

Newsletter

Edition 52 | Winter – Spring 2024

From vision to reality

"I put the mammogram that could have changed my life, on the back burner..."

Tina is a woman with passion – passion for her family, passion for her business, and now with a passion to raise awareness for breast cancer screening and fundraising.

In 2023 Tina underwent emergency surgery to have a pacemaker inserted, but the following day she felt that something wasn't right. She was experiencing pain in her left breast.

At her follow-up appointment six weeks later, Tina pushed to have further tests done. A tiny lesion on her breast was detected while her cardiologist was looking for blood clots.



Tina loves making memories with her family and is grateful for their support.

Just a week later following a biopsy, Tina was diagnosed with invasive lobular carcinoma.

"Through the years everyone would say look after yourself first, but I most definitely didn't. I love being a Nonna, my grandchildren are my life. I have spent my recent years making memories with them and being so busy with 'life'."

Over the past 15 months, Tina has undergone chemotherapy, followed by two surgeries on the breast and one surgery to move her pacemaker and relocate it to the right side of her chest in preparation for radiation which began early 2024 and is now complete.

Tina is thankful that so far she is responding well. Even so, Tina says the challenging journey has brought an added sense of loss.

"I have been a hairdresser my whole life, alongside my dear mum who taught me everything I know."

"This journey and treatment took that creativity and social outlet away from me. I long for that connection and feeling again."

Being a purpose-driven person, Tina decided to turn her experience into something proactive. Alongside her daughter,



"The number of women who have had a screening test because of my journey has been the most rewarding thing."

Stephanie, and a close team, Tina created a fundraising event for Breast Cancer Trials.

In addition to raising much needed funding for clinical trials research, 'The Pink Tie Affair' promoted the need for all women to know their breasts, and seek medical advice if concerned.

Held in May, the night featured Brazilian dance performances, live bongo entertainment, raffles and laughter.

Tina now has an even greater appreciation of time spent with her partner, children, and six grandchildren. She is certain that breast cancer trials will improve outcomes for people with invasive lobular carcinoma like herself.

Chair's update

It was a privilege to welcome 360 breast cancer researchers from throughout Australia, New Zealand, East Asia, UK, Europe, and USA to our 45th Annual Scientific Meeting held in July.

This meeting included reviews of our current research, discussion of new research opportunities, and developments from around the world. It is an opportunity to discuss together the areas of greatest patient need across all types and stages of breast cancer, and this helps inform our research direction.

As you are aware, clinical trials research requires extensive collaboration. Thanks to you, we conduct our clinical trials in partnership with researchers here and throughout the world so that we can pool our resources, share knowledge and achieve progress faster for the benefit of all those impacted by this disease.

In June, the results from our CHARIOT trial were presented at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) which is attended by 40,000 researchers. Thank you for making that trial possible with your kind donations. The results are provided for you in the Research Update.

I would like to take this opportunity to advise you that our Chief Executive Officer, Soozy Smith has decided to retire in November after 13 years of exemplary leadership and dedicated service to Breast Cancer Trials.

During Soozy's tenure, our organisation has achieved numerous milestones, and her visionary guidance has been instrumental in the success and conduct of our research program. We are immensely grateful for her contributions and wish her well. The Board and I are committed to selecting a candidate who embodies our values and vision for the future of our organisation, and are confident that with our talented team, we will seamlessly navigate this transition.

Thank you, as always, for the trust and faith you place in us to make the change you want to see in the world.

Together we are committed to identifying the solutions needed for every patient and every person at high risk, so that there is life, well-lived, free from the fear of breast cancer.

**Professor Sunil Lakhani
Board Chair,
Breast Cancer Trials (BCT)**



IN MEMORIAM

We gratefully acknowledge gifts received up to 18 June 2024 in memory of:

Mrs Mary Ackland
Mrs Faye Adams
Mrs Beth Anderson
Mrs Theresa Andres
Mrs Georgie Apps
Mrs Dawn Ashworth
Mrs Samantha Baines
Ms Tanya Bajda
Mrs Heather Ballantyne
Mrs Gai Battistuzzi
Dr Carolyn Bennett
Ms Doris Bitmead
Miss Lisa Black
Mrs Kim Bouckley
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Mrs Patricia Walsh
Mrs Barbara Ware
Mrs Olivia Warmington
Mrs Wendy Anne Whittington
Mrs Margret Willis
Mrs Jillian Wilson
Mrs Althea Windschnurer
Miss Cheryl Young
Mrs Ourania Zakris

GIFTS IN WILLS

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

The Late Trish Rene Charles
The Late Ernest William Perry

The Late John Downs
The Late Alice Stavridis

The Late Colin John Morgan

The Late Wilma Morrison

Banking changes which may affect you

You may have heard that the Federal Government has decided to phase-out Australia's cheque system over the coming years.

