

Newsletter

Edition 53 | Summer – Autumn 2025

How you're helping people like Wendy

Thanks to your generous support, recruitment has begun for our CAMBRIA-2 clinical trial, with patients like Wendy Rolls already in treatment.

CAMBRIA-2 aims to determine if a new type of endocrine treatment can reduce the chance of cancer coming back for people with hormone receptor positive HER2 negative early breast cancer.

Wendy is a proud mum of three daughters (and a German shorthaired pointer named Jager), grandmother to an adored grandson and loving wife of 38 years.

She was diagnosed just last year with hormone receptor positive breast cancer, which accounts for about 70% of all breast cancer diagnoses, and can have a high risk of recurrence.

"It was a shock... because in the immediate family, I didn't have anyone who'd had breast cancer," Wendy said.

Wendy sees her participation in CAMBRIA-2 as a win-win, with more frequent check-ups, access to a potentially more effective treatment option, and the opportunity to contribute to research that will help future generations – perhaps even her own daughters.



Wendy, CAMBRIA-2 trial participant, with her husband Craig and their dog Jager

Through the trial, Wendy also had access to a genomic test which determined she was at lower risk and could avoid chemotherapy. She was thrilled that she could attend her daughter's upcoming wedding without worrying about the intense side effects.

Wendy's diagnosis has made her want to live her life to the fullest:

"I've got a grandson now, so we want to be able to see him and be in his life. And two of my daughters are married... we just want to be part of their lives. I don't want to be cut short a life."

Your ongoing support for our clinical trials research like CAMBRIA-2 is helping people like Wendy to live long and full lives following treatment.

Chair's update

Thanks to your generosity and support, this year new clinical trials will commence to address important areas of patient need.

We are building on our findings from the Neo-N clinical trial, which identified that adding immunotherapy to chemotherapy given before surgery was effective in the treatment of triple negative breast cancer, a sub-type of breast cancer which unfortunately has the poorest prognosis. We will continue our research to identify those patients who can safely avoid chemotherapy without compromise to their survival and continue our focus on people with metastatic breast cancer.

The Cancer Institute NSW recently released a report which used data collected by the NSW Cancer Registry in which it was estimated that 7,900 people are living with incurable, life-limiting metastatic breast cancer in NSW. It's estimated that 24,000 people are living with metastatic breast cancer in Australia today. Through clinical trials like TUGETHER you are helping to identify treatments which can halt or slow the progression of their disease, and improve quality of life.

It is my pleasure to introduce you to Karen Price who has been appointed Chief Executive Officer at Breast Cancer Trials.



New CEO Karen Price, with Professor Lakhani

Karen brings more than 25 years' experience in the health and NGO sectors in roles across Federal and State Governments and was most recently the Deputy CEO of ACON.

I am confident that under Karen's leadership, Breast Cancer Trials will continue to make an impact on the lives and futures of all those affected by breast cancer.

Our Mission to 'do the research that will create solutions for every person, every situation, every time' is only possible because of you. Please accept my heartfelt thanks for your continued support and generosity. I look forward to the progress we will make together this year in the pursuit of our mutual vision of 'no more lives cut short.'

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Sunil Lakhani'.

Professor Sunil Lakhani
Board Chair, Breast Cancer Trials

GIFTS IN WILLS

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

The Late Lesley Nott
The Late Julie Baines

The Late Trish Charles
The Late Arunee Geoghegan

The Late Francis Smith

The Late Melva Koop

IN MEMORIAM

We gratefully acknowledge gifts received up to 14 January 2025 in memory of:

Mrs Brenda Ashley
Mr Andrew Balak
Mrs Pilar Bernabe
Mrs Ivy Bird
Ms Susan Briggs
Mrs Lorraine Burford
Ms Lorraine Coleman
Mrs Mary Corcoran
Ms Lindsay Craig
Mrs Joanne Dunne
Mrs Yvonne Fehlberg
Mrs Louise Forte
Mrs Vera Giblin

Mrs Barbara Goodall
Mrs Janice Graham
Mrs Dayani Guna
Mrs Rhonda Harding
Ms Kimberley Herden
Mrs Dorothy Grace Hill
Mrs Amanda Hole
Mrs Sui Chun Ng Leung
Mrs Christine Lofts
Mrs Maria Malara
Mrs Maria Masters
Mrs Lee McDaniell
Ms Sheila McIntosh

Mrs Stella McLeod
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Mrs Jennifer Moore
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Mrs Simi Narayana
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Miss Jane Peterson
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Mrs Margaret Scott
Mrs Libera Scotto
Mrs Foong Seow
Mrs Thora Simpson
Mrs Dorothy Snow
Mrs Rina Traficante
Mrs Marina Tugano Karam
Mrs Elizabeth Twine
Mrs Tania Van der Merwe
Ms Mary-Anne Warner

Your kindness at Christmas bringing hope for women like Tamara



Our researchers were overwhelmed by your generous response to our Christmas Appeal, but no one more so than Dr Stephen Luen, medical oncologist and Study Chair for our OLIO clinical trial.

