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Foundation

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#25 SPRING 2022

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A message from the CEO, Robert Hohnen

Spring is finally upon on us and we are slowly heading into the warmer side of the year. The Foundation has been busy finalising our Grant Award Round recipients to support medical innovation, research and education at Prince of Wales Hospital. We also welcomed Professor Michael Bennett as a new member of the Clinical Advisory Committee. Professor Michael Bennett has brought great insight and value to the process of finalising and selecting our Grant Round recipients. On that note, we wish Associate Professor Chris White all the best in his new role as Interim Executive Director at SPHERE, as he will be stepping away from the Clinical Advisory Committee. In this issue of Saving Lives, we are updating you on a very heart-warming story of one of our cancer patients, celebrating our 2022 Grant Round recipients, talk about an amazing fundraising win for the Heartbreakers team, provide updates on Prince of Wales Hospital programs and interviewing one of our talented clinicians. I hope you enjoy reading this issue and once again, thank you for your continued support.



Meet Julie.

When Julie was diagnosed with Leukemia, she felt confused and angry. She was wondering "why is this happening to me? I am not ready to die. I just want to get better." Prior to her diagnosis she experienced little to no symptoms. "I noticed that I would bruise easily, and I dealt with a few mouth ulcers, but I never thought much about it." Immediately after her diagnosis, Julie started treatment at Prince of Wales Hospital where she is looked after by Dr Giselle Kidson-Gerber and a team of "lovely, caring and supportive" nurses. Julie knows she is in the best hands, and she is determined to push through. "I am treating every day with positivity. The medical team at POWH but

also her partner have been an amazing support system." The Foundation team is very grateful to Julia for sharing her story and we wish her the best on her cancer treatment journey.

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Grant Award Winners

The Foundation was extremely honoured to award the recipients from this year's Annual Grant Round.

In the past 12 years, our Annual Grant Rounds have provided more than \$5 million of funding to support research and innovation projects, staff and patient education initiatives and the purchase of additional equipment across Prince of Wales Hospital. This year we awarded \$33k in funding and we're fortunate to have received over 76 submissions in the categories of Senior Research, Novice Research, Innovation, Staff Education and Equipment.

The winners were announced at the Prince of Wales Hospital Staff Forum in September, but are also available to view on the Foundation's website at powhf.org.au/annual-grant-rounds. We congratulate all winners of this year's Annual Grant Round and look forward to supporting future projects and initiatives at Prince of Wales Hospital. You can read more about one particularly exciting research grant in the article "Why your kidneys matter" on page 3.



Clinician in the Spotlight

Meet Renae McNamara. Renae coordinates the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program at Prince of Wales Hospital. We wanted to get to know Renae a bit more, find out exactly what her daily job involves and what she enjoys outside of Prince of Wales Hospital.

What is your role at Prince of Wales Hospital?

I am a clinical specialist physiotherapist and I coordinate the pulmonary rehabilitation program. This is an 8-week exercise, education and self-management training program for people living with chronic lung disease. The program is designed to improve patients' physical and psychological condition by improving their exercise capacity, emotional function, quality of life, knowledge and self-efficacy. We offer gym, aquatic and virtual telerehabilitation exercise groups, as well as ongoing maintenance exercise, walking groups, and a patient social and support group.

What do you do outside of work? Do you have a hobby or another passion?

I love photography and enjoy putting together albums with scrapbooking. I've tried my hand at numerous other arts and craft activities too and have accumulated a whole room at home full of an assortment of supplies and materials which I love playing with when I get the time. I am also passionate about kids sports and spend most of my spare time volunteering and officiating at junior surf lifesaving, swimming, little athletics, and AFL events.

How do you look after your own wellbeing outside of work?

Being anywhere near or on the water is my happy place. So, whenever I get a chance I am swimming, snorkelling, stand up paddling, or out on a boat fishing to my heart's content.

What's the best part of your day at work?

The relief and appreciation shown by patients and their loved ones because I am able to spend as much time as needed with them to ensure that they understand their lung condition. My role provides patients with time that other health professionals often don't have to educate them about all the things they can do to improve their health and wellbeing and to self-manage their disease.

Do you have a favourite patient memory?

Some of my favourite memories are of working with patients who are being considered for lung transplantation. We spend months, and even years, working together to get them to their fittest state possible prior to finding out if they will be listed for surgery, and then we continue working hard for many more months or years waiting for the exciting call to say they will be receiving a transplant.

"A pretty special moment was when a patient with cystic fibrosis who was not expected to survive beyond their 20's received a double lung transplant and was able to celebrate their 40th birthday at a massive party with all their health professionals present."

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What is your biggest challenge at work?

Breathlessness is one of the most important and distressing symptoms experienced by people living with lung disease. The Police song lyrics "Every breath you take and every move you make" perfectly sums up their lived experience of breathlessness. Whilst we have a toolbox of strategies to help manage, relieve, and even reverse some degree of their breathlessness, unfortunately we can't change the underlying lung problem causing much of their shortness of breath. A patient's unique perception and experience of the 'invisible' nature of the symptom can be so frightening for them and so difficult to treat.

Funniest faux pas?

I am a serial offender in leaving the house in pink fluffy slippers (they are just so comfortable!) and then not realising until I get somewhere. I then have to go barefoot because my pre-teen son can't bear for me to embarrass him.



Why your kidneys matter

Did you know that an estimated 1.7 million Australians aged 18 and over are living with chronic kidney disease (CKD)? In 2020, CKD contributed to 17,700 deaths which is a staggering 11% of all deaths in Australia. The Nephrology Department at Prince of Wales Hospital is staffed with internationally renowned renal clinicians who provide holistic care through a multidisciplinary team of specialists that include nephrologists, transplant and access surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses, allied health (social workers, dieticians, pharmacists) and administration staff.

