



Cancer Voices South Australia (CVSA) News Bulletin– May 2020

The world has changed significantly this year with natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic changing our lives and the way we live. I hope that you and your loved ones are safe and 'managing OK'.

Everyone at the frontline of our bushfire and health services deserves our heartfelt thanks. We do not forget you as you constantly care for our community, especially at the most difficult of times. You are truly appreciated, and we sincerely thank you for all that you do.

There is such a rapidly growing amount of **information about COVID-19** that it can be hard to find your way through it all. Here at CVSA we are taking our messaging from key identified Health and Government officials and especially from sources such as the SA Government, Australian Government and Cancer Australia. Useful information is also provided by Cancer Council and it continues to provide its support to people living with cancer and their supporters via the helpline. A recent update from Cancer Australia re **Cancer Care in the time of COVID-19** can be viewed at: <https://canceraustralia.gov.au/cancer-care-in-the-time-of-COVID-19>

Cancer Voices – recent activities:

We have been using Zoom video conferencing for most of our meetings, for example, with the **Cancer Clinical Network** which is part of the **Commission for Excellence and Innovation in Health (CEIH)**. The Commissioner Paddy Phillips spoke to Flinders Medical Centre staff on Friday 15 May about the Commission and the session is available on youtube at the following address: <https://youtu.be/Jbcxv-t-lb8>

We encourage people to consider participating in the CEIH **Patient Outcomes & Experience Measures Workshop**, via Zoom, 9.30-1.30 (SA timezone) on thurs 25th June . **Share your perspectives, ideas and experiences** to help develop a statewide solution for this complex issue. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/patient-outcome-experience-measures-workshop-tickets-106199746300>

The **Cancer Clinical Network** has been designated as the State body for **leading the development of Standards, Pathways and Models of Care for Cancer in South Australia**. The group is chaired by Dr Ganessan Kichenadasse, a Consultant Oncologist and trained Clinical Pharmacologist. The Cancer Clinical Network includes consumers and practitioners in its membership. CVSA Chair Chris Christensen is a consumer rep on the Cancer Clinical Network.

This is an important group as there has been no Cancer Plan in South Australia since 2015 and Chris believes it should be one of the key deliverables from the group. We would appreciate hearing any thoughts you have on what the Plan should include via our email: info@cancervoicessa.com.au

Further information about the work of the Statewide Cancer Clinical Network is available at <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Public+Content/SA+Health+Internet/About+us/c+ommission+on+excellence+and+innovation+in+health> where you can also sign up to receive email news.

We have postponed **our cycling and walking groups**, but we anticipate that these will begin again soon pending advice from the health authorities and government. Stay tuned. We are concerned for

the wellbeing of our members who are immuno-compromised &/or have other conditions that increases their risk from COVID-19.

We are maintaining our **Survivors as Teachers program** for the ninth consecutive year at Adelaide University. This is now being delivered via Zoom and a huge thank you to Julie Marker (CVSA lead), consumer presenters, lecturers, and students for continuing to make these tutorials available. We are also working to undertake a scholarly evaluation of the program during 2020 and hope that we can expand the program into the future.

Our leadership, influence and research interests have continued during these times, including our consumer reviewers of applications for research funding.

Other areas we have been influencing include, **COVID-19 and Cancer Information** for local cancer services and responding to surveys about the impact of COVID-19 on immunosuppressed groups.

CVSA Exec Team member Agnes Vitry is busy as a consumer rep on the planning committee for the **2021 Cancer Survivorship Conference**, which is being hosted here in Adelaide in March next year, either face to face or online.

Much has changed for people with cancer during the COVID-19 pandemic and it is hoped that some things will improve as a result of what we have learnt about ways of working.

For example we support the recent inclusion of **Telehealth as a Medicare item** to encourage phone and video appointments which are safer for people with cancer and their medical team, especially at this time. We hope that this will continue to be the case post COVID-19. We will certainly be advocating for this as an option.

We also support the emailing of test result reports to people with cancer (in agreement with their medical team) prior to appointments so that they can shape questions to ask and make their appointments more efficient and effective.

Last but by no means least, we are currently working on our new Website and will soon be publishing our Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

The Executive Team of Cancer Voices SA is keen to understand **what you see as the problems and solutions to being diagnosed and subsequently living with cancer in South Australia**, especially given what we have learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your thoughts and comments would be most appreciated via our email at info@cancervoicessa.org.au

Warm Regards

Chris Christensen

On behalf of the Cancer Voices SA Executive Team

May 2020.