

Autumn 2019

LivOn!

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**Olivia
Newton-John**
Cancer Wellness & Research Centre

Here's what you made possible

You were there for our nurses

What amazing support you gave in response to our Nurses Appeal. Our nurses have been overwhelmed with your generosity and kind words of thanks and support. Over 2,000 of you generously donated \$150,000. This will support nurses with further recognition and development of their profession through scholarship opportunities to improve their practice and patient care, that means so much to them. This support would not be available without your generosity.



Because of you our nurses will have more learning opportunities to be the very best caregivers they can be.

How you've helped people with cancer

More than 11,000 people visited the Wellness Centre last year. With your support, we were able to deliver 191 wellness programs, including new programs in sleep and cancer, spiritual care and diet and nutrition. Providing support for cancer survivors is a priority so we also introduced a new 'Survivorship: Living with and after cancer' multi-week course, and an exercise program and gym for patients undergoing cancer treatment.

We currently have 267 active cancer clinical trials of which 66 are recruiting and many more research studies across medical oncology, clinical haematology, clinical genetics and psycho-oncology. In the past year, we have opened multiple studies that provide our patients with access to the latest cancer drugs and treatments.



Oncology massage is designed to relieve tension often experienced by patients and may also reduce symptoms such as nausea, pain fatigue and anxiety.

This couldn't happen without you. Thank you.

Thank you for your messages of support for our nurses

Our nurses were so moved and grateful for the beautiful messages of support and appreciation that you sent in during the Christmas period. Here are just a few:

"Thank you to the wonderful staff...for turning my life around. angels at the hospital..." – **Annette**

"Thank you for the work you do to make the lives of your patients meaningful, worthwhile, special." – **Karen**

"We will never forget your compassion. We're entirely grateful." – **Kingsley and Janet**

Olivia's message for you



We are so grateful to you for your ongoing support!

Thanks to you, the ONJ Centre gives people hope by conducting world-leading research to treat the disease, and strength in mind and body by providing wellness programs that treat the whole person.

My niece Tottie and I were blessed to join the Art Therapy Open Studio when we were at the ONJ Centre recently. I felt so privileged to see the profound impact it had on patients and carers as they immersed themselves in the gentleness of their own creativity.

It was so lovely to see the room filled with peace, love, creativity and hope.

Without you, the centre would not be the wonderful place it is and programs like art therapy would not exist.

Thank you for everything you do to support our patients and families.

Love + Light, Olivia

Thanks to you, art therapy provides solace among chaos

When cancer appears, life is turned upside down. Jo Hogan's partner Lori Crupi was diagnosed with blood cancer in 2016. Together they share how art therapy provides solace in their journey of emotional chaos.

"How does one express the incredible value of these wonderful sessions?" says Jo.

Art therapy is different from traditional art classes. "Art therapy at the ONJ Centre provides the opportunity to have an environment where ideas, imagination and creativity can flourish with the support of an art therapist," explains Senior Art Therapist, Fiona Scottney.

"We use the strength and peace we gain from art therapy to speak with clarity and courage to our doctors, to ask questions and to help Lori feel she has some sense of control over her cancer (as much as one can)." – Jo Hogan



You can see several of Jo and Lori's paintings in the Open Studio Art Exhibition in the ONJ Centre level 3 walkway. These programs would not exist without support from donors, including the Dry July Foundation. Thank you.

"Art therapy has enabled us to live in the present, deal with uncertainty and have hope and strength for the future." – Jo Hogan

The Art Therapy Open Studio group meets every Wednesday from 2-4pm in the Wellness Centre and is open to patients and their carers.

Because of you, patients get a prescription of exercise

Following cancer diagnosis, current treatment options include surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. But don't be surprised if you're also prescribed exercise!

Exercise has been proven beneficial to cancer patients by:

- Reducing the side-effects of chemotherapy
- Reducing muscle wastage and managing body weight/mass
- Improving bone density and range of motion in joints
- Helping patients have a deeper and more refreshing sleep
- Decreasing stress and anxiety and giving patients a sense of control
- Improving quality of life and cancer outcomes
- Decreasing risk of cancer recurrence

The Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) recommends patients aim for 20-30 minutes of cardio/aerobic exercise 3 to 5 days a week, plus two to three strength-training sessions, supervised by a health professional such as an exercise physiologist or physiotherapist.

