (Research & YCS)
- Hannah Baird – National Program Manager
- Liz King – Social Policy & Professional Development Manager
- Allison Warr – Data Manager
- Natalie Meti – Youth Leadership Coordinator
- Thomas Brown – Project Officer

It was fantastic to see so many of you recently at the Summit and Congress in Sydney, providing a chance to meet new people working in the AYA oncology field and catch-up with existing colleagues. We wish you Seasons Greetings and a well deserved summer holiday and look forward to seeing you in January.

The YCS National Team



Top: AYA Congress Bottom: Youth Summit attendees

Youth Summit - an amazing success

CanTeen's first ever Youth Cancer Summit kicked off in Sydney on 1 December!



2015 Youth Cancer Summit attendees

This two day event was attended by 110 young patients, survivors, partners, siblings and parents, with presentations by leading international youth cancer experts A/Professor Brad Zebrack, School of Social Work, University of Michigan, Dr Leonard Sender, oncologist from the Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer, UC Irvine, California and Nurse Consultant, Sue Morgan, from the UK's Teenage Cancer Trust based in Leeds.

Luke Ryan, a two time cancer survivor was terrific in emceeing the event, bringing a blend of professionalism and humour to the job. The Organising Committee of patients, partners, parents and cancer charities met for about 18 months to plan and prepare for the event did an extraordinary job with a program including a broad range of topics and something for everyone.



Peter Orchard, Dr Leonard Sender and A/Prof Brad Zebrack

Chair of the Committee, 23 year old Keifer King from WA welcomed delegates to the event, together with National President and Chair of CanTeen's Members Advisory Council Benji Killorn and CanTeen CEO Peter Orchard.

Song Division kicked off proceedings with a fun ice-breaker session for delegates to develop a Summit theme song, which was filmed - a video should be available shortly!

There were informative presentations from medical experts, Dr Michael Osborn from the Youth Cancer Service SA/NT on an overview of cancer in the AYA population in Australia and from Dr Leonard Sender on finding reliable health information on cancer in the digital era. Other topics during the Summit included family communication during cancer treatment, fertility, nutrition and cancer, body image, practical support and the role of exercise during treatment and in survivorship. A powerful session on palliative care led by Dr Rachel Hughes (YCS WA) and Ilana Berger (YCS Vic/Tas) debunked the myths and included a compelling and moving patient story.

Cheeky Food Group did a live cooking demo on stage, where there were many keen volunteers checking the results and quality!

The Summit also had a number of closed sessions for guys, girls, siblings/partners and parents where challenging issues were discussed such as sexuality, clinical trials and dealing with grief and emotions.

A panel session chaired by CanTeen's General Manager of Divisions, John Friedsam, was a real highlight and wrapped up the event with a discussion focused on life after cancer and the many challenges survivorship brings.



The panel included different perspectives including 24 year old patient Mark Haseloff (Chair of the YCS National Youth Advisory Group), haematologist / oncologist Dr Michael Osborn, A/Prof Brad Zebrack and Sue Morgan.

To close the Summit, Luke Ryan gave a very funny presentation about his cancer experiences including great anecdotes about having to give a sperm sample, the awkward silence that came when his teacher told him off for having a shaved head (and he said it was because he had cancer) and how he has a pretty good answer to that overused job interview question: 'tell us about a time when you overcame adversity'.

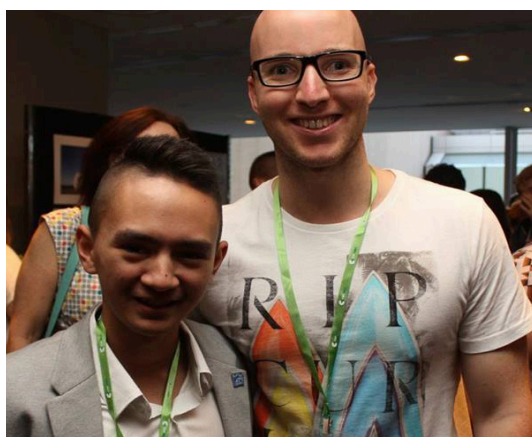
Song Division kicked off the Summit Party for young people and finished with a surprise performance from 2012 X Factor winner, Samantha Jade. Simultaneously CanTeen hosted a dinner in Darling Harbour for the parents of cancer patients/survivors.



