

# The Well Wisher

Autumn 2013

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## The Wellness Centre: A Place Where I'm Understood

**At age 27 the last thing you expect to hear are these three words, "You've got cancer." But that's exactly what happened to Lierre.**

*"I had pain under my arm and I thought it was my glands swelling. I was getting viruses and was really sick," she tells us. "When I found a lump and was sent to get a mammogram I was crying. This was not normal, I knew something was wrong."*

Lierre went to see a breast surgeon and had a biopsy. *"I can't even remember that weekend it was a blur," she tells us. "I went back and got the results on my own because I knew I could deal with it but I couldn't deal with my family's reactions, I was more worried about others' feelings. For my parents it was devastating."*

*"Waiting for treatment, you feel nervous. It's traumatic just sitting there waiting. Before the Wellness Centre opened, sometimes I'd be sitting in the hospital for over an hour with nowhere to go and nothing to do; I was literally staring at the wall."*

*Here in the new Centre you have the pager which alerts you when the doctors are ready to see you, you're able to move around. Once here I'd have a cup of tea, it relieves all that anxiety and for a split second you forget where you are and what you're doing here."*

*The staff and volunteers are welcoming and friendly; it's more like a home than a hospital. I felt like I could come here and be understood; I didn't need to explain myself. "It's nice to come to the Wellness Centre after an appointment and before I go home - just to relax and be supported by people who know me."*

*I knew that physically and medically I was doing everything I could. There was nothing else I could do, I'd ticked all the boxes, but it wasn't enough to actually make me feel better as a person. I needed to find something that was going to give me some relief."*

*I was getting swelling in my arm and it hurt. Laser Acupuncture was suggested, I was sceptical – but it was incredible, the relief was immediate. I could feel the tension releasing up my neck. My arm had no pain afterwards, I found something that actually worked."*



**"It's nice to relax and be supported by people who know me."  
– Lierre Bayley**

*I would never ever have considered art therapy before. I went more out of curiosity, the next time the sense of release that unfolded was extraordinary. I was able to physically express what I was feeling without words. Having breast cancer at age 27 I couldn't relate to anyone else with breast cancer as I was so much younger than most of the other patients. I felt like I didn't fit in, that the circumstance I was going through didn't relate. I just wanted to talk to someone my own age."*

*So we got together a group of us who were all young and on the same page. It was such a relief to know that there were other people out there like me. It was a light bulb moment when I met Kate in the group and we realised we had so much in common. We now catch up and have lunch. We're friends. Our cancer has bonded us. The wellness centre is a place where I feel like I am totally understood without having to explain myself."*

*The Wellness Centre hasn't cured my cancer or medically made me better, but emotionally I am able to cope and deal with things. I attribute coming out the other side to the support of the Wellness Centre, and the opportunities that were offered to me in there."*

# A New Option in Mesothelioma Therapy

Over the past decade, the team from the Radiation Oncology Centre at Austin Health have been developing a program to deliver high-dose radiotherapy safely to patients with locally advanced mesothelioma.

Mesothelioma is an awful cancer that starts in the membranes around the lung after exposure to asbestos.

Senior Radiation Oncologist, Dr Malcolm Feigen, has achieved impressive results treating mesothelioma patients with high-doses of intensity-modulated radiotherapy (IMRT) to half their chest, including the whole lung, diaphragm and some adjacent regions which are at risk of the tumour spreading.

*"We have found that more advanced methods of radiotherapy allow better treatment for patients who have 'incomplete lung' surgery without producing major side effects,"* says Dr Feigen.

Last year we received the Commonwealth Government Asbestos Innovation Fund grant to analyse results of 60 patients treated since 2003. We can now report the success of our radiation pneumonectomy as an alternative to the surgical procedure that removes the whole lung and some nearby tissue.

All patients attend the Austin as outpatients for a half hour of daily treatment on weekdays over a six week period.

We use PET scans to target the more active regions for higher doses and assess treatment results, and are seeing some better results than overseas centres using similar programs.

## Breast Cancer Patients Benefit from Laser Acupuncture

Dr Ian Relf is the first Medical Acupuncturist to join the team in the new Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre at Austin Health. As President of the Australian Medical Acupuncture College and a Research Fellow at Melbourne University, Dr Relf is a sought-after GP who has specialised in medical acupuncture for 15 years.

