

## October 2024 Newsletter

**Our mission is to provide a supportive and informative environment for people with lung conditions and their carers.**

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**NEXT MEETING:** Thursday 14 November 2024  
10:15 am – 12:00 noon  
Weston Creek Labor Club  
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

**Speaker:** A representative from HCCA will talk about the Advanced Care Plan.

### Editor's Note

Our newsletter this month is full of pictures, some of which can only be accessed by people with computers. They are photos sent by George coming to the end of his winter travels around Australia. They are mostly scenes from Southwest WA and Eyre Peninsula SA and include lots of wildflowers. We're sorry we can't show them all in this newsletter. However, if you are one with a computer [click here to see the supplement we have created for you.](#)

### Dates to remember

**Friday 25 October:** Lunch at Snapper, Southern Cross Yacht Club, Yarralumla at 11:30 am  
**Thursday 14 November:** Lung Life meeting 10:15 am – Advanced Care Plan  
**Wednesday 20 November:** World COPD Day  
**Friday 29 November:** Lunch at Belconnen Labor Club 11:30 am  
**Thursday 12 December:** Christmas lunch – more details next newsletter

### October Meeting – Helen Cotter

Marina opened the meeting by welcoming us all, then giving us an update on the Seniors Expo held on Wednesday 25 September at Kingston Markets. The Expo was very successful with an excellent turnout of people wandering around, looking at everything. The Lung Life stand had a constant stream of people talking to them about lung issues and about our organisation. Chris Gray mentioned that they handed out over 100 brochures and pens – and lollies. Marina, Val and Chris felt it was a very successful event.

- Chris Gray then told us she was leaving and moving to Queensland where they'll be near her son. Chris took over from Pam Harris, organising the Expo and other events. We will miss her.

- Marina reminded us that the next meeting (November) was our final for the year. In December, we have our Christmas Lunch; in January, we have a casual get-together – and in February, we start the New Year with a planning session for the year, looking at what needs to be organised and who will do it.
- We discussed World COPD Day on Wednesday 20 November but decided that we weren't ready to do anything as a group this year so will leave it to discuss at our planning meeting in February.
- Marilyn reminded us to **bring food items** to the next meeting – items suitable for Christmas hampers to be raffled at the Christmas Lunch.
- Libby reminded us about the Chifley Gym, officially opened recently by Chris Steel and Rachel Stephen-Smith. It has programs tailored to the individual's needs but also has group sessions – plus all different types of membership options. We call it Chifley Gym but its official name is: **EQUIPD Allied Health Chifley Community Gym**. Their web address is: [www.equipdalliedhealth.com.au](http://www.equipdalliedhealth.com.au) .
- Marina mentioned that she goes to another exercise program, organised by Arthritis ACT which caters for all levels of ability. Website: [Arthritis ACT](http://ArthritisACT)
- **November Lunch:** Belconnen Labor Club – which seems to be officially called Canberra Labor Club is at 51 Chandler Street, Belconnen. Phone: 02 6251 5522; [www.laborclub.com.au](http://www.laborclub.com.au).
- Val Dempsey told us about the launch of a program of putting **defibrillators** in every shopping centre for use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A trial in Victoria showed that having defibs in shopping centres increased the survival rate for those having a sudden cardiac arrest.

At the end of the session, Marina divided us into three groups to discuss three questions:

1. **What do you personally like to receive from the group?** **Answer:** mutual respect – for others and for yourself. Important at a meeting that everyone needs respect – which adds to the enjoyment of the meeting. Especially important: when Marina has the floor, we should listen.
2. **If there is one thing you could change in this group?** **Answer:** the answer follows on from the previous point. We often break into small chattering groups; people's voices are often too quiet to be clearly heard – we need to use the microphone and talk to the whole group – otherwise useful and important information may be missed; and enjoyment lessened.
3. **Why do we come to the meetings?** **Answer:** it was a concise response – to be educated; and for the social aspect.

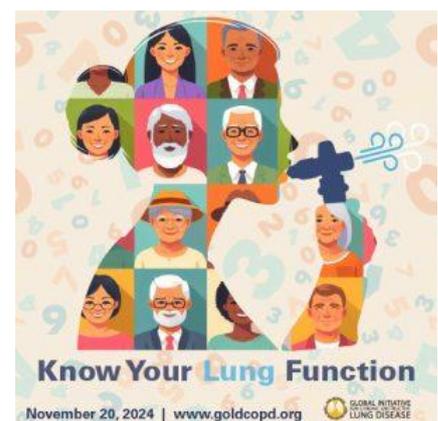
And with that, the meeting ended and it was off to lunch.

## World COPD Day Wednesday 20 November 2024

**From:** <https://goldcopd.org/world-copd-day-2024/>

### [World COPD Day 2024 - Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease - GOLD \(goldcopd.org\)](https://goldcopd.org)

World COPD Day is organized by **GOLD - the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease**. Its aim is to raise awareness, share knowledge, and discuss ways to reduce the burden of COPD worldwide. The first World COPD Day was held in 2002. Each year organisers in more than 50 countries have carried out activities, making the day one of the world's most important COPD awareness and education events.



