

Newsletter

Edition 46 | Winter – Spring 2021



Kate, diagnosed with breast cancer in November 2020.

“Triple Negative Breast Cancer – a term I had never heard until it was the label that was placed upon me.”

In response to a diagnosis of breast cancer which turned her life upside down, Kate created ‘30 for 30’. Feeling that no one should have to go through what she has, Kate reached out to her friends and family asking them to sponsor her as she rides 30kms a day over her 30 sessions of radiation treatment. The below, in her own words, is the message Kate shared with her community which inspired them to action raising close to \$30,000 for our research program.

“Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) accounts for about 10-15% of breast cancers diagnosed. Unlike other breast cancers, there are no targeted treatments and as such it has the poorest prognosis. It is an aggressive cancer, it grows quickly, is more likely to spread and is unfortunately more likely to come back soon after treatment ends.

If it comes back, it generally returns in the brain, lungs, bones or liver at which point it is considered treatable not curable.

TNBC is a silent killer. It favours the young, targeting many of us at a time when we are thinking about marriage and children, and when we are amid building our careers.

My diagnosis turned my life upside down, forcing me to walk away from the life I had built in Dubai

overnight. I had no family history, I am 34 (and not eligible for yearly mammograms). I was fit, healthy and had no symptoms. There was literally nothing wrong with me but by the time I was diagnosed my cancer had already spread.

However I am lucky. I was one of the 30% whose tumours responded to chemotherapy. My surgery removed the cancer cells, and six weeks of daily radiation will mop up anything that may be lying around. It’s looking good, but unfortunately there’s no escaping the very real fear of recurrence and the next five years will be a test.

My hair may be growing back but the impact of months of dose-dense chemotherapy runs deep. The trade-off for life saving treatment is a raft of undesirable long-term side effects and complications which I am only just starting to navigate. I was very naive, but now I’m beginning to face the reality of my diagnosis and with that comes the realisation that my recovery will be long.

No one should have to go through this, yet so many do. Please help me to change the prognosis for TNBC patients by sponsoring me as I ride 30kms a day over my 30 sessions of radiation, starting from June 10th.

Your money will go to Breast Cancer Trials, a group of world-leading breast cancer doctors and researchers committed to exploring and finding better treatments for people affected by breast cancer through clinical trials research. Together we can make a difference to the lives of those diagnosed with this horrible disease.”

– Kate



Kate pictured with her husband Jesse.

Chair's update

As a researcher and surgeon who treats breast cancer patients regularly, it is always very gratifying when the years of work and commitment to a clinical trial produces an outcome that is going to significantly benefit patients.

The recent presentation and publication of the OlympiA clinical trial is a wonderful example of this. Breast cancer is a complicated disease and it will take a truly global, collaborative effort, such as that achieved with OlympiA, to understand and change the outcomes for every person diagnosed or at risk.

I congratulate my fellow BCT researchers, staff and clinical trial participants for their hard work and dedication to the OlympiA clinical trial and I look forward to seeing Olaparib become available for this new use in Australia as soon as possible.

Your generous response to our Appeals this year, including at

tax time and Mother's Day, is very much appreciated. I was heartened by your response to our recent supporter survey too.

Thank you for sharing with us that many of you have been touched personally by breast cancer, or through a loved one or friend. With its prevalence in our community as the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia today, it's not surprising that many of us have been affected and that we all want to see change.

My fellow Board members and our scientific community are listening to you, wanting to understand your motivations and your hopes for the future. We are committed to a breast cancer clinical trials research program which is driven by patient need, responds to cutting edge ideas and opportunities, and maximises the advances in technology and the laboratory which are happening at a rapid pace.



Results from clinical trials do not come overnight, however. Clinical trials by their very nature require time. OlympiA for example first commenced in Australia in 2015. Your continued commitment to our research program is critical and without it, the benefits to patients from this research may never have been known.