Samantha Jade (middle) with some Youth Summit attendees

One attendee shared his feedback *"I enjoyed hearing more about what was going on internationally to help youth cancer patients around the world. Meeting truly exceptional people in their field as well as the opportunity to meet and interact with others from across Australia."*

And so two extraordinary and informative days on youth cancer came to a close - the sharing of laughter, music and tears and an important opportunity to share and connect with othoerothers on the same path.



Youth Summit attendees enjoyed two days of activities and presentations



Adolescent and Young Adult Congress

It's a wrap!

CanTeen held the International Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology Congress in Sydney from 3-5 December. More than 250 delegates from the USA, Canada, UK, Europe, New Zealand and across Australia attended this multi-disciplinary Congress, held for the first time in Australia. It was an extraordinary three days of stimulating presentations, informative research and sharing of ideas. The active participation of young people in co-Chairing sessions and presenting their stories and work ensured a balance of 'the science' and 'the personal'.

A couple of our delegates shared their views:

"What a fabulous conference. Congratulations to all involved in pulling it together"

"I took in a great deal of information and was very impressed by many of the presenters – the fact that so many are passionate about improving outcomes for young people was very obvious and nice to see. Everything was so well organised and I really enjoyed the Congress."

The Congress focused on three key themes of adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer care - best practice and emerging medical treatments, psychological and emotional support as well as survivorship.



Dr Antoinette Anazodo, Adolescent Oncologist and Lead Clinician of the NSW/ACT Youth Cancer Service, chaired the Scientific Organising Committee with Associate Professor Pandora Patterson, CanTeen's General Manager of Research and Youth Cancer Services, as Deputy Chair. Special thanks go to this Committee of specialists from around Australia, New Zealand,

the US and the UK, who delivered a highly engaging program which included numerous worldwide leaders in the field of AYA oncology and psychosocial support.

International keynote speakers were:

- A/Professor Brad Zebrack, Associate Professor at University of Michigan School of Social Work
- A/Professor Brandon Hayes-Lattin, Associate Professor of Medicine at the Division of Haematology and Medical Oncology, Oregon Health and Science University
- Ms Sue Morgan, Teenage Cancer Trust Nurse Consultant
- Dr Dan Stark, Senior Lecturer and Honorary Consultant in Medical Oncology at Leeds University; and
- Dr Norma D'Agostino, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto.

Many leading international and Australian clinicians and researchers, AYA advocates and young people also presented.

The Congress was formally opened by The Hon Jillian Skinner MP, NSW Minister for Health, followed by 23 year-old cancer survivor Keifer King providing an overview of the Australian Youth Cancer Summit, also hosted by CanTeen, which had been held over the previous two days. On Day 2, the Federal Minister for Health, Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Sport, The Hon Sussan Ley MP, gave an address where she praised the Youth Cancer Services for their work in treating and supporting young cancer patients, acknowledging their unique role within the oncology sector. The Minister credited CanTeen's key role in facilitating national consistency, providing professional development opportunities for the YCS workforce and in delivering a strategic and integrated approach to AYA oncology.

Themes during the Congress included models of care, psychosocial support, oncofertility, adolescent health, new frontiers in cancer research, medical treatments, lifestyle interventions, online support, supportive care, palliative care and survivorship.



The social highlight of the Congress was the Dinner Cruise on the MV Epicure on beautiful Sydney Harbour, which was especially impressive for the international delegates.

The Congress' final session was a panel Q&A with leading international and Australian speakers, looking at issues such as international collaboration in the AYA oncology field and our role in supporting developing countries in improving cancer treatment and care for this age group.

For those who attended an evaluation form has been emailed for you to complete. We'd really value your feedback and perspective to include in planning any future events.

Looking ahead, a Global Accord on adolescent and young adult cancer has been formed between CanTeen, the Teenage Cancer Trust and Teen Cancer America.

These organisations will rotate hosting an international AYA Oncology Congress with the first to be held in Edinburgh in December 2016.



Peter Orchard, Federal Health Minister Sussan Ley, MP, Dr Antionette Anazado, Mark Haseloff and Keifer King

Introducing Liz King

Liz King was recently appointed as the Social Policy and Professional Development Manager for the YCSs following on from her role as Evaluation Manager of CanTeen's services. Liz has over 15 years experience working in strategic research and evaluation roles across national, state and non-government health settings. Prior to CanTeen, Liz managed the lung cancer program at Cancer Australia, which focused on building the evidence base to support clinical best practice, increasing support for health professionals and improving data and reporting for lung cancer. Liz has also managed strategic research related to various social policy initiatives, including increasing access to organ donation, research regarding young adult perceptions of alcohol advertising in the context of the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code Scheme and road safety research and policy.