The timetable for phasing out cheques in Australia will see the end of bank cheques in 2025, the end of commercial and government cheques by 2026, and by 2027 there will be no more personal cheques.

By the end of 2030, the entire cheque system will no longer exist.

Some of Australia's major banks have already begun implementing this change, meaning some bank cheques and personal chequebooks will no longer be reissued.

You are the driving force behind our ground-breaking clinical trials research. If you donate by cheque, we want to ensure you are informed of the other safe and secure methods for you to continue your generosity and the impact you're making to so many people.



The diary that saves lives

The 2025 edition of our diary will be on sale from September and is available in newsagents, Woolworths, participating post offices or at www.breastcancertrials.org.au

Keep an eye out for your supporter 'special offer' coming in September.

Other ways you can support the breast cancer clinical trials research that matters to you, include:

PHONE

Call our Supporter Care Team, Helen and Jeni, on **1800 423 444** between 8:30am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday, and they can take your kind credit or debit card donation over the phone.

BPAY

By telephone or internet banking. Your personal Reference Code is included on every donation form and appeal email we send you.

CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD

By completing and returning the donation slips we send to you by mail; by scanning the QR code on that donation form which takes you to our website; or by visiting our website at www.breastcancertrials.org.au and clicking 'Donate'.

ONLINE

At www.breastcancertrials.org.au using either your credit or debit card, or PayPal.

Thank you for making a life-changing difference to millions of people impacted by breast cancer.

Please contact us at any time for assistance; we rely on your generous support and can help you donate through alternative, secure means.



Research updates

Your support is critical in helping further our research into better treatments and outcomes. These results show how your generosity continues to benefit people through new treatment approaches.

CAMBRIA-2 trial aims to prevent recurrence in ER-positive, HER2-negative early breast cancer

The CAMBRIA-2 clinical trial is now open to patients across Australia and New Zealand. This trial aims to find out if giving camizestrant is more effective in reducing the chance of breast cancer from recurring, compared with the usual endocrine (hormone) treatments such as letrozole, anastrozole, exemestane or tamoxifen.

Although many patients with ER-positive, HER2-negative early breast cancer may be cured of their disease with surgery, hormone treatment, radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy, a significant number of patients will experience recurrence of their breast cancer.

Patients with this type of breast cancer may experience recurrence due to resistance to endocrine therapy, or if dormant tumour cells grow. Therefore, it's critical we identify endocrine treatments that are more effective, safe, and that patients continue to take for as long as required, to further improve the cure rate.

The research will also find out more about the side effects, safety and effectiveness of camizestrant.

Camizestrant is a type of endocrine treatment called a 'selective oestrogen receptor degrader' (SERD).

It works by breaking down the oestrogen receptors in cells, and also blocks the oestrogen receptors from being triggered by oestrogen. This prevents ER-positive breast cancer cells receiving messages to grow and multiply. Camizestrant may therefore help to reduce the chance of breast cancer recurrence.

CAMBRIA-2 is open to women and men who have ER-positive, HER2-negative early breast cancer that has an intermediate or high risk of recurrence. This international clinical trial will recruit 5,500 patients across 40 countries over more than three years. It will be conducted in Australia and New Zealand by our researchers and is now open in 28 of our participating hospitals.



Dr Nick Zdenkowski
Study Chair of CAMBRIA-2

CHARIOT trial shows promising results for triple negative early breast cancer patients

Thanks to your support, a world-first clinical trial developed by Breast Cancer Trials is offering fresh hope to patients with treatment resistant, early-stage triple negative breast cancer.

The primary results of our CHARIOT clinical trial were presented in 2022 and showed that adding two immunotherapy drugs to chemotherapy before surgery resulted in 24% of participants achieving a complete disappearance of their cancer within the

breast and lymph nodes by the time of surgery.

Longer term follow up was needed to determine the overall effectiveness of this treatment.

At the recent American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) conference in June, the results from three-years of follow up were presented.

These results showed that participants who achieved complete disappearance of their cancer within the breast and lymph nodes at the time of surgery were less likely to have a breast cancer recurrence and had better overall survival.

Importantly, 100% of participants whose breast cancer showed an increased presence of PD-L1 (known as PD-L1 positive) and/or a high number of tumour-infiltrating lymphocytes (TILs) were alive and free from any breast cancer at three years.

Professor Sherene Loi is the Study Chair of the CHARIOT clinical trial and says that while the number of trial participants was small, the outcomes of CHARIOT are promising.

“These results demonstrate that patients who have complete disappearance of their cancer by the time they have surgery are more likely to experience enduring long-term breast cancer-free survival.”

