Allergies and lung disease

Ainsley Ringma, Lung Care Nurse, Lung Foundation Australia

You may notice as the days get longer and warmer that you begin to have a runny nose, sneeze more and even your eyes may be itchy or watery. Welcome to spring, which for some people means allergy time. Allergies like allergic rhinitis (hayfever) can occur at any time of the year, but are more likely in the spring due to the increase in flower or grass pollen, tree moulds and more.¹

Allergic rhinitis affects around 15 per cent of the Australian population, or about 3.1 million people which equals about 1 in 6 people.² Common symptoms include sneezing, runny and itchy nose, itchy or watery eyes, blocked nose and snoring at night. Allergy occurs when a person’s immune system reacts to substances in the environment that are harmless for most people.³ These substances are known as allergens and are found in house dust mites, pets, pollen, insects, moulds, foods and some medicines. Spring is a common time when these allergens are all around, especially with the changing of winds, and windy days. This is a perfect example of when we may encounter many of these triggers.

In a study by the Johns Hopkins University published online in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, researchers looked at more than 1,400 patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), and found that those with allergies were much more likely than those without allergies to wheeze, to have chronic cough and chronic phlegm, to awake during the night because of cough, and to have a worsening of COPD symptoms that required antibiotics or a visit to the doctor.⁴ According to Dr Nadia Hansel, an associate professor of medicine at the Johns Hopkins Asthma and Allergy Center in Baltimore, the findings suggested that treating allergies or avoiding allergy triggers may help reduce the number and severity of respiratory problems in people with COPD.⁴

If you experience hayfever or allergies, below are some tips for coping with or controlling symptoms and triggers:¹

- Be aware of what triggers your allergy and when it’s likely to be a problem.
- Find out the remedies which help you best (such as antihistamines and nasal sprays) and keep them with you.
- Check whether you can take these remedies if you are on any other medication. You can talk about this with your pharmacist, nurse or GP.
- Check when you should start taking your remedy.
- Sometimes a little petroleum jelly inside your nostrils can stop some of the allergens reaching the lining inside your nose. If you’re on oxygen, use a non-petroleum based lubricant such as Nozoil. Try using some as soon as your symptoms start.
- Wear wraparound sunglasses when outdoors to keep pollen allergens out of your eyes.
- Wash your clothes and hair more regularly, as this will help to get rid of the pollens.
- Keep your home clean and use a damp duster to stop pollens moving about your home.
- Avoid open, grassy spaces if possible and keep windows shut – at home and in the car.
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- Avoid open, grassy spaces if possible and keep windows shut – at home and in the car.

Hopefully, these tips will help you reduce the symptoms and impact of hayfever so this spring you can be prepared and enjoy the warmer weather. Please discuss any concerns you have with your health professional who may be able to suggest some medicines to help.

References

Save the date for World COPD Day!

It’s that time of the year again when we ask you to save the date for World COPD Day which falls on Wednesday 16 November this year. Once again we are encouraging members of the community to get involved by holding your own activity to raise awareness about the symptoms of COPD and encourage people to take symptoms like persistent and productive cough seriously.

There are many ways to celebrate World COPD Day including a morning tea, luncheon, BBQ, cake sale or a World COPD Day Walk. This year the World COPD Day Walk falls under the umbrella of the ‘Love Your Lungs’ Fun Run and Walk, a new Lung Foundation Australia initiative to help celebrate Lung Health Awareness Month (November) and raise funds for people with lung disease.

If you take part in a World COPD Day Walk, you can still wear your COPD t-shirt with pride and if you happen to raise money during your World COPD Day activity, the funds will still go towards COPD research. Don’t forget to register your walk or activity on the World COPD Day website at worldcopdday.lungfoundation.com.au to receive your free pack of promotional materials.