Supported by the Lewis Foundation, the Prince of Wales Hospital Foundation funded the regions first unique Kidney Biobank for acute and chronic kidney disease. This biorepository of patient tissue, samples and linked clinical data from patients with kidney disease is providing a strategic resource for fundamental and translational research.

Living with CKD is challenging and patients who require a kidney transplant, face the daily reality of taking immunosuppressive drugs to avoid organ rejection. Unfortunately, whilst necessary to counter the rejection of the kidney, some can cause kidney toxicity, as is the case for Calcineurin Inhibitor (e.g. Tacrolimus). Damage biomarkers can detect drug toxicity and therefore help with the early detection of subclinical nephrotoxic injury. The Foundation recently funded a study to evaluate the role of more precise and reliable markers of kidney function and other damage markers in the diagnosis of kidney injury. The TransTox Study, led by Amy Yoke Mooi and supported by Dr Camila Eleuterio Rodrigues and Prof Zoltan Endre has already led to a new kidney biomarker being implemented in the hope of providing kidney transplant patients with better graft survival due to better drug management. We are excited to share further updates about the impact of the TransTox Study with you in the future.





City2Surf – The Heartbreakers have done it again!

City2Surf returned officially in 2022 and so did the Heartbreakers. The Heartbreakers – the Prince of Wales Hospital Foundation's City2Surf team, celebrated their 15th year participating in the City2Surf to raise funds for the Prince of Wales Hospital. Named after the famous Heartbreaker Hill and led by Fabian Heaton, the Heartbreakers 2022 fundraising efforts are designated to support the aged care facilities within the hospital. The team finished strong on the day and celebrated with a

well-deserved drink at the local pub! The Heartbreakers will continue to raise funds to reach their \$10,000 fundraising goal by holding a BBQ on Wednesday 9 November at POWH. The Heartbreakers are also running an online Raffle with exciting prizes up for grabs. To get your ticket, please contact us at info@powhf.org.au. Thank you on behalf of the Foundation for your dedication and passion in helping us support the patients, doctors, and nurses at Prince of Wales Hospital.

What happens after a loss? LOSS Program – Louisa Hope Fund for Nurses

Bereavement support to help families through loss is offered in less than one third of intensive care units in Australia despite more than 46 percent of family members reporting a need for bereavement services.

To help families deal with the grief, the stress of a loss and help answer questions and concerns, the Foundation funded a research project within the Adult ICU called LOSS (Loved One Support Service) through the Louisa Hope Fund for Nurses.

The program encourages 'memory making' and memory keepsake creations such as locks of hair and handprints for grieving family members. The program also provides follow-up phone calls to assist with unanswered questions as well as timely referral to community

bereavement services if needed. Families are encouraged to be open to visitation during end-of-life care in order to create a soft, safe, and comfortable space for patients and families.

On behalf of the Foundation, we commemorate Melissa for her dedication and passion for patients and families going through these challenging times. Melissa says "It is a multidisciplinary program, so other professions such as social work or ICU medical teams can play a role in offering support. Creating LOSS as a formal end-of-life/ bereavement program, is particularly useful for newer ICU nurses as this program gives them directions and a plan to follow to deliver patient and family centred care."



Watch out for the Foundation's Christmas Appeal

For Dean the 2020 festive season was filled with uncertainty. His kidneys had failed and he urgently needed a transplant. Fourteen years prior at the age of 23, Dean – a fit and healthy personal trainer – was diagnosed with a rare incurable kidney disease. Despite his determination and the excellent care from the Prince of Wales Hospital, his kidneys failed by Christmas 2020 and Dean needed emergency surgery to start peritoneal dialysis.

As the new year began, the 24/7 dialysis was taking its toll and Dean's kidneys continued to deteriorate. What he really needed was a kidney transplant, but due to his rare blood type, his chances of finding a match were slim. However, against all odds, a few months later Dean received a call about a suitable kidney donor. The very next day, Dean underwent kidney transplant surgery that changed his life. "The doctors at Prince of Wales Hospital saved my life.

The surgeons are world-class, the nurses supported me every step of the way and the whole team have been amazing. It's the best care in the world," Dean said. If you would like to know more about Dean's journey or make a donation, please visit powhf.org.au/give



Wellbeing Program Grant

As part of the annual Grant Award Rounds we were able to support many different projects of innovation, research and education. This year we were privileged to support the Medical Education Unit Department at Prince of Wales Hospital for their Junior Doctor/Doctor In-Training Wellbeing Program.

The program is a series of wellbeing activities that will be held throughout the year. It involves raising awareness about mental health issues, encourage staff to seek help and treatment, educate doctors on undertaking preventative activities that improve mental health and wellbeing such as the importance of exercise, sleep, and good nutrition. This program will help foster a safe and supportive work environment and a culture of inclusiveness amongst staff with patients benefitting from healthier, happier and well supported doctors for improved patient safety and an enhanced patient experience.



Entertainment Book

Are you looking to enjoy travel, restaurants, and cinemas (as well as everything our city and beyond has to offer!) post lockdown?

Through an Entertainment Membership you can save up to 50% and receive 2 for 1 offers for your favourite spots around Sydney. The big bonus is that you're helping our Hospital at the same time, with 20% of every membership purchase donated to the Prince of Wales Hospital Foundation. Follow the QR code to purchase your Entertainment Book today.



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Prince of Wales Hospital, Level 3 High Street East,
PO Box 908 Randwick NSW 2031,
Phone: 02 9382 4263

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