Thank you for working with us to get new treatments to more patients. Together we are saving and improving lives.

Professor Bruce Mann
Board Chair, Breast Cancer Trials (BCT)

IN MEMORIAM

We gratefully acknowledge gifts received in memory of:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
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| Ms Karen Barnett | Mrs Ivy Dodd | Ms Elizabeth Jennings | Mrs Cathy Montgomery | Mrs Thora Simpson |
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BEQUESTS

We gratefully acknowledge bequests received from the following supporters and offer our condolences to their families:

- Miss Shirley Apelt Mrs Murielle Bird Ms Joan D Pearce Mrs Martha Louise Sims Mr Norman John Smith Miss Sheila W Woodcock

Shaping the future of your charity

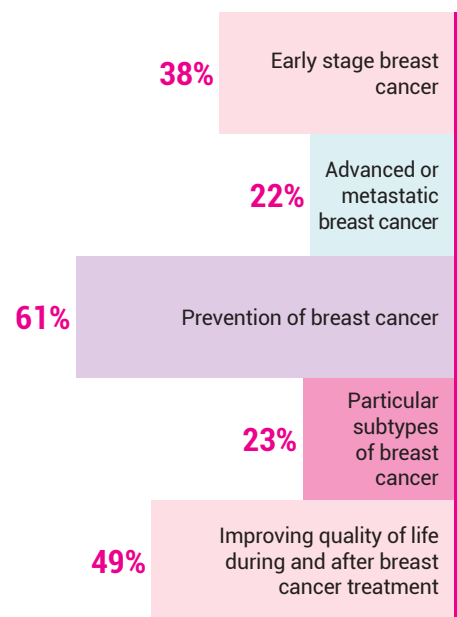
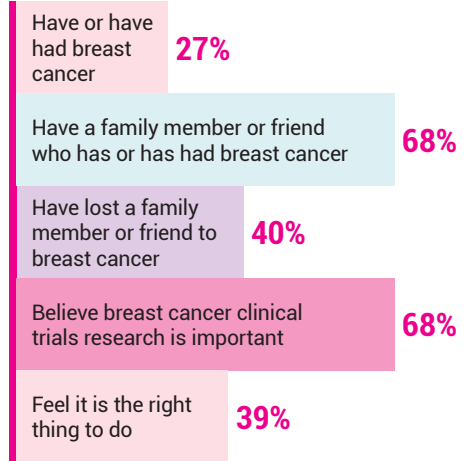
Thank you to everyone who completed the 2021 Supporter Survey. Your feedback helps us to plan and communicate with you about the things you care about most. You truly are helping to shape the future of your charity so that together we can save lives from breast cancer.

What best describes your motivation to donate to breast cancer clinical trials research?

Every day in Australia, 55 women will experience the shock and fear of being told they have breast cancer. We know many of you are motivated to donate to our research because you have personally experienced breast cancer yourself or a loved one has been affected.

Your support ensures clinical trials research can turn laboratory breakthroughs into new treatments and cures for our family and friends diagnosed with breast cancer. Vicki shared:

"Being a breast cancer survivor, I know that a lot of people gave their support either financially or as a trial participant, and this enabled me to have the treatment I had. Therefore, I am now paying it forward as both a participant and a donor."



Areas of breast cancer clinical trials research you are especially interested in.

Understanding what's important to our community helps inform our research priorities moving forward. You told us that you're especially interested in the prevention of breast cancer but also want to ensure people have good quality of life during and after their breast cancer treatment. Because of your donations, we can be financially independent to pursue our research program. That means we can initiate clinical trials that are patient-centred and for the common good of all people affected by breast cancer.