Registrations open on 1 September. We’re looking forward to working with you to make World COPD Day bigger than ever this year.
Dear Readers,

I had the pleasure of meeting Olympic legend Cathy Freeman in June. Cathy has partnered with Lung Foundation Australia to encourage the nation to start thinking about their lung health. Cathy is our new Just One Breath national ambassador, joining our previous champions who include Archie Roach and Christine Anu. She is passionate about maintaining good lung health as well as encouraging people to recognise and, more importantly, act on the potential risks and symptoms of lung disease. Having lived with a lung disease for most of her life, Cathy can speak personally about how important it is for Australians to start taking their own lung health seriously.

As part of this new collaboration, Cathy took part in a regional New South Wales journey, together with representatives from Lung Foundation Australia, to help share the lung health message with the Indigenous community and local school of Albury Wodonga.

Cathy is also introducing a series of video stories about Australians living with a lung disease, as well as promoting symptom awareness and early diagnosis through Lung Foundation Australia’s Lung Health Checklist. These stories as well as Cathy’s experiences are currently available on our website. Visit www.lungfoundation.com.au and click on the image of Cathy.

We will be launching another three stories during the next few months for Lung Health Awareness Month. Each story details a very different experience with lung disease and we thank all of our patients and their families for their generosity and willingness to be involved. Indeed, as you will read throughout this newsletter, August to December will be a busy and exciting time for Lung Foundation Australia.

New Lung Cancer Multidisciplinary Team Directory launched

Lung Foundation Australia has developed a comprehensive directory of dedicated Lung Cancer Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT), with funding from the Cancer Australia 2015 Supporting People with Cancer Grant. The MDT Directory provides a platform to improve early access and treatment for patients who present to their GP or clinician with symptoms of lung cancer that warrant early follow up. An MDT provides a collaborative approach to treatment and care, which includes access to a number of different health professionals (e.g. lung cancer support nurse, medical oncologist and surgeon) throughout the disease trajectory of a lung cancer patient. Hospitals which are able to offer an MDT approach, provide best practice in addressing all aspects of a lung cancer patient’s care including their psychological and physical needs, along with best standards in treatment plans. The directory is an easy to use, online tool to assist a prompt referral into a hospital that strives along with best standards in treatment plans. The directory is an easy to use, non positional and clinically supported.

We welcome feedback on the content and use of the directory to ensure we are providing an accurate and user friendly tool. Email our Lung Cancer Support Nurse Claire Mulvihill at lungmdt@lungfoundation.com.au or phone freecall on 1800 654 301.

At this month’s Australian Lung Cancer Conference in Melbourne, we will be launching a new report looking at the huge impact of lung cancer in Australia as well as ways to improve outcomes for those with lung cancer. This vital document, calls on funders, policy makers, the wider community and health professionals to act to reduce the toll of lung cancer.

This month will also see the inaugural Just One Breath Cycle Challenge being held at Lakeside International Raceway in Brisbane’s north. Proceeds will go to support lung research through our joint initiative with the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand, ‘Lungs for Life’. If you would like to take part and have not yet signed up your team, visit www.justonebreath.com.au/events to register.

These events will be followed by the third Just One Breath Gala Dinner on 22 October. Then we roll into Lung Health Awareness Month and International Lung Cancer Awareness Month in November which includes World COPD Day, Shine a Light on lung cancer events and Asbestos Awareness Week. We are also organising the first Love Your Lungs Community Fun Run and Walk in Melbourne together with our partners Collingwood Football Club and Ego Pharmaceuticals.

Keep your eyes on the Lung Foundation Australia website, our Facebook page and other social media channels for more exciting news during the next few months. Thank you all for your support.

Heather Allan

Introducing Aerobika

Meeting an unmet need

The AEROBIKA Oscillating PEP (OPEP) device is drug-free, easy-to-use, non positional and clinically supported.

Patient feedback indicates that using the device daily improves the ease in bringing up mucus, decreases cough frequency, reduces breathlessness, increases exercise tolerance and improves quality of life. Exhaling into the device will assist in loosening and helping remove the mucus from the lungs.