2016 Scholarships

The 2016 YCS scholarships for the Graduate Certificate in Adolescent Health & Welfare (Oncology Stream) at the University of Melbourne have been awarded. Ten scholarships of \$5,000 each were awarded to YCS staff and others from across the country. This is the third year the scholarships have been awarded during Phase 2 and the recipients represent a good cross section of disciplines and jurisdictions. It is great to be able to continue this support amongst the YCS teams and the additional expertise gained amongst the participants of the Graduate Certificate in Adolescent Health and Wellbeing.

Congratulations to the 2016 recipients from SA, NT, WA, NSW and Queensland. And well done to the recipients of the 2015 scholarships who have completed the Graduate Certificate this year.

Clinical trials update

In the context of the significant barriers that Australian AYA cancer patients experience accessing new world-class treatments through clinical trials, a proposal was recently submitted to the Department of Health that outlined a nationally coordinated and strategic approach to improving AYA cancer patient access to clinical trials. Thanks to those of you who provided input on this proposal.

The objective of the proposal is to improve outcomes for AYA cancer patients by increasing their participation in high quality clinical trial research, via a focus on increasing access to new priority - driven research and currently available clinical trials that are relevant to the Australian AYA cancer population. In consultation with relevant clinicians and academics working within clinical trials, the approach has focused on addressing key structural, funding, data and capacity issues, including:

1. The establishment of strong national and international AYA clinical trial collaborations;
2. Establishment and maintenance of research infrastructure;
3. Identification and funding of AYA research priorities; and
4. Supporting and building the clinical trial research workforce.

The proposal outlines a five year funding timeframe, based on the establishment of demonstration projects that focus on high lethality cancers experienced by AYA cancer patients.

New Report released on Survivorship Care for Adolescent and Young Adult population

CanTeen was delighted to release a new Report at the recent Congress in Sydney. *Exploring Survivorship Care for Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Survivors in Australia* reviews the Australian and international literature on survivorship, includes insights from 35 key informant interviews with health professionals, young cancer patients and parents, outcomes from a focus group with young cancer patients and the findings of an online survey. The Report articulates the challenges for patients and their families at the end of treatment and provides an overview of current survivorship care in Australia including existing frameworks. Issues such as medical late effects, ongoing psychosocial care, re-engagement with life, fertility, research and the important role of primary care are identified.

There are eight recommendations for action including the development of an integrated national AYA survivorship pathway, the need for improved data collection, developing a new survivorship guidance, e-health technology and ongoing advocacy.

The results were discussed with the National Youth Advisory Group at their November meeting, with members to take the findings back to their local Youth Advisory Groups. Consultation about priorities and next steps will take place with the Youth Cancer Services Leadership Group (Lead Clinicians and Service Managers) and Strategic Advisory Group in early 2016.

Copies of the Report are available by emailing a request to thomas.brown@canteen.org.au



Validating a psychosocial screening tool for youth cancer patients

The Distress Thermometer project is continuing in New South Wales, ACT, South Australia and Northern Territory and recently commenced in Queensland. To date, we have a total of 27 returned surveys and 9 non-participation forms (people unable or unwilling to participate in the research).

The surveys received so far are from the following hospitals in New South Wales: Calvary Mater (7 surveys) Prince of Wales (5), John Hunter (4), Westmead Adults (1), Sydney Children's (1). In South Australia: Royal Adelaide (4), Women's and Children's Hospital Adelaide (1). In ACT: Canberra Hospital (3). In Queensland: Princess Alexandra (1).

Part of the study includes an opt-in telephone interview conducted 6-8 weeks after the initial paper survey, in order to ascertain whether the administration of the Distress Thermometer and Problem Checklist is meeting the needs of AYAs and generating appropriate referrals. To date the follow-up telephone interviews have been conducted with eight people, with plans to contact more young people as the study progresses.

Another important aspect in validating the Distress Thermometer is gathering feedback from professionals as to the use of the tool and its place within assessment and care planning. The Distress Thermometer Healthcare Professionals survey has been rolled out in NSW, SA, ACT, NT and QLD. To date we have received 13 surveys and we will continue to roll the survey out to the remaining states over the next few months. If you are from one of these states or territories and haven't participated yet but you would like to participate, please email the research team (research.team@canteen.org.au).