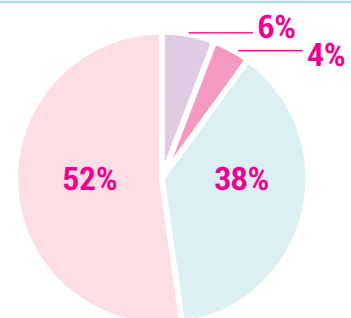
Our priority research areas include:

- Stopping breast cancer from occurring in the first place.
- Curing more people with targeted treatment at the time of their first diagnosis to prevent any chance of recurrence of their disease.
- Helping patients with metastatic breast cancer to live longer with good quality of life.
- Protecting quality of life by reducing the side effects of treatment.

Have you included a gift to Breast Cancer Trials in your Will?

A gift in your Will to fund breast cancer clinical trials research is a powerful way to ensure you can continue to help people with breast cancer beyond your lifetime. Ten percent of people who responded to our survey indicated they have left, are considering, or intend to leave a gift in their Will or Trust to Breast Cancer Trials. People like Faye, who shares her story with you on page eight of your newsletter. Having personally suffered breast cancer and participated in a clinical trial, she is determined to change the future for all women affected by breast cancer.

If you would like to learn more about the difference a gift in your Will can make, please contact Cheryl our Special Gifts Officer on 1800 423 444 – she would be very happy to speak with you!



- Have already included Breast Cancer Trials in my Will
- Intend or will consider including Breast Cancer Trials when I make or revise my Will
- Have a Will but have not included Breast Cancer Trials
- Not interested at this time or do not have a Will

Research update

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) congress is the largest cancer conference in the world, bringing together the world's most reputable cancer researchers, patient advocates and industry professionals, including those from Breast Cancer Trials, to discuss the latest advancements in cancer treatments, clinical trials research and cancer care.

This year the results from our OlympiA clinical trial were presented in the most watched session alongside the four other biggest research findings of the year.

We report on these exciting, landmark results below made possible with your generosity.

New treatment for patients with early-stage breast cancer and who have an inherited BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation

Thanks to your support for the OlympiA clinical trial, breast cancer patients all over the world have a new treatment option. Results from this international clinical trial showed that the drug olaparib reduces breast cancer recurrence by 42% in patients who have been treated for early-stage breast cancer and who have a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation.

Conducted in Australia by Breast Cancer Trials and supported by you, the OlympiA clinical trial was coordinated internationally by the Breast International Group and recruited 1,836 patients worldwide, including 60 women from Australia.

OlympiA found that giving olaparib tablets twice daily for a year to patients with BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene mutations, after they have completed chemotherapy, increases the chances that they will remain free of invasive or metastatic breast cancer. This was a phase III clinical trial, which tested the efficacy and safety of olaparib tablets versus placebo as adjuvant treatment.

Professor Kelly-Anne Phillips is the Breast Cancer Trials Study Chair of the OlympiA clinical trial and says the results provide a new treatment option for patients with early-stage breast cancer.

"One of the biggest fears that patients have is that their breast cancer will come back. The OlympiA clinical trial has identified a new treatment for patients with early-stage breast cancer who have a genetic mutation in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes, that may help prevent their breast cancer returning and cancer spreading, after their initial treatment has been completed," said Professor Phillips.

Approximately 5% of all breast cancer patients diagnosed have a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation, which equates to roughly 1,000 women diagnosed

with breast cancer in Australia each year. These women are typically diagnosed at a younger age and often have a particularly aggressive form of breast cancer.

Olaparib exploits an inherent defect in DNA repair that is present in the cancers of people with a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation, ensuring that cancer cells are more likely to die.

"Our study findings are a significant step forward in the precision treatment of breast cancer and provides a new treatment option. The findings also mean that genetic testing for BRCA1 and BRCA2 will likely become more routine for all women with newly diagnosed breast cancer.

This will have the downstream effect of helping us to identify their relatives who also have the gene abnormality and who can therefore undertake evidence-based treatments that can prevent them getting breast cancer. So, this is not only a step forward in breast cancer treatment, but also in helping us to prevent breast cancer too."



