

August 2015 Newsletter

Providing a supportive and informative environment for people with a variety of lung conditions and their carers.

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Next Meeting: Thursday 13 August 2015
10:15 am - 12 noon
The Burns Club
8 Kett Street Kambah ACT 2902

Guest Speaker: Open forum - bring along any ideas or worries/concerns you would like to discuss.

Dates for your diary

Thursday 10 September 2015 Lung Life Meeting, The Burns Club, 10:15 am - 12 noon

Canberra Lung Life Support Group Helen Reynolds

Our Support Group is a collection of people and carers each with their own medical condition such as:

- COPD (emphysema, chronic bronchitis)
- asthma
- bronchiectasis
- pulmonary fibrosis
- dust diseases and
- lung cancer.

A supportive and informative environment is provided through monthly meetings where the group is:

- kept up to date with events and functions
- given the opportunity to discuss their concerns relating to their own situation in the knowledge that someone will have experienced something of the same and will be understanding and compassionate when sharing their own experiences
- given the opportunity by guest speakers to broaden their understanding of not only their own condition/s but also medical information, social information, information on sustaining quality of life and agencies which offer assistance and support
- provided with a social outlet for people to mingle informally over lunch.

A variety of social activities are arranged by the Social Committee led by their leader, Pam Harris.



Pam and her committee organise the fish and chips luncheons at the Southern Cross Club, Midwinter Luncheons, Christmas Luncheons, World COPD Day Activities, Senior Citizens Week Activities and other social functions.



Two well known faces joined the group for fish and chips at the Southern Cross Yacht Club. Barry is a regular but Caroline took time out of her jet setting life style to join the group for lunch.



The summer fish and chips lunch was so successful it was decided to have another when the weather was not so hot. You can tell this was the latter occasion by the clothes Wynn and John are wearing.



David and Marilyn dressed warmly for the autumn lunch but even so people didn't stay too long, as the weather was a trifle chilly.



There are always prizes for some lucky people at our various luncheons - Midwinter and Christmas. There are lucky door prizes and, of course, raffle prizes.



In an informal setting, such as the luncheons, people are more likely to drop protective barriers they may have erected enabling them to experience the understanding, compassion and support from people who "have been there and done that".



The venue for the Midwinter Luncheon was the Irish Club. The food was tasty, the company interesting and parking wasn't a problem.



Pam and Peter are engrossed in the conversation that could be a discussion of any topic under the sun.

Is Canberra an age-friendly city?

Source: COTA ACT, June-July 2015

COTA ACT (Council of the Ageing) recently undertook research into what older people think of their neighbourhood. Some of you may have contributed to this research.

The good news

Many love where they live: the amenities, green spaces, cafes and accessible shops. They feel they belong: friendly neighbours and a safe and welcoming feeling as you walk around.

The bad news

There are problems:

- the quality of footpaths
- cars parked on nature strips obstructing walkers and scooter riders
- grass turning paths into jungles
- tree roots pushing up the footpaths and
- parking at the local shops
- transport for people who do not or no longer drive
- pedestrians versus motorists on the road and at the shops.

Suggestions for improvements

COTA ACT's research also included getting feedback on the changes older people would like to see. They need to collate the results and work on the best way to work together to make our suburbs friendlier for all.

Age Care Reform

Source: ONECOTA, June/July 2015

Aged Care Reform changed on 1 July. The new system focuses more on the needs and preferences of the consumers, families and friends. The most important changes include:

- finding information and accessing assessments and services through **My Aged Care**, a gateway established by the government to help people navigate the aged care system
- the kinds of basic care and support available through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme and how you are assessed for them
- the contributions of consumers towards subsidised care and support in the Commonwealth Home Support Programme – with nationally consistent fees policy and schedule.

The site, www.myagedcare.gov.au, is an easy-to-read site with clear sections for navigating your way around it. As well as this website, there is a national contact centre on **1800 200 422** between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm on weekdays and between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm on Saturday.