*"Using a laser rather than needles has a much higher safety level,"* says Dr Relf. *"Not puncturing the skin is better for cancer patients as some have compromised immune systems and lymphoedema. They have already had a lot of injections with their other treatments."*

The laser itself is relatively easy to use. It stimulates the nerves under the skin to initiate an acupuncture effect. It relaxes the muscles and settles frayed nerve endings which are giving pain. It's a safe form of treatment.

Laser acupuncture is not a cure for cancer. It treats the side effects, complications and chronic pain associated with treatment.

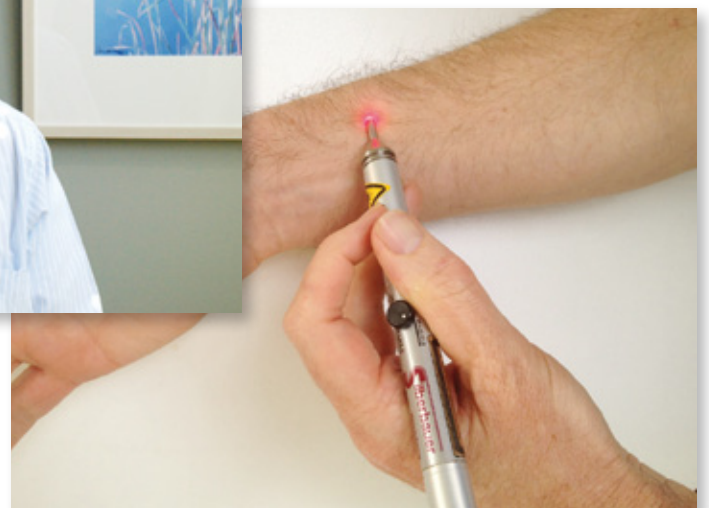
*"We use it in breast cancer patients who have had surgery or radiotherapy and have nerve damage and pain afterwards. One patient who had severe shoulder pain for two years had a course of the laser acupuncture and is now about 60% better with much better quality of life and the constant pain has gone,"* he says.

*Laser is scientifically proven to be effective; it has a high level of scientific evidence.*

*"I'm passionate about what I do because it is effective treatment,"* says Dr Relf. *"I really enjoy improving the quality of life of my patients."*



Dr Ian Relf



Laser Acupuncture is scientifically proven to be effective



# A Personal Message from Olivia



*I am absolutely thrilled to see the progress of the Cancer & Wellness Centre. What's especially exciting is that Stage 2 is still on track to welcome our inpatients later this year. I am so excited and so grateful to everyone involved.*

*My good friend Sir Cliff Richard who walked with me on my fundraising walk along the Great Wall of China, delighted patients when he dropped into the Centre for a surprise visit. He performed a very special impromptu Valentine's Day version of Living Doll for a patient, Ireene, during her treatment and he took time out and chatted with patients.*

*Sir Cliff was amazed by how warm and inviting the Centre was. He said he was delighted to see first-hand that our vision of combining clinical care, research and wellness was working so well for patients.*

*On the front page of this newsletter, you can read about Lierre who is on her own journey with breast cancer. She is having an all-embracing experience with the programs in the Wellness Centre. It is fantastic to see people embodying the essence of what we have created.*

*I am grateful that as a community we have shared this dream and worked towards its completion.*

*It's a huge project, which has been made possible because of the wonderful support we receive from you, our supporters.*

*Thank you – for not only your financial support, which is invaluable, but also for sharing our vision in making a real difference to those who have cancer.*

*Thank you for your continued support.*

*Love and Light,*

Olivia



Sir Cliff Richard, OBE serenaded Ireene, 76

## Thank You for Music Therapy

Last edition we shared with you the story of Tony and his journey with Music Therapy. John, our Music Therapist has since received this heartfelt letter of encouragement:

***“When I was in hospital you would come around, chat, play music and listen, which was fantastic.”***

***“When you are in a defenceless position you have to put your emotions on hold to get through that time. By talking to you and hearing you play and sing and be listened to, helped me to remember my feelings and I could feel my ‘whole self’. It was very beneficial so thank you very much for that.”***

- Patient

# Individualised Palliative Care for Patients

**As Manager of Palliative Care Services, Molly Carlile is responsible for all palliative care services across Austin Health, the inpatient consultancy team and palliative care volunteers. She has been working in palliative care for more than 20 years.**

Her lifetime of work along with her passion and dedication has earned her a swag of recent awards including The Minister's Award for Outstanding Achievement by an individual or team in healthcare at the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards, The 2012 Deakin University and Health Super Leadership in Nursing and Midwifery Award, and the 2012 International Journal of Palliative Nursing, Educator of the Year Award.