**Professor
Kelly-Anne Phillips**
Study Chair of the
OlympiA clinical trial

We sincerely thank all the women who participated in this clinical trial, Breast Cancer Trials researchers across Australia, and you, our committed supporters, for making this treatment advance possible.

The results have now been published in The New England Journal of Medicine.

Watch a video on the OlympiA results here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UpnPauSqJ30>

A participant perspective from the OlympiA clinical trial

Dimity Paul knew about cancer from a young age. Her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer in her mid-40s and her grandmother died of ovarian cancer.

When gene testing became available, her mum got tested and it was identified she carried an inherited BRCA1 gene mutation which explained her three diagnoses of breast cancer. The family was informed because this news could impact many of them.

At age 21, Dimity decided she wanted to know if she too carried the BRCA1 gene mutation, which would mean she had a 70% chance of getting breast cancer just like her mum.

"I wanted to plan ahead for my life and have a small element of control over something that I couldn't control," she said. "I just wanted to give myself the best chance possible going forward in my life."

When her result came back as positive, at the time there wasn't a lot she could do. It was estimated that her risk of getting breast cancer would start in her mid-30s. At age 27 she began surveillance testing, which involved an annual Medical Resonance Imaging scan (MRI). In her fourth year of surveillance testing, breast cancer was detected. She had just turned 31 – her diagnosis came earlier than anyone had expected.

"It was a shock. I know that sounds weird when I knew I had the gene mutation and a 70% chance of getting breast cancer – but I was still shocked," Dimity says.

"As humans I think we all have the survival instinct where we think it won't happen to me. I had a plan – removal of my healthy breasts at 35 years and my ovaries at 40, well before anything can happen. But it didn't go to plan."

She had a double mastectomy, node clearance and chemotherapy treatment. The option of participating in the OlympiA clinical trial was explained to her.

"I thought that participating in this clinical trial could give me a new treatment option, but if I didn't get the drug, at the very least I'd be helping to find something which might be able to treat the next generation of women."

Dimity describes participating in the clinical trial 'like an army of people supporting you'.

She said, *"You get this incredibly high standard of care from a whole team of people. It feels incredible to have been part of this trial. I'd love get to a point where no one dies from breast cancer. And we will only get there with science, patients willing to participate in clinical trials, researchers, doctors and generous people helping to fund this research – all working together."*

Hear from Dimity in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usJOTIf9Vtg>



Dimity Paul
Patient on the OlympiA clinical trial

Giving families precious time together

We acknowledge and thank the strong and incredibly brave people who share their personal breast cancer journeys with our breast cancer community. Like you, they're determined to raise money to support life-changing breast cancer research.

During our Mother's Day and Tax Appeals we shared two very touching stories, both young mums with small children, who are living with breast cancer.

Thank you to everyone who donated so generously to help fund the Neo-N and CAPTURE clinical trials. You've helped raise a combined total of \$654,575. Your support means so much to Toni and Kristy.

Thank you to those who also send messages of support and encouragement – they inspire us every day. Here are just a few:

Research is the way forward. I lost my wonderful mum aged 54, 7th May 1990, to breast cancer. Funding research is a way of honouring mum.

– **Maureen**

I have daughters and a granddaughter who need to be able to live without the threat of breast cancer. So I thoroughly support breast cancer research.

– **Stacey**



"I am thankful for the treatments that have given me more time with my family, and for you and everyone who has donated to breast cancer trials research so that things keep improving for women like me." – Toni

"It's a humbling feeling knowing that people like you care about people like me, who are living with metastatic breast cancer. Thank you for giving people with breast cancer and their families more time together." – Kristy



Kristy's story really touched me. I sincerely hope the CAPTURE trial will give Kristy, and others, hope and more time with their loved ones. – **Gabrielle**

My mum is a survivor and blessed by all of the dedicated researchers, doctors and staff. Thank you to everyone who is part of this wonderful team.