***Editor's Note:** I phoned the contact centre and although they could not give me the name of a service provider who could answer my needs they were extremely courteous, helpful and eager to give assistance in any way possible. The type of assistance I need is outside their guidelines but I will seek help again and hopefully with more success.*

The A-Z of Preventative Health Care

Chris Moyle

Marriage (Dr Oz)

For cougars and cradle snatchers: marrying a younger man doesn't add any years to your life; but men who marry women 17 years younger live up to 10 years longer.

Massage

***Source:** Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*

Massage is one of the oldest forms of pain management. Hippocrates (c.460-380B.C.) said, "Physicians must be experienced in many things, but assuredly also in the rubbing that can bind a joint that is loose and loosen a joint that is too hard". Massage stimulates the skin, underlying tissues and muscles with applied pressure.

Studies of the benefits of massage demonstrate that it is an effective treatment for reducing stress, pain and muscle tension.

Discuss the pros and cons of massage with your doctor, especially if you have cancer or unexplained pain, and be sure to seek out a trained professional massage therapist.

Woodsmoke Pollution: from our archives

Helen Cotter

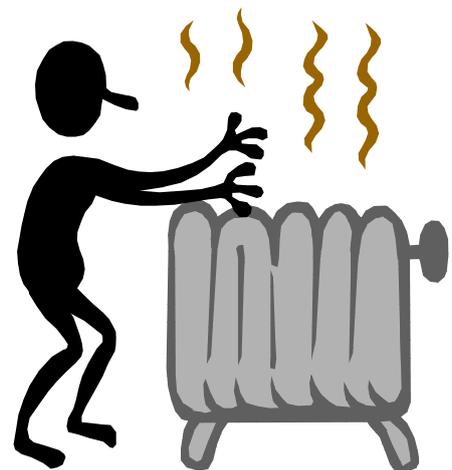
In a Lung Life meeting in 2009, Dianne (pron: Dee-anne) Proctor, a member of Lung Life, spoke passionately to the group about the dangers of woodsmoke. It was the first I'd heard that woodsmoke was dangerous although the knowledge had been bubbling around for some years. Dianne's research showed woodsmoke was:

- full of toxic elements
- the major air pollutant in Canberra and
- a real problem in the Tuggeranong Valley.

Dianne lived in the Tuggeranong Valley becoming aware of the dangers through the publicity raised by woodsmoke activist, Darryl Johnston. Darryl and his family were, and still are, affected by woodsmoke. He has spent years trying to get conditions improved in the Valley, both for his family and for everyone else.

The Valley is particularly susceptible to woodsmoke pollution because smoke hangs around in valleys especially when there is an atmospheric inversion and the lower air is unable to disperse. Remember when we used to think how lovely it looked hanging around the hills in winter and how lovely it smelled. Gone are those days now we know how dangerous it is.

Dianne, with Darryl, threw herself into developing a plan of action to lessen the pollution. 2009 and 2010 were very active years. The information they needed was:

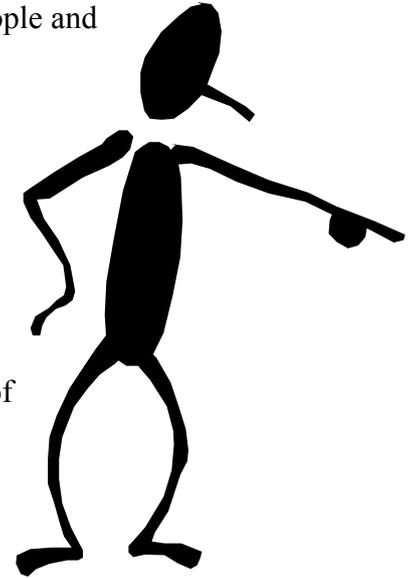


- what is wrong with woodsmoke?
- is it a problem in Canberra?
- how are other places dealing with it?
- what is happening in the ACT about it?

In early 2009 Dianne, in collaboration with Darryl, downloaded information from the NSW Department of Health concerning the dangers of poor air quality to all people and particularly those with respiratory diseases:

- information on the dangerous chemicals found in woodsmoke
- emission reports from the National Pollution Inventory – on both particulate matter and on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
- information on the problems with wood heaters, even ones of accepted standards.

