



PA Foundation 1984 – 2009

25 years & \$20 million fostering life saving research

The PA Foundation was established in 1984 to raise funds for world class health and medical research at the Princess Alexandra Hospital—Queensland’s leading research hospital and our largest clinical trials centre. “Gardasil” and the “Brisbane Technique” are just two familiar entries in a long list of significant achievements.

Over the past 25 years, the Foundation has raised more than \$20 million. More than \$1.2 million was awarded last year alone. Substantial sums considering all funds are generated by the general public, the business community, private practice trust funds, fundraising events, bequests and the many patients and families who have benefited from medical treatment provided by the PA Hospital.

These funds directly benefit the PA’s groundbreaking research projects in areas such as cervical cancer, prostate cancer, heart disease, immunology, kidney disease, diabetes, liver disease, transplantation and arthritis.

Investing in smart thinking

This is not just an investment in the future health and wellbeing of our families and communities; it is also an investment in Australian industry and ingenuity. In the

words of Professor Ian Frazer: “As individuals and as a nation, we need to value ideas. The solution to many of today’s challenges will start with an idea and be driven by a commitment to find that solution.”

One breakthrough benefits many. And every donation takes us a step closer to the next one. In the next 25 years, the Foundation aims to build on its considerable achievements to date, and advance the PA Hospital’s world leading, life saving research. The new Translational Research Institute is now in development—the only facility of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, it will house the 600-plus people who make up our research community.

The PA Foundation would like to take this opportunity to thank the many individuals, families and businesses who have supported our vital work in the past. We look forward to working with you further in the future, as we continue to foster research for life.



A new image for a new era

To celebrate 25 years, and help pave the way for a prosperous future, the PA Foundation

has updated its logo. The new brand seeks to create a positive, professional and progressive impression for the Foundation and the vital research it supports. It will be an invaluable tool for taking our message to a wider audience, sharing our success stories, and raising funds for future research.

‘One breakthrough benefits many. And every donation takes us a step closer to the next one’

The design draws on the universally recognised health symbol of the cross, with the organic shapes of the individual elements resembling cells. Various colours represent a diversity of activity and research. These combine to symbolise the collaborative and translational nature of our research, and the complex task of fostering that research.

Extensions of the logo adapt to specific areas of focus, such as heart disease, cervical cancer, prostate cancer and diabetes. (See the insert in this issue for more details.) The new brand will be progressively extended to the Foundation’s various communication and marketing materials throughout the year—starting with this edition of Partners.

We hope you like our new look. 

Foundation Timeline (this issue 1984 - 2002)

1984 Foundation Established Australia’s first successful liver transplant.

1986 Split liver transplant – ‘the Brisbane Technique’ – pioneered.

1987 Artificial cornea R&D commenced. New methods developed for preserving donor organs.

Treasurer commits \$7.5 million to PA prostate cancer research



Treasurer Wayne Swan and Patient at the PA.

The Australian Government has provided a \$7.5 million funding grant to establish a Prostate Cancer Research Centre at the PA Hospital. The announcement in January by Commonwealth Treasurer, The Hon Wayne Swan MP, came after months of lobbying and years of world-leading research by Foundation-supported researcher, Professor Colleen Nelson.

"I have every confidence the research done will save many lives. I literally owe my life to them."

Mr Swan says this level of investment in prostate cancer research is a first in Australia. "It is about saving lives" he said. "When it comes to medical research, this country punches well above its weight. We have been blessed with dedicated and visionary researchers who put this country on the map for world research".

As a prostate cancer survivor himself, Mr

Swan is a vocal and tireless advocate for detection, treatment and research. "I know how invaluable the findings of the Prostate Cancer Research Centre and clinical trials will be" he said. "I have every confidence the research done will save many lives. I literally owe my life to them."

Professor Colleen Nelson, who will co-direct the centre, welcomed the announcement. "This announcement represents a great day for men suffering from prostate cancer, men that have survived prostate cancer and the men who will have to deal with prostate cancer in the future" Professor Nelson said. "The Prostate Cancer Research Centre will be a dedicated, multidisciplinary effort. A global effort with global solutions to deal with what is a global problem."

Along with continued support from the community through donations and events like last year's Prostate Cancer Awareness Luncheon, we can individually and collectively help our research see the light of day. 🌈



"One researcher working in the back room can change the lives of a million people."

Hotels shout hospitals

For the fifth year running, the Queensland Hotels Association has demonstrated its community spirit with Hotel Care Week, when Queensland hotels rally together to raise money for medical research and regional hospitals.