Exercise physiologists Kirsty McRae and Lachlan Terry have been employed at the ONJ Centre to promote, engage and grow the culture of exercise for people with cancer.

"An exercise physiologist prescribes exercise just as you'd prescribe a medicine like Panadol or Aspirin," says Lachlan. "Individualised programs are prescribed based on a patient's cancer diagnosis and treatment, personal goals and preferences."



For more information about our exercise program phone (03) 9496 9980 or email onjexercise@austin.org.au

Cheers to Dry July and supporters

Did you know the Dry July Foundation has given more than \$600,000 in grants to the ONJ Centre since 2014?

This has helped us provide wellness and supportive care to patients and their families. We're very grateful to the Dry July Foundation for their wonderful generosity and to members of our community who took up the Dry July challenge.

Programs to benefit from Dry July's support include:

- a dietician delivering nutrition support to patients and their families
- wellness planning
- the Cancer Information and Resource Service
- the music recording studio
- exercise equipment
- gentle yoga
- oncology massage
- post-treatment group Live Well.

"I am so incredibly grateful to Dry July for helping the ONJ Centre provide such wonderful support for patients like me," says Suzi Juracic, currently being treated for myeloma.

You can get involved and raise funds for patients by going dry in July and asking your family and friends to sponsor you. Find out more at dryjuly.com.

A very special Pink Party to help people with cancer

Having seen many family and friends affected by cancer Arnulf Pohl and Gregory Connolly hold a fundraiser every year to help people with cancer at the ONJ Centre. This year was extra special.

Since the first Pink Party in 2007, Gregory, Arnulf and their community of wonderful family and friends have raised more than \$17,000.

Each year their Pink Party has a theme, including Rocky Horror Pink, Pink Punk, Hollywood Glamour Pink, Diamonds are Forever Pink and Oktoberfest Pink. But this year, their Pink Party was extra-special. It featured a wedding - their own!

"It was a most wonderful day," says Arnulf. "We were deeply touched by how generous our friends were (donating money to the ONJ Centre in lieu of wedding gifts). It's truly a day that we will cherish in our hearts." Arnulf and Gregory have asked that money they raise help patients have access to wellness and supportive care while undergoing treatment.

"We connect with the idea of the ONJ Centre as a 'healing place' where wellness is addressing these needs," says Arnulf. While Arnulf and Gregory are already planning this year's pink extravaganza, they'll always have cherished memories from last year's Pink Party.



Holding your own event is a fun way to bring family and friends together, while raising money to help patients and their families undergoing cancer treatment. If you'd like to find out more call the Fundraising Team on (03) 9496 5753.

Helping people with brain cancer

A remarkable young man has demonstrated values of family and community in a surprising way.

When Koray Barkut was just 13, his mum Havva was diagnosed with a brain tumour. Years of surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy at Austin Health and the ONJ Centre followed. Inspired by his mum's experience, Koray decided to do something to help other people who might be in a similar situation.



Koray with his father Ibrahim, mother Havva and sister Esen.

"I wanted to raise some money for the ONJ Centre where mum receives her treatment" says Koray. "So, I sent a message to 100 of my friends, asking if they could each give \$100."

Within four days, Koray's community raised \$10,000 for the ONJ Centre. The money will be used to help fund the Brain Tumour Support Service, a much-needed resource offering programs and support groups to help people with brain tumours.

"We hope to do it again next year and just keep going," says Koray.

The Brain Tumour Support Service relies on donations from the community for survival. If you'd like to help make a difference for people like Havva visit onjcancercentre.org/donate.

Reassurance for day oncology patients

A new clinical model helps people undergoing cancer treatment manage symptoms without having to come to hospital.

The ONJ Centre was one of four Victorian hospitals to pilot the Symptom and Urgent Review Clinic (SURC) last year, which allows patients receiving cancer treatment to seek medical advice from home.



Masen Delic receiving specialist oncology nursing advice from Cher Wang, SURC Nurse

Cancer treatments can sometimes have side effects and around 40 per cent of patients end up visiting the emergency department after returning home after their treatment. SURC is a fabulous program because it increases the level of support offered to our patients.

Masen Delic received treatment at the ONJ Centre and used the SURC regularly, especially after his first few rounds of chemotherapy.

"It was so reassuring to have a specialist nurse I could call who knew about my treatment and what was normal for me to experience and what wasn't. It gave me peace of mind." – Masen Delic

The SURC pilot was so successful that it's now a permanent service. Our SURC nurses will also mentor staff at four regional hospitals that will pilot the program this year.