– **Steven**

Supporters in action

Recycling not only helps our planet but Australian charities as well. The five Gers children started **'The Gers Bottle Project'**.

The children collect plastic and glass bottles and donate the money from recycling them to their local hospitals and community.

We were recently gifted their latest donation of \$100. It's wonderful to see such kindness and thoughtfulness in those so young.

Thank you, Gers family!



Race For A Cure driver and Co-founder Ben Kavich standing proudly with this year's pink and yellow car.



Ben and Toula Kavich with their daughter Isabelle.

It was another successful year for **Race for A Cure**, a fundraising initiative created by Ben, Toula and Michael Kavich, raising an impressive \$22,000!

The Kavich family has now raised an incredible \$100,000 since 2017.

Every year on the Easter long weekend, race car drivers and brothers Ben and Michael hit the track at the Bathurst 6 Hour race on Mount Panorama in their pink liveried car.

The Kavich family generously donate their time and resources to keep the car racing each year.

You'll notice this year the car had a special splash of yellow as Yellow Pages was the Official Marketing Sponsor.

This partnership is very special to Ben and Michael whose father Tony Kavich, also a successful racing car driver, held the world-first Motorsport and Yellow Pages partnership in 1984.

Congratulations and thank you to the Kavich family and Yellow Pages.

Chloe Wade, an inspiring high school student from NSW, ran this July in **#Run4Fran** to raise funds for breast cancer research in honour of her Aunt who passed away from breast cancer at just 45.

"On the 29th of November 2020, I lost my beautiful Aunty Fran to breast cancer. She was determined to run a marathon and trained right up till a month before she passed," said Chloe.

"Her journey was not meant to be, so I decided to step up and complete her dream of running 42.2kms on the 4th of July."

Running alongside her to help complete her Aunty Fran's dream, was her Uncle Jade, Fran's husband.

Chloe and her friends and family raised \$7,500 which is truly inspirational.



Chloe, in her Pink Champion singlet.



Fran pictured with Jade and their children Sara and Declan.



In training – Chloe, Jade, Declan and Sara.

For more ways to fundraise, visit www.breastcancertrials.org.au

Help save lives, one tasty course at a time!

We had such a wonderful response to our inaugural 3 Course Challenge, that we're back this year with a brand new flavour. And we hope you'll join us!

This challenge of life-saving proportions (or should we say portions) invites you to cook a three-course meal, host a dinner party and ask your friends and family to support you in the challenge by donating to breast cancer research.

Last year our dinner party hosts were supported in the challenge by Top Chef and TV Personality Manu Feildel when he hosted an interactive livestreamed cooking class on how to cook a French menu. The '3 Course Challengers' not only served up tantalising French fare for their dinner party guests, but they also exceeded all expectations raising over \$138,000!

This year, we are spicing things up with a mouth-watering Indian menu. When you join the 3 Course Challenge and raise over \$150, you'll unlock access to a livestreamed, interactive cooking class with

Masterchef alumni, restaurateur and TV Personality Sarah Todd on Saturday 16 October.

Sarah is renowned for her sumptuous Indian flavours and has curated a fresh, healthy menu that is sure to appeal to every palette.

Sarah is passionate about supporting breast cancer clinical trials research



Sarah Todd pictured with her mum Lorraine and Lorraine's beloved grandchildren Phoenix and Jackson.



3 Course Challenger Denis with his lucky dinner party guests for last year's French themed 3 Course Challenge.

as her own mum Lorraine was diagnosed with the disease thirteen years ago on her 50th birthday. Sarah was only 21 when her mum received the devastating news.

"Mum was a single mother who raised three children, worked full time and did everything on her own. I see her as a superwoman. When she got sick, it was a huge shock for her to go from caregiver to the one needing to receive care for the first time."

Sarah recalls how hard it was to watch her mum undergo chemotherapy treatment, seeing the pain she was in.