A paper outlining the protocol for the Distress Thermometer Validation Project was published by the journal, Clinical Oncology in Adolescents and Young Adults, in July this year. A copy of the article can be accessed here: [validation-of-the-distress-thermometer-for-use-among-adolescents-and-young-adults](#)

Finally, the recent Congress provided a great opportunity for CanTeen's international partners on the DT project to meet and present on the exciting research being conducted internationally in the area of distress screening for AYAs with cancer. On the Friday of the Congress Associate Professor Pandora Patterson, Associate Professor Brad Zebrack, Dr Dan Stark, and Dr Norma D'Agostino presented on their respective distress screening research within a plenary session. Having all our international collaborators together

YCS Nurse and Clinical Innovation Mentor Program

CanTeen is collaborating with the School of Nursing (Cancer Nursing Research Unit) at the University of Sydney to deliver this Program, which commenced in November 2015 with 16 Youth Cancer Service nurses taking part. Its overarching aim is to provide YCS nurses with the research skills to enable them to contribute to developing new knowledge in youth cancer care, and to undertake relevant evaluation and research projects to communicate their findings. Specific aims of this workforce development initiative include a focus to:

- Establish cohesive national goals for youth cancer nursing in Australia
- Commence development of a competency framework for YCS nurses drawing on the EdCaN Framework
- Build expertise in youth cancer nursing research and evaluation
- Increase the visibility and knowledge of the nursing contribution to YCS
- Establish the YCS nurse role in mentoring and succession planning.



Professor Kate White

Professor Kate White is leading this Program which will run for nine months.

The Program consists of three face to face workshops and a series of six webcasts between November 2015 and July 2016. The first of these workshops took place on 24th November and was well received.

continued overleaf...

Consultation with course participants has assisted in the refinement of program content priorities, with a focus on both research skills and professional development, outlined below.

Research Skills	Professional Development
Information management skills	Applying for scholarships and grants
Integrative and systematic review research strategies	Career planning – navigating academia
Critical appraisal skills	Abstracts and publication preparation
Audit and evaluation research methodologies	Mentoring and success planning
Patient reported outcomes and nurse sensitive outcome measures	Identifying research mentors and establishing research collaborations
Developing methodologies	Individual or group research projects
Ethics procedures	
Data management	

Each participant has identified their learning goals and been offered the opportunity to undertake a research project either individually or, where there are shared topics of interest, as a group. An evaluation will be conducted that captures skills development including confidence in undertaking research.

Participants of the program included eight nurses from NSW/ACT, three from Vic/Tas, three from Qld and two from WA. This program provides a great opportunity to harness the enthusiasm and interest of these nurses in continuing their professional development in the important area of research.

National advocacy to reimburse fertility preservation costs

Dr Antoinette Anazodo in collaboration with CanTeen are together championing a process to have new Oncofertility Medicare item numbers incorporated into Australia's Medicare health system. Development of these new Medicare item numbers, will for the first time in Australia, enable cancer patients to have equitable access to fertility preservation services before starting their cancer treatment with the hope and choice of having a family in the future. Antoinette says that "nine thousand people aged 0-44 are diagnosed with cancer in Australia each year, however it is disappointing that less than half of these patients are told about the effects of cancer treatment on their fertility."

Between September and November 2015, a Protocol Advisory Sub-committee (PASC) document was developed and circulated to YCS staff, leaders of all the paediatric and adult tumour groups, nursing leaders, senior cancer and reproductive/andrology specialists, policy makers around Australia and consumers. The project team met with the Department of Health in late November and in mid December, to discuss progressing both new and revised Oncofertility item numbers. We will keep you updated regarding this very exciting initiative.



For further information, please contact Brigitte Gerstl, National Project Manager at: Brigitte.gerstl@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au.

Picture from left to right: Peter Orchard, CEO CanTeen; Dr Antoinette Anazodo, Lead Clinician for Adolescent and Young Adults NSW/ACT Sydney Youth Cancer Service Sydney Children's Hospital and Prince of Wales Hospital; Ms Brigitte Gerstl, National Manager FUTuRE Fertility; Associate Professor Kate Stern, Senior Reproductive Specialist, Melbourne IVF.