CHARIOT was open to both women and men diagnosed with triple negative early breast cancer demonstrated to be resistant to traditional neoadjuvant chemotherapy treatments.

The primary and three-year follow up results are particularly meaningful given that patients whose triple negative breast cancer is resistant to chemotherapy, and who have evidence of residual cancer in the breast after neoadjuvant chemotherapy, have a high chance of relapse and death from breast cancer within three years.



Professor Sherene Loi Study Chair of CHARIOT

TUGETHER trial working to slow the spread of advanced HER2-positive breast cancer

Metastatic breast cancer, also known as advanced or Stage 4 breast cancer, is a diagnosis that means breast cancer cells have spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body. Developed by our researchers and led by Professor Sherene Loi, the TUGETHER clinical trial aims to identify a new treatment option for people with advanced HER2-positive breast cancer.

The trial is investigating whether adding two new medicines— tucatinib and pembrolizumab—to the usual treatment given to people with advanced HER2-positive

breast cancer slows down the growth of the cancer.

The development of anti-HER2 drugs like Herceptin that slow or stop the growth of cancer cells have had a positive impact on the overall treatment of HER2-positive breast cancer. Yet around 30% of patients will have tumours that metastasise, including to areas like the brain, causing devastating neurological symptoms and a significant loss in a person's quality of life.

“What I am really excited about is being able to use this combination of treatment to treat really hard-to-reach spots in the brain and hopefully prolong a person's life,” said Professor Loi.

Your support is critical in conducting clinical trials such as TUGETHER, which offer hope to women who have metastatic disease.



“I was first diagnosed in 2013 which then progressed to metastatic breast cancer in 2018. I felt I had two options, just give up, or be positive and take one day at a time.

I'm participating in the TUGETHER clinical trial and hoping this treatment will work so I am around when my granddaughters grow up.

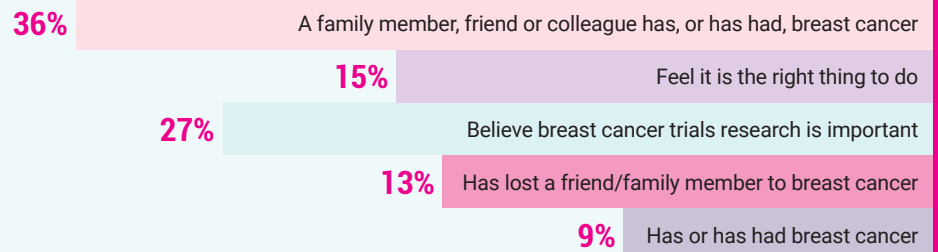
I feel safe knowing I'm in good care.”

- Maria

Your supporter survey feedback

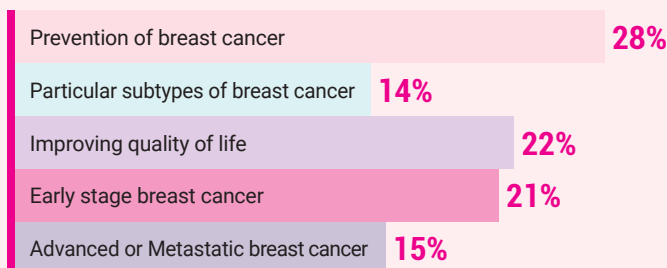
Thank you for sharing your thoughts in our 2024 Supporter Survey. Your opinions and experiences shape the important work we do, and demonstrate why breast cancer clinical trials are so important to us all.

Over 50% of our supporters have shared they have a close connection to our cause.



Breast Cancer Trials conducts research across many areas of breast cancer.

Which areas you are most interested in supporting?



Curious about what our trials cover?

Our trials encompass every facet of breast cancer research, from prevention and slowing disease progression, to enhancing quality of life.

By donating, you're contributing directly to the latest advancements in breast cancer research.

Scan this QR Code to learn more about our research.



Your kindness means so much

Naveena, Naomi, and thousands of Mums thank you for your support.

In the first six months of this year, you have helped raise more than \$800,000 for clinical trials research.

You might remember Naomi, who featured in our Mother's Day appeal. The mum to three beautiful girls was diagnosed with breast cancer last year after feeling a lump in her breast.

Naomi recently shared some wonderful news with us: her 12 month scans have come back clear! We're all so happy for you, Naomi.

We're also grateful to Naveena who shared her story in our recent Tax Appeal, raising funds for trials like OPTIMA and EXPERT which focus on treatment optimisation. The whole Breast Cancer Trials community came together in support of our first

matched giving day, the *For Our Mums* appeal, where gifts were matched for one day thanks to a group of special donors.

Thank you for your generous support, and for sharing messages like these which touch our hearts:

"Oh the timing of your fundraising campaign. On this day 9th May I lost my dear mum to breast cancer. Forever 62 years young."