"Nobody really talks about the fact that losing your hair can cause crazy amounts of pain. Mum felt like her scalp was being stabbed with pins as her hair fell out."

Lorraine's breast cancer experience gave her a whole new appreciation for life and she is so grateful to be able to grow older and spend time with her beloved grandchildren, including Sarah's son Phoenix.

Sarah knows that without the advances made in breast cancer clinical trials, it could have been a different outcome for her superwoman mum.

Please join Sarah this year in the 3 Course Challenge and not only learn to cook a sumptuous Indian feast, but also help save lives from breast cancer. **You can register your interest at www.3coursechallenge.com.au**

Don't delay, the Challenge launches soon on August 23rd 2021.

The diary that saves lives

The Australian Women's Health Diary, in its 24th year, remains an informative and much-loved organiser for women of all ages.

It's also a critical tool in our fight against breast cancer raising \$900,000 last year to support our research program. Thank you to everyone who purchased the 2021 edition.

Available from September, the 2022 edition is again packed with health information for women of all ages, wrapped in a practical, easy to use diary format. Priced at just \$18.95, it will be available in newsagents, Woolworths, participating post offices and from our website at breastcancertrials.org.au.

Your supporter special offer will be available in September.



“Can’t let the grass grow under your feet.”

Dedicated supporter Faye Purnell, who turns 80 this year, has certainly made this her mantra for life as she strives to help change the future for all women affected by breast cancer.

Faye has raised \$23,000 for Breast Cancer Trials over the past 21 years. She has also generously pledged to leave Breast Cancer Trials a gift in her Will.

Faye's unwavering dedication to support breast cancer clinical trials comes from personal experience. In 1999 at the age of 58, she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Faye vividly remembers her arrival at the hospital for her mastectomy operation, a long winter weekend in June. After her surgery, Faye had the opportunity to participate in one of our clinical trials which aimed to identify the optimal timeframe for taking Tamoxifen to help prevent recurrence of breast cancer following treatment.

At the completion of the five-year

trial, it was recommended to Faye that she continue taking Tamoxifen for a further five years to help prevent her cancer from returning. And thankfully, Faye remains healthy and free of breast cancer.

Faye's first fundraising event was a wool challenge at the Festival of Fleece in Merriwa, where Faye's team took out the world championship; shearing sheep, spinning the wool and knitting a jumper in just over five hours.

At the time, she recalls her doctor, Professor John Forbes AM saying, **“You never know who the research is going to help next.”**

This resonated with her, along with her own experience of breast cancer, and she continues to fundraise every year hosting jewellery parties, morning teas and Melbourne Cup fundraisers.

For her annual Bake for Breast Cancer morning tea, Faye bakes 12 dozen delicious scones – one morning tea not to miss!



It's important to Faye that her efforts to help others continues beyond her lifetime which is why she made the decision to leave a gift in her Will to Breast Cancer Trials.

She encourages everyone to consider making this decision too and says:

“You're going to help a lot of other women. Research benefits continue through the generations.” – Faye

Remembering Breast Cancer Trials in your Will ensures that the special commitment you have to save lives from breast cancer today, is a legacy which will continue beyond your lifetime.

If you would like information about leaving a gift in your Will, please tick the box on your donation slip or contact Cheryl our Special Gifts Officer for a confidential discussion on **1800 423 444**.

To leave a gift in your Will, the following wording should be used:

“I (your name) give to Breast Cancer Trials:

- *the residue of my estate, or*
- *_____ % of my estate, or*
- *the lump sum of \$_____, or*
- *my property known as _____ [e.g., real estate, art works, shares, units or other securities in listed companies].*

to be applied for general purposes by Breast Cancer Trials as determined by its directors. I declare that the receipt of an authorised officer of Breast Cancer Trials will be a sufficient discharge to my executors who will not be bound to see the application of this gift.”

Editorial Information

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