Each year GOLD chooses a theme and this year the theme is: **Know Your Lung Function**. It aims to highlight the **importance of measuring lung function**, also known as spirometry. Spirometry is an integral tool for diagnosing COPD and can also measure lung health throughout life.

Our lungs are continuing to grow from the womb all the way through young adulthood. Throughout this period we are vulnerable to insults such as air pollution and respiratory infections that can impede lung growth and increase our risk for developing chronic lung disease later in life. Unfortunately, much lung function can be lost before we develop symptoms.

COPD is currently **one of the leading causes of death worldwide** and is highly prevalent in the general population, particularly in low resource countries. It's estimated that **three million people globally die each year due to COPD**. This number is expected to increase due to the ageing world population. Exposure to tobacco smoke and other inhaled toxic particles and gases are the main risk factors for COPD, although recent research indicates that COPD results from a combination of genetic and environmental risk factors that occur over a lifetime, starting in utero and continuing during infancy and adolescence.

**World COPD Day on Wednesday 20 November 2024** aims to raise awareness about COPD and encourage actions to prevent it and to improve quality of life of those with COPD. Employers can provide safe breathing environments, citizens can be good stewards of air cleanliness, and both patients and families can help advocate for more research and better access to care, including essential medications, routine spirometry screenings, and other treatments like telehealth access for patients in remote settings.

In addition, providers and policy makers can work together to improve access to spirometry and advocate for its use as a general health marker in all stages of life, important not only for the diagnosis of respiratory diseases but also as a general health marker.

## ASH celebrates

From Caroline Polak Scowcroft

**Canberra Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)** have just celebrated their 40th anniversary. Throughout that time ASH, under the presidency of founder Dr Alan Shroot, has tirelessly and successfully countered the tobacco industry against their smoking promotions; consequently ASH has advocated very successfully for decreasing Australian smoking rates.

On this topic, Dr Shroot writes many letters to the Editor of the Canberra Times and other media and is often interviewed on local radio.

For the past year, ASH's main focus has been on the **upsurge of vaping**, particularly among younger Australians. ASH always actively campaigns by lobbying elected members, writing to the media, and opposing the relaxing of any legislation relating to smoking, and related issues.

For further information, ASH can be contacted on [canberra.ash@outlook.com](mailto:canberra.ash@outlook.com).

## Seniors Expo

On 25 September we ran a stall at the Seniors Expo at the Kingston Markets. Our thanks go to Marina and Val Siemionow and Chris Gray who set up, ran the stall and closed down in the afternoon. There was a lot of interest – especially in the lollies – but also genuine enquiries about Lung Life itself. We may have picked up a few future members.

Our thanks to Marina, Val and Chris for their work, time and effort in running the stall.

Thanks to Val Siemionow for these photos and for this information.

Here are some photos from the day:



Marina and Chris setting up



Val and Chris all set for visitors



The scene in the Kingston Markets. Can you see our stall and our people?

## Lung conditions: silicosis?

From LFA via Caroline Polak Scowcroft

Silicosis is an occupational lung disease caused by breathing in silica dust. Inhaling this dust causes inflammation which, over time, leads to **scarring of the lung tissue and stiffening of the lungs, making it difficult to breathe**. Silicosis is a chronic condition that currently has no cure.

Silica is a **naturally occurring mineral** that can be found in soil, sand, granite and many commercial products such as engineered (artificial) stone, bricks, tiles, concrete and mortar. It's also found in most mining and quarrying operations because it occurs naturally in the earth's crust. It can be found in most rock, limestone, and sandstone.

Silica dust is generated when silica-containing materials, such as engineered stone, concrete, mortar or natural sources like shale and granite, are cut, crushed, drilled, ground, polished, sanded, sawed or disturbed with force. These actions produce visible dust, but it's the smaller dust particles that you can't always see that stay in the air and when breathed in, can penetrate deep into the lungs, causing the silicosis.

## Friday End-of-month Lunch: Space Kitchen

Twelve people attended this lunch at the Space Kitchen, Woden, and all looked as if they enjoyed themselves immensely. It was a very pleasant afternoon with good menu, good service and good company.

Photos and information by Val Siemionow.



Barry, Joe and Val



Marilyn and Kaye



John Morley. Is that really two lots of cheese to eat?



Marina and Val  
Marilyn in the background

**Need assistance navigating supports as you (or a loved one) get older?**

Services Australia now has Aged Care Specialist Officers (ACSO) who can help you with aged care matters.

It's free to access these face-to-face services. Staff in all Services Australia offices can help you with general information about My Aged Care services.

They can also help connect you with specialised assistance, including using My Aged Care's online or phone service.

You can book a free face-to-face appointment with an ACSO

- through video chat if you have a myGov account, or
- in person at some service centres.

You can also get support online at the [My Aged Care website](#) or over the phone on [1800 200 422](tel:1800200422).

Read more about [how Services Australia can help you](#).



## Way out west where the rain don't fall – George Watts

George's winter journey is nearing its end. He has sent us a lovely lot of photos from Southwest WA and, closer to home, from Eyre Peninsula, SA.



**Ravensthorpe, WA**



**Wave Rock, Hyden**



**Beautiful blue Leschenaultia**

See the full selection of George's photos in our special document. [Click here to view this.](#)