"To all the families and friends supporting loved ones in their cancer battle, we know the journey and have experienced the joy of successful treatments. On with the wonderful research."



Helen is honouring those closest to her

Through a gift in her Will

Helen's father would often say "life is sweet."

Helen believes the outcomes of breast cancer clinical trials research can offer breast cancer patients the opportunity to savour its sweetness.

Helen was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002 when she was just 41 years of age.

"I was extremely lucky with my diagnosis: stage 1, grade 1 Luminal A sub-type breast cancer," she says.

"I realise that it is only through these clinical trials that other women who are not as fortunate as I, are given a better chance of survival and quality of life."

Helen has been a dedicated donor to Breast Cancer Trials for over 20 years, commencing just after her diagnosis, and has made the extra special commitment to leave a gift in her Will to our clinical trials research.

Helen has a deep belief in the transformative impact of clinical trials.

"As a breast cancer survivor, and by leaving a gift in my Will, I wish to give more breast cancer patients a future full of hope for survival."

I am leaving a gift in my Will to honour and thank those closest to me – my parents and family who supported me while I was unwell, my dear friend Chris, and all women who are going through and may go through breast cancer."

Did you know?

One quarter of Australians want to remember a charity in their Will, but fewer than 8% actually do.

Helen is one of many compassionate supporters who have chosen to remember Breast Cancer Trials in their Will. We are so grateful for this especially kind way to support our clinical trials research.

Thank you, Helen, for choosing to honour your journey and your loved ones in such a generous way. You are helping ensure that the futures of women with breast cancer are shaped by progress, not limitations.

If you would like more information, please email bequestenquiries@bctrials.org.au or call **1800 423 444**.

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

"I give to Breast Cancer Trials (ABN 64 051 369 496) to be applied for general purposes as determined by its Directors:

- *The residue of my estate (or _____% of the residue of my estate), or*
- *The whole of my estate (or _____% of my estate), or*
- *The sum of \$_____, or*
- *My asset/s listed (e.g. shares, real estate, etc)*

I declare that the receipt of an authorised officer of Breast Cancer Trials will be sufficient discharge to my executors who will not be bound to see the application of this gift."

Supporters in action

15 years of support - and still going strong!

Since 2010, and after her own breast cancer diagnosis, Faye has generously supported Breast Cancer Trials through a number of fundraising events such as jewellery parties and Melbourne Cup luncheons (to name a few).

Incredibly, she has raised over \$30,000!

Faye has also made the generous decision to leave a gift in her Will, which will make a difference to patients for years to come.

In May, Faye held one of her famous morning teas and guests had a wonderful time testing their knowledge in the quiz, trying their luck in the raffle, and chatting with the many friends that have supported Faye's fundraisers over the years.

Are you interested in hosting an event and fundraising for Breast Cancer Trials? Head to breastcancertrials.org.au/fundraise to find out more!



Thank you, Faye, for your generous commitment to our clinical trials over many years.



A paw-some result for Breast Cancer Trials

In February, thousands of people nationwide along with their adorable four-legged friends, joined us for our first 57km Dog Walk Challenge.

Did you know 57 people are diagnosed with breast cancer every day in Australia?

We were thrilled to see dogs of all shapes and sizes rocking their free pink bandanas alongside their owners in their own pink shirts.

Our tails are wagging in excitement to announce that it was an incredible success, as over \$700,000 was raised for breast cancer research, only possible thanks to our team of dedicated supporters and their furry friends.

Interested in taking part in the next 57km Dog Walk Challenge? Register your interest here at breastcancertrials.org.au/57km-dog-walk-challenge

Learn from leading researchers

Hear from some of the world's leading breast cancer researchers through our free, online, and live Q&A events.

Moderated by Author and Journalist Annabel Crabb, our Q&As are aimed at keeping you informed about breast cancer research, clinical trials, and important breast cancer topics.

They enable you to watch the events at a time and location that is convenient to you, and you are also able to ask our researchers your breast cancer questions when you register for each Q&A.

Previously covered topics include: Treatment Optimisation, Breast Cancer and Fertility, Breast Cancer Recurrence, Side Effects of Treatment and more!

Save the date for our final Q&A for 2024 on 6 November from 5-6:30 PM (AEDT), with the topic to be announced in the near future.

For more information about our Q&As or to stay up to date with past sessions visit our website at:

www.breastcancertrials.org.au/qa-events



Editorial Information

Editor Rochelle Nolan, Individual Giving Manager, Breast Cancer Trials

Sub-Editor Ben O'Connell, Appeal Manager

Contact Details PO Box 283 The Junction NSW 2291

Phone (+61) 2 4925 3022 **Freecall** 1800 423 444

Email enquiries@breastcancertrials.org.au

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