The 2008 event, held last September, raised an unprecedented \$200,000. Since 2004, Hotel Care Week has raised more than \$830,000. Funds are distributed between the PA Foundation, Mater Foundation and

Queensland's regional hospitals.

At the cheque handover ceremony last December, melanoma survivor Julie Fraser and Hotel Care Week patron Ian Healy shared heartfelt stories on how research has touched their lives.

Julie said medical research was the reason she was still here. "I'm one of the lucky ones. There are a lot of people diagnosed in the late stages of melanoma who can't

come to grips when they find out that there is no vaccine, no cure and limited treatment options." For these patients, Julie says, research is critical.

Queensland Hotels Association CEO Justin O'Connor perfectly summed up the spirit of the event and the potential of research. "One researcher working in the back room can change the lives of a million people" he said. 🌈

1989 Foundation commences funding cervical cancer vaccine research by Prof. Ian Frazer. World's first donor liver liver transplant.

1994 Foundation commences funding Rheumatoid Arthritis research by Prof. Ranjeny Thomas.

1998 Prof Michael Roberts develops a safer and more effective aspirin

PA cardiac research helps Elaine get her breath back

Most of us take walking for granted. But for Elaine Fehringer, just a few steps could leave her gasping for breath.

Elaine suffers from a condition known as diastolic heart failure, whereby increased pressure within the heart prevents sufficient blood from being circulated. This is suspected to be caused by stiffening of the heart muscle and arteries. Diastolic heart failure can present in people with no history of cardiac disease. A telltale symptom is severe breathlessness.

Elaine's cardiologist—the PA's Professor Tom Marwick—encouraged her to participate in one of his group's research trials. The Exertional Breathlessness and Cardiac Filling Trial, headed by PhD candidate David Holland, investigates treatment options—including exercise therapy—to reduce the symptoms of breathlessness, and improve the patient's capacity to perform daily tasks.

Elaine has become a regular visitor to David's research post at the PA. And after six months in the trial, she has made dramatic improvement. "The first time I came

here" Elaine says "it took me 20 minutes to walk from the train station to the courtesy bus. I then had to be driven up the hill. Now, six months on, I get out of the train, walk straight past the courtesy bus and up the hill. It takes me half the time, and I'm not short of breath at any stage."

David says he is very happy with how far Elaine has come, and the significant improvement in her wellbeing. "Elaine's exercise capacity has doubled" David says. "The stiffness of her arteries has reduced and she has less pressure at the heart. She can now walk for more than 45 minutes without shortness of breath."

Elaine can once again go about the day-to-day without having to rely on others. "I can play with my grandkids, do the grocery shopping—simple things I hadn't done in a long time" she says. "I can never thank Professor Marwick or David enough for their support and encouragement to participate in the program. I highly recommend anyone suitable to take part in the trial—to support the PA's research and benefit from the results. I am living proof that a little research can make the biggest difference."



Elaine and David at the PA trial centre.

If you get short of breath—and do not have heart, lung or kidney disease—you may be suitable for this trial. For more information, please contact:

David Holland

Tel: 3240 5324, Mobile 0407 164 026

Email: d.holland@uq.edu.au



Heart Disease
Research for Life

Sherrin dinner feeds PA's Alzheimer's research



Fireworks at Riverfire Charity Gala.

The 2008 Sherrin Riverfire Charity Gala Dinner raised an amazing \$165,569.34 to go to the Foundation for Alzheimer's Disease research. This brings the total raised by the Sherrin family over the past five years to more than \$500,000.

The annual dinner is held in memory of Helen Sherrin, whose life was cut tragically short in her 40s by a rare and aggressive form of Alzheimer's Disease—the degenerative and terminal brain disease for which there is neither cure nor treatment to halt progression.

Helen was a patient of Dr Paul Varghese and his team at the PA. Trialling new therapies extended Helen's life expectancy by 18 months, but ultimately wasn't enough to stave off the debilitating disease.

Michael Sherrin established the charity

dinner in recognition of the treatment and support his late wife and their family received at the PA—in the hope that fostering research will help reduce suffering for Alzheimer's patients and their families in the future.

"The Riverfire Charity Gala Dinner is our way of celebrating Helen's life" Michael said. "Most importantly, it raises funds so we can help other families affected by the disease."

With continued groundbreaking research by Dr Varghese, and the generous support of people like the Sherrins, there is hope that the Alzheimer's puzzle will one day be solved.

The next Riverfire Charity Gala Dinner is scheduled for August this year. More information: sherrinrentals.com.au/gala

2001 New PA Hospital Opens. Prof Marjory Green discovers a protein that may prevent transplant rejection.

2002 World's first single liver transplant performed on a baby just 24 hrs old. Diamantina Insitute opens.

2002 World's first clinical trial on spinal cord regeneration by nasal cell transplant.

Issue 1 Quiz!