**How do we create an environment where each person gets the death they want, in the way that they want it?**

*"This is impacted by how the community at large views death and whether or not the community is well enough equipped to have informed conversations with each other, and their families. All this is influenced by how well we do our job in palliative care," Ms Carlile says. "We've got to provide individual care to each person based on their particular needs."*

**The technology in the building is fantastic.  
It's a marriage of art and science.**

*"Dying is just one window of time in people's lives," says Ms Carlile. "It's like birth. If we do this properly and we support people to die the way they want to die, their experience and the experience of the people around them will be more positive."*

*"None of us want someone we love to die, but when that is the reality, we want to make sure that they are comfortable and cared for. A 'good death' means different things to different people. But the impact of a 'good death' goes beyond the person who dies, to their family and friends and beyond into the community; it has a ripple effect. These are the elements that*

*start to impact on how the wider community perceives death. Death is demystified, people's fears are shared and grieving people are supported. Everyone's experience is important," Ms Carlile says. "That's what I've worked on my whole life."*

## **Stage 2 opening**

With the opening of Stage 2 of the Cancer & Wellness Centre this year, the impact on palliative care will be huge.



**Mollie Carlile received The Minister's Award for Outstanding Achievement surrounded by Austin Health Staff and Board**

*"The beautiful new facility is just stunning. There is so much light in the building - it's a healing space. The technology in the building is fantastic. It's a marriage of art and science."*

*"It won't necessarily impact what we do in Palliative Care, but how we do it. It will enable us to provide a suite of services we haven't been able to provide before. The single rooms will enable us to provide one on one therapy with people. More communal space means more group activities. It will draw people into a space that takes them away from focusing 24/7 on their illness, that gives some respite from anxiety, worry and fear."*

*"I hope in the future that death is no longer a taboo subject. That we build a community, where people feel more comfortable talking about death, better equipped to comfort and to support others, more prepared to talk openly and honestly with their children and that dying becomes a normal part of life. People should not be scared about the quality of care they will receive at the end of their life," says Ms Carlile.*

*"Our mission statement is 'You Matter'. 'You' doesn't just mean patients, family, and carers, it includes staff and the community; everybody matters. We should be framing what we do with this in mind."*



**The design of the new Palliative Care wards**



# Building Progress Update

The Lung and Gastrointestinal Oncology and Uro-Oncology clinics have moved into the Cancer & Wellness Centre with Specialist Clinics (Clinic 6) moving in at the end of last year.

Detailed planning exercises are being undertaken for the inpatient services and other departments moving into the Centre as part of Stage 2. Work is also underway to specify, select and order new equipment, including furnishings and fixtures for Stage 2 areas. This includes large items like beds, cardiac monitors, mobile vital signs monitors, fold-out trundle beds for relatives and exercise equipment.

We are actively working on the introduction of new technologies including an advanced nurse-call communication system that will enhance the patient experience. We are also planning for the final move of Radiation Oncology across from our Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital site following the relocation, commissioning and testing of the second Linear Accelerator.

Of course our commitment to consumer engagement continues, with a forum being held this month to get feedback and advice on a diverse range of topics. Finally, we are proud that the building has been featured in a number of prestigious architectural publications around the world, including the World Architecture News.



We are planning the move of the second Linear Accelerator

## New Centre a Breath of Fresh Air

Teena Amore, says it feels like she's been on a rollercoaster ride since being diagnosed with breast cancer last year.

She has had a breast removed, radiotherapy and six bouts of chemotherapy.

Teena began her treatment at the Austin Hospital but is now being treated in the new Cancer Centre. She met fellow breast cancer survivor Olivia Newton-John at the official opening.

*"I said to her, 'If you are going to be hit with a hard blow in your life, this is where you want to be.'"*

*Austin Hospital is nice but it's a hospital – the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre: it's like I don't have to go to the hospital, it's welcoming, even the walls are very earthy with warm colours."*

***"If you are going to be hit with a hard blow in your life, this is where you want to be"***

At her first appointment at the new Centre which is of course part of Austin Health, Teena was able to check in and have a coffee and relax on a couch while she waited, 'being pampered by the women in the Wellness Centre.'

*'Walking into the place it's a breath of fresh air. I have endured some really hard things and it really does make a difference,'* Teena says.



Teena and Olivia at the official opening

# Thank You for Being a Friend

We are always grateful to those in the community who choose to support the centre through various fundraising activities.