Your patients can purchase the AEROBIKA in Australia through all AIR LIQUIDE Healthcare locations

1 S Svensson et al - Presented at ERS 2014. 2 Patient satisfaction survey demonstrated consistent results of the patient reported outcomes in the clinical study, n=506.
Did you find it hard to get out and about this winter? If you found yourself not exercising or not exercising as often, now is the time to ‘spring’ back into it. Exercise is an important part of managing a chronic lung condition and Lung Foundation Australia encourages pulmonary rehabilitation as the first step, followed by an ongoing exercise maintenance program like Lungs in Action to maintain the great gains. Pulmonary rehabilitation programs generally consist of eight weeks of exercise and education. These sessions are evidence-based and designed specifically for people with chronic lung conditions to better manage their symptoms and stay well and out of hospital.

If you are looking for inspiration, take a leaf out of Margaret Catlin’s book. Despite living with COPD, the weather can’t keep Margaret from attending Lungs in Action at Colac’s Blue Water Fitness Centre. Since completing pulmonary rehabilitation last year, she has not missed a class, although Margaret does admit that attending regularly has its challenges.

She said, “It is a struggle that’s for sure, but it’s once a week and I’m committed to the cause. I know I am going to feel better for it.” Margaret’s motivation has been the continued physical benefits she gets through engaging in regular exercise.

“I used to walk for two minutes and be exhausted. Now I walk for 10 minutes and I’m still exhausted afterwards but I feel so much better for it,” she said. Combining the class with frequent walks, managing a household and regular baking, Margaret believes the benefits of attending the class don’t stop at the physical capabilities.

“The social interaction of being in a group of people going through the same thing is terrific. Everyone looks after everybody else and understands what you are dealing with. We only do what we can, but it’s better than nothing,” Margaret said.

For anyone considering starting a regular exercise class, Margaret advises to give it a go. “You’re only going to benefit from it. You are supported at every session by a qualified instructor who can help regardless of what condition you have or the situation you are in. You won’t regret it,” she said.

If you haven’t been exercising, it is important that you see your GP or respiratory specialist about getting back into it, and discuss your eligibility for referral to either a pulmonary rehabilitation program, or a Lungs in Action class depending on your current circumstances. There are a number of pulmonary rehabilitation or Lungs in Action programs across the country. To find your nearest location, please call Lung Foundation Australia’s Information and Support Centre on freecall 1800 654 301.

Next year, Lung Foundation Australia will launch our ‘Love Your Lungs’ Club, a new community which will replace our existing Supporter Membership program. The new club will cost $30 per year and will offer access to a variety of benefits for supporters including discounted entry to Patient Seminars, discounts on patient resources (where a cost applies), advance notice of Lung Foundation Australia special offers/events/campaigns and programs and access to our online supporter discount program which has great deals on travel, restaurants, shopping and other items.

One of the big changes that will be introduced at the same time is in how LungNet News will be distributed. Like all other charities we have been faced with the increasing costs of printing and distribution, as well as continued price rises from Australia Post. It has become increasingly expensive to cover the cost of mailing a hard copy of the newsletter. This means that from May next year, the physical copy of LungNet News will only be mailed to members of the ‘Love Your Lungs’ Club who elect to receive it in this way.

LungNet News is a valued resource and placing a small price on it ensures we can most effectively use the funds generously contributed to us while continuing LungNet News’ proud history.

That’s why we are ensuring people can still read LungNet News if they are unable to become a member of the ‘Love Your Lungs’ Club. You will still be able to receive an electronic copy sent free of charge directly to your email inbox four times per year. You will also be able to download or print copies directly from our website. If you don’t have access to a computer or an email address, you can obtain a copy of LungNet News by asking a family member or friend to print it for you, or you could make use of the facilities at your local library.