Our researchers rack their brains ...
Now it's your turn!

How long did it take PA researchers to develop the cervical cancer vaccine?

- a. 5 years b. 10 years
c. 15 years d. 20 years

How many cases of diabetes are diagnosed in Australia each year?

- a. 100,000 b. 400,000
c. 700,000 d. 1 million

Cardiovascular disease accounts for one-third of all deaths in Australia, killing one of us every ...

- a. 10 minutes b. 45 minutes
c. hour d. day

The springboard for developing the cervical cancer vaccine was the discovery of an association with ...

- a. diabetic myelopathy b. gingivitis
c. human papillomavirus
d. hyperthyroidism

Diastolic heart failure is when the heart ...

- a. stops beating b. beats irregularly
c. has increased pressure within
d. doesn't pump properly

The PA's Exertional Breathlessness and Cardiac Filling Trial aims to ...

- a. increase pressure within the heart
b. reduce pressure within the heart
c. increase lung capacity
d. improve liver function

Intro: the people behind the research



Professor David Johnson

Kidney Disease Research Group

Put simply, I'm researching ways to improve the outcomes of individuals with kidney disease and kidney cancer. I was clinically drawn to this field because of the complex challenge of treating patients with kidney disease. I then got into research to try to make a difference at a population level, rather than just the individual level.

Kidney disease affects one in seven Australians and accounts for the deaths of 10% of Australians each year. Over the last 30 years, the Australian population has increased by 40%, whilst the end-stage kidney disease population has increased

by 400%. An effective prevention strategy for kidney disease is urgently required.

The PA Foundation has helped from the outset. I would not have been able to get my lab started without the Foundation's New Investigator Grant. The Foundation has also helped tremendously by providing seedling funds to help kick-start new research projects in kidney disease. Number one on my wish list is more space.

The achievements I'm most proud of are my wife and six children, first and foremost. I'm also proud of my efforts to establish automated laboratory reporting of a kidney disease screening test (eGFR) with all serum biochemistry requests in Australia and New Zealand. And my nomination as a Queensland finalist in the 2008 Australian of the Year Awards.

When I'm not at work, I like to play with my children and cycle. And if I wasn't a researcher, I'd be a stay-at-home Dad. 🇺🇸

Tell us...Your thoughts, comments and stories

We'd love to hear from you, please drop us a line or give us a call.

Post a letter to Reply Paid 77401 PA Foundation, 199 Ipswich Road Woolloongabba, 4102, Call us 07 3240 2359 or Email general@pafoundation.org.au

What's on... 'The 39 Steps'

Come and join us for a special theatre performance of the West End and Broadway smash hit, 'The 39 Steps', Alfred Hitchcock's classic spy thriller hilariously recreated for stage.

All proceeds for this special performance go to heart disease research.

When: Tues 12 May, 8pm, Twelfth Night Theatre

Tickets are \$49.90 and include a free glass of champagne.

To book your tickets call us on 07 3240 2359 or visit pafoundation.org.au

Donation Form – Yes, I would like to support health research!

If you would like to make a donation, please fill out and detach the form below and return it POSTAGE FREE to: PA Foundation REPLY PAID 77401, Woolloongabba QLD 4102, or fax it to (07) 3240 7303. For enquiries, to donate by phone or to organise scheduled donations, please call (07) 3240 2359. For further information on the PA Foundation or to make an online donation, go to pafoundation.org.au.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO THE PA FOUNDATION | | <input type="checkbox"/> ONE-OFF CREDIT CARD DONATION | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER | | | |



Research for life

The PA Foundation raises funds for groundbreaking, lifesaving research - to develop better diagnoses, treatments and preventions for some of Australia's biggest health challenges. This research reduces human suffering and enhances quality of life; it reduces the burden on already stretched health care budgets, and fosters Australian ingenuity and industry.

All research funded by the Foundation goes through a rigorous selection process - to ensure it is of genuine scientific merit, and does not replicate any other research anywhere in the world. All funds raised therefore contribute to the highest calibre research,

to tackle some of the most challenging health problems facing us as a nation ...

-  Cancer
-  Heart Disease
-  Diabetes
-  Spinal Injury
-  Arthritis
-  Mental Health
-  Liver Disease
-  Kidney and renal disease

\$20+ million in 25 years

Thanks to the donations from individuals, families, communities and businesses - more than \$20 million in our first 25 years

- this research has improved the lives of literally millions of people around the world. Our cervical cancer vaccine, for instance, is widely regarded as a major milestone in the fight against cancer, and one of the greatest medical breakthroughs since penicillin.