June and July 2009 were a hive of activity with emails buzzing back and forth from Dianne and Darryl, Jim Markos, Mark Hurwitz. Dianne kept others involved by forwarding the emails to people such as Darlene Cox of HCCA and Lung Life members – Esther Fitton, Caroline Scowcroft, Laurelle Ellis, Pam Harris, Madeline Fleming, Rusty Woodward among others. Remember those emails?



Dianne and Darryl looked at ways to progress the issue in the ACT.

- How did Jim Markos handle the situation in Launceston?
- Would the Lung Foundation take the matter up looking at air quality?
- What was happening in other parts of the world?

In a hand written summary, Dianne outlined some suggestions for the future. Specifically, to focus on health aspects while educating the population and relevant players on the issue.

In July 2009, Dianne attended the Tuggeranong Community Council meeting with Rusty Woodward where Darryl Johnston, President of TCC, proposed a motion calling on the ACT Government to ban installation of new slow combustion wood heaters by 2010 followed by a total ban of all such heaters by 2015. The motion was passed. One consequence was that the ACT Government called for a review of the woodsmoke situation.

Later in 2009, Dianne died and her information was passed to me. She had done valuable work in raising awareness about the dangers of woodsmoke and in doing something about it.

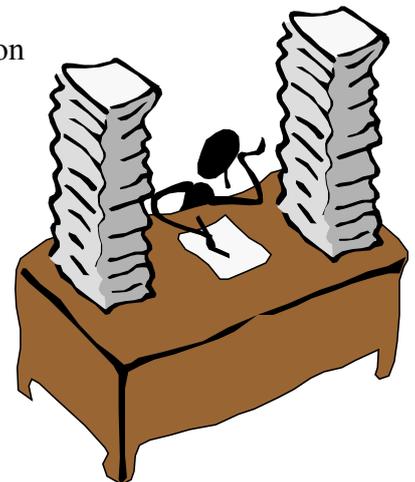
Bronchiectasis Registry

Source: <http://lungfoundation.com.au/health-professionals/bronchiectasis-registry/>

Non-cystic fibrosis (non-CF) bronchiectasis is caused by chronic infection of the airways and results in chronic cough, excess sputum production and in some cases chest pain, shortness of breath and coughing up of blood. There is currently no cure and little information on the condition.

Lung Foundation Australia proposes to launch an Australian Registry to study non-CF bronchiectasis. The Project is designed to build upon its success with development and administration of the Australian [Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis Registry](http://lungfoundation.com.au/research/idiopathic-pulmonary-fibrosis-registry/).

(<http://lungfoundation.com.au/research/idiopathic-pulmonary-fibrosis-registry/>)



Such a registry will provide the opportunity for research into this condition. Not only will an Australian Bronchiectasis Registry serve to focus the Australian respiratory medical community on this condition, but it will also foster national and international collaborative efforts of research into bronchiectasis.

The project has strong support from the global bronchiectasis network, including the COPD Foundation's USA Bronchiectasis Registry, the UK Bronchiectasis Registry and the developing European Registry, which will collect data across 108 sites. The Registry will be developed and implemented over an initial three-year period, with the view to continue to expand the Registry once established.

Exercise for people over 60

Esther Fitton

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface where you have plenty of room at each side.

With a 1kg potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 2 kg potato bags. Then try 5kg potato bags and eventually try to get to where you can lift a 10 kg potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. **(I'm at this level).**

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

POC Available

We have a **Philips SimplyGo Oxygen Concentrator** with only 180 hours of use available for sale. It provides both continuous flow and pulse and has the usual worthwhile accessories:

- a trolley for easy pulling;
- a carry bag
- electric or battery use
- 2 batteries
- car charger
- user manual and quick start guide.



This is Currently on ebay for \$2,999. If you're interested, contact Caroll on 0409 322 069.

Last month's guest speaker **Holly Smith**, a dietician with the Obesity Management Service, gave the group an overview of the service including:

- the members of the team, doctors, nurses, dietitians, psychologists, physiotherapists and exercise physiologists
- what the service will do for the individual
- referral method and
- where the service is based.

In next month's newsletter there will be all the information needed for referral plus even more relating to the service plus information on nutrition and age.