If you would like to sign up now, or would like further information about the changes please phone our Information and Support Centre on 1800 654 301, email enquiries@lungfoundation.com.au, or visit http://lungfoundation.com.au/supporter-membership/.
Lung Foundation Australia announces two new IPF PhD scholarships

Lung Foundation Australia has announced the winners of two new PhD scholarships worth $180,000 over three years to increase our understanding of a rare and devastating disease called Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF).

Through the generous support of the Wilson family, together with the Pulmonary Fibrosis Consortium, Lung Foundation Australia is offering seven leveraged PhD scholarships worth $90,000 each to be awarded in the coming years and to help put IPF under the research spotlight.

IPF patient David Wilson, after whom the PhD scholarships are named, said research in Australia was woefully underfunded and he wanted to support local programs for local people. “I don’t know what caused my IPF and there aren’t any answers for me,” Mr Wilson said. “If, by supporting this research, I can help others find the answers I don’t have, it will be a great result,” he said. “It is a personal thing for me to help others.”

Lung Foundation Australia CEO Heather Allan said it was vital that research into rarer lung diseases like IPF was adequately funded. “This is about funding research to save lives,” Mrs Allan said. “IPF causes persistent and progressive scarring of the tiny air sacs (alveoli) in the lungs where the amount of scar tissue irreversibly increases over time, restricting how the lungs can expand, until the thickening caused by this scarring becomes so bad, insufficient oxygen enters the blood stream,” she said. “While the rate at which the disease progresses is highly variable with some patients remaining stable for many years while others get rapidly worse, it is inevitably fatal without a lung transplant.”

The first two David Wilson PhD Scholarships in IPF, each worth $30,000 a year for three years, were awarded in June. Adelle Jee from the University of Sydney is tackling how IPF behaves, its prognosis and if there are markers to predict deterioration. The research will compare IPF patients with another group of patients with interstitial pneumonia with autoimmune features (IPAF). It will deliver practical, clinical outcomes examining blood samples, breathing and tissue samples to develop markers and possible ways to determine the cause of IPF.

The second funded project will be conducted by the University of Newcastle’s David Walters and will examine the role of fibroblasts in strengthening the lungs and why they malfunction in conditions like IPF. This research will target the process that causes the thickening of the lungs in IPF to initially stop the disease from worsening and eventually hopes to possibly reverse it.


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<tr>
<th>Research Award</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lung Foundation Australia/Boehringer Ingelheim COPD Research Fellowship 2016/2017</td>
<td>Dr Christian Osadnik</td>
<td>$80,000 per annum for two years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lung Foundation Australia/Ivan Cash Research Grant-in-Aid Award</td>
<td>Dr Helen Jo</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/Lizotte Family Research Award</td>
<td>Gang Liu</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/Ludwig Engel Grant-in-Aid for Physiological Research</td>
<td>A/Prof Alex Larcombe</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/Australian Cochrane Airways Group Scholarship</td>
<td>Anke Lenferink</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/Australian Cochrane Airways Group Scholarship</td>
<td>Harshani Jayasinghe</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/A Menarini COPD Travel Grants to travel to ATS 2016</td>
<td>Dr Annemarie Lee</td>
<td>Travel grants of up to $3,000</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/A Menarini COPD Travel Grants to travel to ATS 2016</td>
<td>Dr Kristin Carson</td>
<td>Travel grants of up to $3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Sensier Memorial Award for Translational Research in Bronchiectasis</td>
<td>Dr Greg Fox</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/Deep Manchanda Early Career Research Fellowship in Lung Cancer 2016</td>
<td>To be announced at the Australian Lung Cancer Conference in August 2016</td>
<td>$160,000 over two years matched by University</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/A Menarini COPD Travel Grants to travel to ERS 2016</td>
<td>Dr Christian Osadnik</td>
<td>Travel grants of up to $3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lung Foundation Australia/A Menarini COPD Travel Grants to travel to ERS 2016</td>
<td>Dr Natasha Smallwood</td>
<td>Travel grants of up to $3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lung Foundation Australia/David Wilson PhD Scholarship in IPF Research</td>
<td>Dr Adelle Jee</td>
<td>$15,000 per year for three years matched by University</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/David Wilson PhD Scholarship in IPF Research</td>
<td>Mr David Waters</td>
<td>University</td>
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<td>Lung Foundation Australia/David Wilson PhD Scholarship in IPF Research</td>
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Indigenous Lung Health Checklist is now available