Around the country

YCS NSW/ACT update

Our Outreach program is continuing to develop around the state. In October, the Hunter YCS team travelled north to sunny Coffs Harbour and beautiful Port Macquarie to meet with nursing and social work staff in adult cancer services and paediatrics, to provide education and support to staff working with AYA cancer patients and promote the YCSs. Locally based AYA patients were reviewed along the way and the upcoming Youth Summit and AYA Congress were promoted. Due to this visit, the North Coast Cancer Institute at Port Macquarie will appoint a Youth Cancer Champion.

In November, staff from both Hunter YCS and Sydney YCS travelled to Gosford Hospital and met with Oncology, Haematology and Radiation Oncology staff to promote the YCS and educate staff on the services available for young cancer patients.

October saw the Sony Foundation run another successful Wharf4Ward event. It was held at restaurants along Woolloomooloo Wharf where a record \$900,000 was raised for You Can, with over 800 guests from business, politics, media and sport attending. Sony Music artists Delta Goodrem, Hoodoo Gurus and Nathaniel provided spectacular entertainment alongside stunts, super yacht entrances and swimwear catwalks in the 'James Bond' themed long lunch. Several AYA 'You Can' champions attended including the beautiful Tessa Calder, who inspired and touched guests with her moving speech about her cancer experience.

YCS ACT have launched an AYA Interest Group bringing together hospital, community and NGO stakeholders who work with AYAs living with cancer and meet bi-monthly. The membership includes hospital staff within cancer services, adolescents and paediatrics, as well as members from NGOs, Community Services and Cancer Council ACT. The group has made strong connections and improved the knowledge of services within the ACT and Southern NSW already, and is looking forward to providing continued professional development and welcoming new members in 2016.

Finally, we hope you all enjoyed the Summit and Congress and all of us would like to wish you a joyful Christmas and a wonderful 2016!



YCS staff visited the Central Coast Cancer Centre

YCS SA/NT update

Halli Waran, our acting Cancer Care Coordinator at the Royal Darwin Hospital will be completing her work with us in mid-November. Our thanks go to Halli for her work in the role during Katie Sykes' maternity leave. Katie is not due back at work just yet, so we welcome Shirelle O'Halloran into the role until Katie's return. Shirelle comes with great experience in the palliative care field and we look forward to working with her over the coming months.

In Adelaide we also recently said a brief farewell to our Medical Fellow, Rebecca Manudhane, as she commenced on maternity leave. It wasn't too long before we got the good news about the birth of a healthy baby boy though! Congratulations Bec, Anit (and big sister Audrey) on the arrival of baby Jonty on 10 Nov.

We look forward to seeing you all soon.



YCS Queensland update

The Qld YCS welcomed Rebekah Orford (Bek) as the Statewide Educator. Bek commenced on 21 September and will be based in the Central Team at the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital (LCCH). Bek has worked in the paediatric oncology service at the Royal Children's Hospital, now LCCH since 2004. During 2006-07 Bek travelled overseas and she gained further paediatric oncology experience in Dublin. Since the LCCH opening, Bek has worked as the Oncology Clinical Practice Facilitator and was pivotal in coordinating the training for nurses in the cardiac ward where the designated additional oncology beds were allocated. Prior to her appointment to the Educator position, Bek acted as the CNC for QYCS Central Team.

Jane Roach (CNC Central Team), Bek and Katrina Hampton (Townsville) commenced the CanTeen initiated Nurse Mentorship Research program in Sydney in November. Fiona Henderson (CNC, PAH) and Dr Melissa Jessop attended the Australian Association for Adolescent Health in Melbourne from 11 – 13 November.



Bek Orford at YCS QLD

Congratulations to Fiona, Kim Sutherland and Lyndal Gray, the Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) cancer team at the Princess Alexandra Hospital who celebrated their success in receiving the Metro South's Board Chair Award for Patient Centred Care recently.

Jane and Belinda along with the wider nursing and allied health teams established an activity program for adolescents attending outpatients at the LCCH. "Livewire" has commenced for an hour 2 days a week and we are working with CanTeen Queensland General Manager, Jessica Kerpsie and MLO, Laura Storey to include the local team in this coordinated program.

The Central QYCS team coordinated a clinical leadership workshop which was held on 15 October. The designated CNC/CCC and Medical leads from each of our 5 partner sites attended a successful day. The key outcomes were:

- Agreement on the QYCS Vision, Mission and Values; and
- Agreement to establish 3 QYCS working groups - Service, Education and Research.