Thank you for the time and work you put into your events which recently included:

**The Jaden Cornelious Foundation** raised \$1,545. The funds have come from sponsored weight loss, head shaves, piercings and the very successful Totally Olivia Tour Reunion.

**Heather Mahamooth** raised \$5,228 from a fashion parade and high tea.

**Australian Culinary Federation** raised \$4,447 by hosting the Pink Breakfast at Victoria Market.

**Sharpline Stainless Steel** made a donation in lieu of Christmas gifts to clients, making a donation in their honour of \$3,000. What a great way to show your clients your philanthropic spirit.

**Katherine Yeats** raised \$2,826 through Every Day Hero by cutting off her long blonde hair to donate for a wig.

**Arnulf Pohl** held a Pink Party raising \$1,560 for the Centre.

Recently **CitiPower** and **Powercor** presented 25 employees with a Spirit of Excellence Award for their commitment and outstanding contribution to the business, its customers and/or the community. As part of their award, employees were given \$1,500 to donate to the charity of their choice.

**We'd also like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the following:**

- Ron and Sue for their \$1,200 donation in lieu of birthday gifts.
- Dandenong District Tennis Association donation of \$1,000 from their 35th Anniversary luncheon.
- Kapar Hair Artistry's 'Cut for a Cure' raised \$900.
- Nicole Dematos raised \$892 from selling candles.
- Laser Plumbing & Electrical Campbellfield raised \$820 from their Energy Efficiency Information Night.
- St John's Primary School held a stall for breast cancer research raising \$165.
- Ruyton Girl's School held a Pinkalicious Day raising \$784.

What a great way to get involved. To register your interest in holding a community event or fundraiser please contact **Melissa Cramp** on 03 9496 5753 or email [OliviaAppeal@austin.org.au](mailto:OliviaAppeal@austin.org.au)

## What's On!

There's always something happening on the Centre Calendar:

### **The Acceptance and Lonsdale Finance Charity Ball**

The Acceptance and Lonsdale Finance Charity Ball is being held on the 4th of May at the Sofitel Melbourne on Collins.

To purchase tickets simple go to [acceptancelonsdalecharity.com.au](http://acceptancelonsdalecharity.com.au)

## Calling All Runners and Walkers...

**Run or walk on Sunday 21st of July and help raise funds for the Cancer & Wellness Centre.**

On Sunday 21st of July Melbournians will be hitting the pavement for the 2013 The Age Run Melbourne event. We're asking our supporters to jump on board, don their best sporting gear and hit the streets of inner Melbourne for our Cancer & Wellness Centre Appeal.

### **Interested?**

It's simple – register yourself as a participant at [www.runmelbourne.com.au](http://www.runmelbourne.com.au) and nominate ONJCWC as your charity of choice. Then ask your family and friends to sponsor you.

If you would like further information on supporting the Cancer & Wellness Centre through the 2013 The Age Run Melbourne event contact Melissa Cramp on 03 9496 5753 or email [oliviaappeal@austin.org.au](mailto:oliviaappeal@austin.org.au).



# Supporting Patients on the Care Journey

The creation of a new Chemotherapy Nurse Coordinator position is helping to improve the care journey for patients at the Centre.

The Chemotherapy Nurse Coordinator Tina Griffiths says the complexity of the care pathway is a problem faced by cancer patients worldwide. *"It involves many different modes of treatment and lots of different specialists across different areas and it can be confusing for patients."*

Tina says her position, which was created last year, fits with the Centre's philosophy of making the patient journey seamless.



***"We want patients to feel well supported and that all their needs are met, because we are looking after the whole person."***

— Chemotherapy Nurse Coordinator Tina Griffiths

**Would you like more information on how a bequest to Austin Health could help?**

**Call our Bequests Manager, Sevi Skaleris on 9496 5361 for a confidential discussion.**

## Yes, I Wish to Help



☐ Dr ☐ Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am already an Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre OR Austin Health Supporter. My supporter number is \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my cheque/money order made payable to Austin Health for the amount I have ticked:

☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$2,500 ☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ my choice

**OR** Please debit the amount I have indicated from my:

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

### For regular monthly donations

I authorise the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre (Austin Health) to make automatic monthly deductions from my credit card (details as above) until further notice.

Monthly amount is: \$

Commencing (month and year) \_\_\_\_\_

Automatic deduction occurs on the 17th of the month.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Please send me information about:

- ☐ Joining Olivia's Circle (monthly giving program)  
☐ Making a bequest to the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre in my Will

### All donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible

If you do not wish to receive any further fundraising communications from us, please write, email or phone us on 03 9496 5753.



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