Indigenous Australians are almost twice as likely to die from a lung-related condition than non-Indigenous Australians. With the mortality rate for respiratory disease in Indigenous Australians 1.9 times that of non-Indigenous Australians, it is more important than ever to try and address the endemic challenge of helping the Indigenous community to breathe well.

That’s why together Lung Foundation Australia and the Queensland Government’s Indigenous Respiratory Outreach Care Program have developed the first Australia-wide culturally sensitive, screening tool for the Indigenous community. The Indigenous Lung Health Checklist encourages the Indigenous community to check out their lung health by answering eight simple questions.

Narrated by Olympic legend and Lung Foundation Australia’s Just One Breath Ambassador Cathy Freeman, this checklist is now available on our website. We encourage health professionals working in Indigenous health and, in particular respiratory health, to promote this narrated checklist to their clients. To view this new resource, visit www.indigenouslungcheck.lungfoundation.com.au.

The resource was launched at a media event at The Prince Charles Hospital on 6 July and promoted at the Family Fun Day at Musgrave Park during NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) week (3-10 July).

Calling for online support volunteers

In early 2017, we hope to launch an online forum to extend the reach of our patient support. The forum will be used to connect those affected by lung disease to an online support system accessible by all, regardless of age, health, or location.

We are looking for volunteers, either patients or carers to join a committee and give us their insight and provide direction on how you would like the forums to be used. We are also looking for people with basic internet skills who would like to help out with running the support forum.

If you would like to get involved, please contact the Information and Support Centre on freecall 1800 654 301 or email enquiries@lungfoundation.com.au.
Melbourne Better Living with Lung Cancer Consumer Forum – Wednesday 17 August

Lung Cancer Network Australia invites patients, carers and family members to attend a free interactive consumer forum as part of the upcoming Australian Lung Cancer Conference in Melbourne on Wednesday 17 August. Forum topics include managing ‘scanxiety’ and other common psychosocial challenges of living with lung cancer; managing the physical symptoms and side effects of a lung cancer diagnosis; and clinical trials. The forum will finish with an interactive patient panel and Q & A session facilitated by a health professional. For the event flyer, visit http://lungfoundation.com.au/events/better-living-with-lung-cancer-consumer-forum-2/. Please register for catering purposes by phoning freecall 1800 654 301 or email kerrie@lungfoundation.com.au.

Celebrating our fifth year of Shine a Light on lung cancer events

This November, Lung Foundation Australia will celebrate the fifth anniversary of our Shine a Light on lung cancer awareness events. We encourage our supporters and clinicians, nurses and allied health professionals who care for lung cancer patients to host a Shine a Light on lung cancer event which can be as small or as big as you like – a morning tea, cake stall, sausage sizzle or a community walk. For more ideas and information to get you started, visit http://lungcancer network.com.au/get-involved/shine-a-light-on-lung-cancer/.

Lung Foundation Australia to support people as they QUIT4october

Once again this year, the Lung Foundation is focusing our fundraising on the inequities in research funding allocated to lung cancer – less than five per cent of research funding is allocated to lung cancer research – yet lung cancer is Australia’s biggest cancer killer. Our fundraising target is $50,000 and every dollar raised from the Shine a Light events will go towards lung cancer research.