This will be followed with a Central team and allied health workshop in 2016. We are looking forward to



YCS VIC/TAS update

It's been a busy quarter for the Victorian & Tasmanian Service this quarter. We have seen an increase in the numbers of young people referred to the Service as awareness grows across the sector. Excitingly, we have welcomed our final two AYA Nurse Consultants for YCS Phase 2, Tarnya Hotchkin at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne and Victoria Jayde in a state-wide role in Tasmania. Joining Pete Haywood at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Donna Gairns at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, these CNCs will work with the broader team and local lead clinicians to implement a range of AYA cancer initiatives across the sector.

Recent months have also seen an increase in referrals to our Secondary Consultation Service. This service aims to support healthcare professionals and primary care providers through the provision of advice, guidance and support on all aspects of AYA care. Provided by senior clinicians within the team, consultations are conducted by phone, video or face to face with the primary team at the site of the young person's care. Work has commenced exploring the expansion of this Service into Tasmania in line with the development of their local model of care.

A number of cancer awareness and education initiatives aimed at building state-wide knowledge in AYA cancer care have been undertaken. The 2015 Cancer Care in Young People Series concluded with over fifty healthcare professionals participating. A successful AYA Cancer Workshop was delivered part of the Victorian Regional CNSA Winter Program and a key note presentation was delivered at the COSA Cancer Pharmacist Group (CPG) meeting recently held in Melbourne. Ilana Berger and Mairghread Clarke also delivered conference presentations at the Oncology Social Work Australia National Conference.

Finally, this quarter has seen exciting developments in the building of the new You Can Centre at the new Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Parkville. After extensive consultation and engagement with the health and government representatives, the Sony Foundation and young people, the detailed design phase is complete. Tenders for the building will be undertaken in the coming weeks with commencement of works not far away, in time for the hospital move in 2016.



Tarnya Hotchkin

YCS WA Update

The WA Youth Cancer Service is pleased to commence its end of treatment clinic, which has been designed in consultation with young consumers, as well as other national jurisdictions whose shared knowledge and experience have been invaluable.

The WA YCS study day was held in October, with over 60 health care professionals participating, including regional teams who joined via teleconference. Guest presenters included Professor Donald Payne who spoke on adolescent development and its impact on the cancer experience, Dr Lisa Miller speaking on mental health issues unique to the cohort, Dr Cathy Choong who spoke on endocrinological impacts of cancer in the age group and the increasing role for exercise interventions, Dr Joo Teoh on fertility considerations in cancer diagnosis and treatment and Dr Tom Walwyn who provided an overview of cancer and treatment in the AYA group.



Victoria Jayde

continued overleaf...



Our service has welcomed a new clinical nurse specialist, Daniel Berk. Dan is a familiar face to many of our patients through his work in the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and also through the home chemotherapy program at Royal Perth Hospital. Dan's enthusiasm and approachability have already established him as a popular member of our team. We are proud (though a little sad) to announce that Todd Dennis, our excellent admin and project support officer, has been accepted into the Notre Dame University medical program. His happy disposition and collegial spirit will be missed, though we are certain he will excel in his medical career.

The WA YCS exercise physiology program continues to grow, with a high number of patients eager to engage with Claire. A strong interest has led to the development of group projects – a group Pilates program is due to commence in the new year. Our Youth Advisory Committee completed a strategic planning program facilitated by Brooke Chapman, Lecturer in Social Science within the School of Psychology and Social Science at Edith Cowan University. The training was well received by our group who will utilize lessons learnt well into the future.

Sock it to Sarcoma held its annual gala dinner and the YCS team enjoyed a night of entertainment and opportunities to catch up with colleagues, supporters and former patients. Sock it to Sarcoma has continued to grow and reach to both sarcoma patients and research. We are proud to have a close association with this wonderful organization.

Our team has valued greatly the collaborative relationship with the local CanTeen team and very much look forward to shared projects into the New Year. We would also sincerely like to thank RedKite, particularly Lois Keay Smith, a respected team member, who will be moving on at the end of this year. We warmly welcome Sylvia Kelly who will be taking on Lois' role in education and vocation support.

The WA Youth Cancer Service wishes everyone a happy festive season and a prosperous and healthy new year.