The SURC is located in the Day Oncology unit and is open Monday-Friday between 8am and 5pm.

Spirit of community is alive and well

There is a special connection between Eilish and Maeve and the ONJ Centre.

Their grandfather was the late Max Campbell. Max worked hard to help secure funding for the new ONJ Centre which opened in 2014. Sadly, he passed away unexpectedly that year, and today Eilish and Maeve are continuing his legacy of giving back to the community.

"Even though we're just two sisters holding a stall on the side of the road, we know that every little bit of money donated to the ONJ Centre counts. I want to continue to carry on my Pa's legacy of his enormous community spirit and make him and my family proud." – Eilish

"I know that my Pa would be proud that we're continuing to raise money for the ONJ Centre." - Maeve

Thank you Eilish and Maeve!



Community fundraising, like Eilish and Maeve's cake stall, contributes important funds to Austin Health. If you're interested in holding a community event contact our Fundraising Team on (03) 9496 5753.

What matters to you, matters to us

In August 2018 we asked you and our community of donors to share your thoughts in our survey. You told us why you care, why you help people with cancer and how we can make your experience of giving to the ONJ Centre even better.

You are inspired to give to:



Care & Treatments



Research & Clinical Trials



Wellness & Supportive Care

You love reading **Liv On!**, especially articles about:



Patients



Research



ONJ Centre Staff

You feel that:



Your donations make a difference



We report back to you



You want to do more to help patients

Thank you for sharing what matters to you.



Olivia
Newton-John
Cancer Wellness & Research Centre

**RUN
MELBOURNE**

Become an an ONJ Centre Hero at Run Melbourne this July 29!

Run with purpose at Run Melbourne by fundraising for The ONJ Centre.

You'll be helping people win over and live better with cancer.

Visit: onjcancercentre.org/runmelbourne
or email: fundraising@onjcancercentre.org



Yes, I want to help people with cancer and their families

Title: Dr / Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms (please circle)

Name _____

Address _____

Suburb _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of:

\$35 \$50 \$75 \$150 My choice _____

Payment details

My cheque and/or cash gift is enclosed.

VISA Mastercard AMEX

Card number _____

Name on card _____

Expiry date ____ / ____

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.

I would like to join Olivia's Circle by becoming a regular giver

I authorise the ONJ Cancer Centre (Austin Health) to make automatic monthly deductions from my credit card (details as above) until further notice.

Monthly amount \$ _____

Deduction occurs on the 17th of the month.

Please send me information about:

Joining Olivia's Circle (monthly giving)

Making a bequest to the ONJ Cancer Centre in my Will

Locked Bag 25, Heidelberg VIC 3084

Ph (03) 9496 5753

Email fundraising@onjcancercentre.org

Austin Health is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect your personal information so that we can contact you regarding your donations to Austin Health and the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness & Research Centre and our other programs that you may be interested in. We may share your information with similar organisations, including the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute. To review our Privacy Policy please visit austin.org.au/privacy-statement. If you would prefer Austin Health to not share your information and/or if you prefer not to receive mail from Austin Health, please let us know by writing on this coupon and return in the reply paid envelope provided.

Thank you **Giovanna and Brian**

Brian and his good friend Giovanna work tirelessly collecting bric-a-brac from the community to sell once a month at their Bric-A-Brac stall at Bulleen Plaza Shopping Centre.

Brian was diagnosed with myelodysplasia, a form of blood cancer, in 2011 and has been a patient at the ONJ Centre since. "Giovanna said to me 'You've got this blood cancer, the treatment is working. We should do some fundraising to stop the spread of cancer, of any type,'" says Brian.

So far, they've raised nearly \$20,000 for patients at the ONJ Centre. Thank you Giovanna and Brian. To find out more and to drop by their stall visit bulleenplaza.com.au/events.



Giovanna and Brian pictured with Melissa Cramp (centre), Community Engagement Officer.

On the cover...

Pictured in his final weeks of medical school last year, Dr Suresh Haikerwal completed a rotation with the ONJ Haematology team. This year, Dr Haikerwal begins his career as a doctor here at Austin Health. "In my time as a student at Austin and ONJ I was privileged to be taught by many caring, competent and compassionate doctors. I'm also indebted to the countless patients who helped me to learn through sharing their experiences with illness and health."