You can create a Shine a Light on lung cancer Everyday Hero fundraising page as a tribute to a loved one who is living with lung cancer, or as a way of getting involved and helping us continue to support and empower lung cancer patients, their families and carers. Visit https://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/shinealightonlungcancer2016 to set up your fundraising page. For more information phone freecall 1800 654 301 or email kerrie@lungfoundation.com.au.

 references


Better Living With Your Lung Disease Patient Seminars

In late May, Lung Foundation Australia held the annual Perth Better Living With Your Lung Disease Patient Seminar. The seminar proved to be extremely popular, with 130 people attending, more than double the number of attendees compared to last year.

The presenters delivered valuable information on cough, sputum and airway infection as well as outlining the benefits of physical activity and exercise in lung disease management. Whilst in Western Australia, Lung Foundation Australia took the opportunity to host a Better Living With Your Lung Disease Patient Seminar in Mandurah, where presenters provided valuable information about what to consider to ensure fitness to fly with a lung condition and discussed the differences between COPD and asthma.

The Gold Coast Better Living With Your Lung Disease Patient Seminar took place on 1 June and was well attended with more than 75 people coming along to hear presentations on the treatment of COPD and managing the activities of daily living. Later in the year, we will be holding our annual events in Brisbane north (Chermside), Sydney, Tasmania, Adelaide and Melbourne. We will also be adding a new Patient Seminar in the Camden region of New South Wales in mid-September.

For more information on our Better Living With Your Lung Disease Patient Seminars visit our website www.lungfoundation.com.au/events/ or phone freecall 1800 654 301.
Join us in celebrating Lung Health Awareness Month

November will be a particularly busy month here at Lung Foundation Australia with Lung Health Awareness Month and International Lung Cancer Awareness Month – and we want you to be involved. As you will have seen throughout this newsletter, there are many events happening during the month, from Love Your Lungs Community Walks around the country, various World COPD activities, Shine a Light on lung cancer events and the Love Your Lungs Family Fun Run and Walk in Melbourne.

This year we will be focusing on making sure people not only know the risks and symptoms of possible lung disease but that they act on these symptoms early rather than ignoring them. For more information on activities during Lung Health Awareness Month and how you can be involved, keep an eye on our website www.lungfoundation.com.au or follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/lungfoundation/) or Twitter (https://twitter.com/Lungfoundation).

New and updated resources

Home Oxygen Therapy

This brochure provides brief information for those recently prescribed home oxygen therapy.

Your Pathway Through Lung Cancer Care

‘Your Pathway Through Lung Cancer Care’ shows patients what to expect if they have been diagnosed with lung cancer. It helps them to understand more about lung cancer and the evidence-based clinical pathways throughout their lung cancer journey. If you would like a copy of these or any of our other resources, please phone our Information and Support Centre freecall on 1800 654 301.

A focus on fundraising

Our recent appeal letter stressed the urgent need for funding for research into lung disease. Research is one of the most effective ways to improve prevention, detection, treatment and management of lung disease and it requires vast resources. We cannot do this without the help of the community.

For those who have already donated, a huge thank you. You are all making a real difference to the lives of future Australians. If you have not yet donated, it's not too late to do so. Please visit http://lungfoundation.com.au/get-involved/donation/research/ to donate or phone freecall 1800 654 301.

Just One Breath Cycle Challenge – Brisbane, 26 August

Lung Foundation Australia is proud to be hosting our first cycling challenge raising funds to support research on 26 August in Brisbane. Registrations are filling up fast, so if this is an event you’re interested in, please register now so you don’t miss out.

If you can’t take part, please share this event with your friends, family and colleagues who might be interested. You can also support the event directly by making a donation to the Lung Foundation team – yes, staff are cycling too! Visit https://cycle-challenge.everydayhero.com/au/lung-foundation.