Australia's health at a glance

- Australians enjoy one of the world's long life expectancies, averaging 81.4 years
- Death rates are falling for many of our leading health conditions, such as cancer, heart disease, strokes and asthma.
- Cardiovascular disease, cancer and respiratory diseases remain the leading cause of death. 

An introduction to the PA Foundation's key research areas



Heart Disease Research for Life

Heart disease

Cardiovascular disease - heart, stroke and blood vessel disease - is the leading cause of death in Australia. It accounts for an astonishing one-third of all deaths, killing one Australian every 10 minutes.

Cardiovascular disease is Australia's number one health problem. The cost to the community is estimated at around \$6 billion a year.

Take heart

Death by cardiovascular disease is largely preventable. Early detection and treatment over the past 10 years have resulted in a

clear decline in mortality rates. PA researchers have made a significant contribution.

Today, PA researchers are investigating ...

- How stiffness of the heart muscle and arteries can be reduced to prevent hypertension and heart failure.
- How exercise and diet can prevent or reverse cardiovascular disease.
- Physiological factors underlying abnormal blood pressure response.

- Associations between diabetic myocardial disease and cardiac dysfunction.

- New drugs to prevent heart attacks and stroke.

- Physiological testing to guide heart failure management.

With continued research, we will continue to reduce the personal suffering and financial burden. 



Prostate cancer

Prostate cancer represents as big a threat for men as breast cancer does for women. It is the most common type of cancer in Australian men, and the second highest cause of cancer death, after lung cancer. One in nine Australian men will develop prostate cancer. More than 3000 die from the disease each year.

Prostate cancer is a malignant tumour of the prostate - a walnut-sized gland surrounding the male urethra just below the bladder. Prostate cancer can grow slowly with little

or no side effects; or it can progress rapidly with significant and potentially fatal side effects.

As our population ages, the incidence of prostate cancer increases dramatically. It has risen by two-thirds in the last decade. At this rate, it will double by 2020.

Advances in research and early diagnosis have achieved a 90% cure rate. Ongoing PA research is investigating two key areas ...

- Identifying whether a patient's condition is slow or fast spreading.

- Determining the appropriate level of treatment required.

With the Australian Government's \$7.5 million grant to establish a Prostate Cancer Research Centre at the PA Hospital, PA researchers will be advancing prostate cancer detection and treatment to address all types and stages of the disease. 🌈

Diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic condition in which the body cannot properly use its main energy source - blood glucose. This is often due to both environmental and hereditary factors.

Diabetes can be treated, but there is no cure. It can lead to tissue damage, organ failure and premature death.

Type 1 diabetes usually occurs in children and young adults, and requires regular insulin replacement. Left untreated, T1 has a 100% death rate.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for around 85% of cases. T2 can sometimes be managed

through exercise and diet, but generally also requires insulin replacement.

A major health crisis

- Diabetes can lead to heart disease, kidney disease, nerve disease, renal failure, blindness and physical incapacitation.

- It's one of the top 10 causes of death.

- The national cost is estimated at more than \$900 million a year.

- The incidence of diabetes is climbing at an alarming rate—more than 700,000

diagnoses each year.

- 2,000,000 Australian adults are obese, making them prime candidates for T2.

PA research making progress

Our researchers are working on a blood test to identify those at risk of developing T1, and then tailoring treatments to prevent the disease.

Health and fitness programs are being trialled for the prevention and management of T2 and associated conditions. 🌈

Cervical cancer

Cervical cancer kills around 270,000 women worldwide each year, making it the second highest cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer.

One in 150 Australian women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer—that's 700 new cases each year. One third of these women will die from the disease.

Thanks to PA research, these figures will soon start falling

PA research over 20 years has led to major

developments in cervical cancer tests, treatments and - perhaps most significantly - vaccines.

The Gardasil and Cervarix vaccines - developed by our own Professor Ian Frazer and the late Dr Jian Zhou - will potentially halve cervical cancer rates, saving the lives of millions of women worldwide.

Cervical cancer is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV). There are some 10 strains of HPV that cause the disease. However, the current vaccines do not pro-

tect against all of these. And older women remain at risk.

We've come a long way

PA researchers are now working on a vaccine against the remaining HPV strains. The ultimate aim is to have one vaccine that will provide broad protection against all HPV strains.

Our researchers are also working on better treatments to fight the progression of cervical cancer, which will lead to better outcomes for women suffering from the disease. 🌈