Just One Breath Gala Dinner - Sydney, 22 October

Tickets will go on sale soon for our annual Just One Breath Gala Dinner fundraiser. This year’s event will take place at the Foundation Hall, Museum of Contemporary Art, Circular Quay in Sydney on Saturday 22 October. We’re pleased to announce superb world class entertainment from trumpeter James Morrison and his Motown band and we are all looking forward to a fantastic night. Keep an eye on this space for further details.

Love Your Lungs Community Walk – 1 - 30 November

November is Lung Health Awareness Month and to mark the occasion, Lung Foundation Australia will be coordinating community walks across the country. To register your interest in an event, visit www.loveyourlungs.com.au.

Charity Trivia and Cultural Fundraiser

A particular acknowledgement to organisers Parul Amin, Vijanti Amarsree, Sujata Nathoo and Suvin Hawton who hosted a successful Charity Trivia and Cultural event at the Ponds Hub in Sydney on Saturday 14 May raising $3,500 for Lung Foundation Australia. It was reported that everyone had lots of fun at the same time as raising funds for a great cause. There was plenty of food, prizes and entertainment.

Join in the fun and help us raise funds for vital research!
You may remember reading about the appointment of Claire Mulvihill to the newly created position of Lung Cancer Support Nurse in the August edition of LungNet News last year. It has now been one year since Claire’s appointment and we thought it timely to share the story of one of the patients Claire has been able help by the provision of support and information.

**Case Study:** 56 year old lady from regional Australia diagnosed with stage 3a Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC).

**Treatment:** Patient underwent concurrent radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

Post treatment, the patient required emotional support after enduring six weeks of treatment in the city away from her family. Although she attended a hospital with a dedicated Lung Cancer Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), there wasn’t a Lung Cancer Support Nurse or Cancer Care Coordinator employed at the location to provide the support she was seeking and this led her to call our Lung Cancer Support Nurse.

During the first phone call, Claire established the patient’s emotional and physical needs with discussions around nutrition and diet, the importance of exercise, sleep and returning to work. Claire also explained that an important aspect of the patient’s care was utilising the professional support contacts available to her which included her GP, medical oncologist and radiation oncologist.

After a few months, the patient contacted Claire again as she was concerned post hospitalisation that a second course of antibiotics was not resolving a suspected chest infection coupled with a repetitive cough. Whilst speaking with the patient and noting her breathlessness and frequent coughing in relation to the course of radiotherapy she had completed three months prior, Claire had concerns she was presenting with radiation pneumonitis. With the permission from the patient, Claire emailed her radiation oncologist who was part of the hospital’s lung cancer MDT. Within five days, the patient was reviewed by her radiation oncologist and appropriate treatment was started.

Since this event, the patient has continued to benefit from regular follow up calls to Claire for emotional support and during this time, she has become a member of our Lung Cancer Telephone Support Group.

If you haven’t previously heard about our Lung Cancer Support Nurse, Claire, she is available to provide telephone support and information to patients and their families living with lung cancer, mesothelioma or rarer thoracic cancer, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week. You can contact Claire by phoning our Information and Support Centre on 1800 654 301 or email claire@lungfoundation.com.au.

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**Farewell to Lung Foundation friends**

**Marlene Kennedy**

The Albury/Wodonga Murray Wheezers Respiratory Support Group pays tribute to their late President, Marlene Kennedy, who passed away on 25 April 2016. Marlene was a founding member and President of the group which was established in 2005. Marlene will be remembered for her continuing leadership of the Murray Wheezers even with her deteriorating health and will be remembered with great fondness by all the members.

**Jan Buchanan**

Lung Foundation Australia was saddened by the news of the passing on 29 May 2016 of Jan Buchanan from the North Lakes Ezy Breathers Support Group, aged 78. Jan had been the leader of the group for many years and the support she offered will be greatly missed.

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**About the LungNet News**

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PO Box 1949, Milton QLD 4064
Free call: 1800 654 301
Phone: 07 3251 3600 Fax: 07 3368 3564
Email: enquiries@lungfoundation.com.au
Website: www.lungfoundation.com.au

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