You helped raise an incredible \$354,702 towards the OLIO trial, which has meant that recruitment for Dr Luen's groundbreaking new study is underway. He said:

"To be able to hit the milestone of recruiting the first patient for the OLIO trial is truly momentous. I'm so grateful to the supporters who clearly have such a deep care for women facing breast cancer and have been so generous with their donations.

There's no doubt in my mind that this could never have happened without you."

The OLIO trial aims to build on a breakthrough from a previous trial that discovered a feature in the tumours of young women with hormone receptor (HR) positive, HER2 negative breast cancer—the most common type of breast cancer, which is often much more aggressive in premenopausal women.

Thank you for sending your beautiful messages to our researchers who are lighting the way for women like Tamara.

Professor Lakhani, Board Chair said, *"My fellow researchers and I were overwhelmed to receive the many messages you sent to us in response to our Christmas Appeal. Your words of support, encouragement and thanks were greatly appreciated, thank you."*

I have supported research over the years in hope that women, like my sister Liz, can survive her 3rd diagnosis. – **Margrete & Graeme**

Thank you for seeking bright ideas for innovative treatments and discovering significant new things! – **Jeanette**



Tamara and her family at Christmas, with new hope, thanks to you

OLIO will test whether we can treat this feature with targeted treatments that will kill the cancer cell, and whether adding immunotherapy can provide the boost needed to prevent the cancer from returning.

This could have an incredible impact on women like 42-year-old mum Tamara, who was diagnosed with HR positive, HER2 negative breast cancer after discovering a 9.5cm lump in her breast. Tamara has only gratitude for your compassion:

"Thank you for your support of Breast Cancer Trials. Because of you, we can have hope for improved treatments and chance of survival. It means the world to me, and all women like me, to know that we're not in this alone."



Thank you!! My wife died at 47 years old. Our daughter is now 39. Hoping your work keeps her safe. – **David**

Thanks to each and every one of you for your wonderful work to help so many women with cancer to have hope of a cure. – **Sandra**



Understanding Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is not one disease, but several. It includes many subtypes, and as such, treatments can be personalised to the patient, their age and circumstances. These are the most common forms of breast cancer.

Invasive vs non-invasive

Non-invasive breast cancers are contained within the breast and haven't grown beyond the milk ducts or glands. They don't have the ability to spread to other parts of the body. However, if left untreated they may transform into invasive cancer over time. Surgery to remove the affected tissue or the entire breast may be performed to prevent the cancer from becoming invasive. Radiotherapy and/or hormone-blocking therapy may also be used.

Non-invasive breast cancer types include:

- **Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)** – confined to the ducts of the breast
- **Lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS)** – confined to the lobules (milk glands) of the breast

Invasive breast cancers grow in the normal breast tissue with the potential to spread to other areas of the body. Treatment depends on how advanced the cancer is (the stage of the cancer) and other factors.

Treatment may include surgery, chemotherapy, targeted therapy and/or hormone-blocking therapy. Invasive breast cancer can present in different ways, including:

- **Early breast cancer** – contained in the breast, which may or may not have spread to the lymph nodes in the breast or armpit

- **Inflammatory breast cancer** – a rare form that affects the lymphatic vessels in the breast skin, causing redness and inflammation
 - **Paget's disease of the nipple** – a rare form of breast cancer that affects the nipple and the areola; commonly associated with an invasive cancer elsewhere in the breast
 - **Locally advanced breast cancer** – which has spread to areas near the breast, such as the chest wall
 - **Metastatic breast cancer** (also called advanced, secondary or stage 4 breast cancer), that has spread from the breast to other parts of the body, such as the bones, liver or lungs.
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Types of breast cancer

The following are the main types of breast cancer, each requiring different treatments:

- **Hormone receptor positive** – oestrogen and/or progesterone receptors are present in the cells causing cancer growth
- **HER2 positive breast cancer** – a protein called human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2) is present in high levels on the cell causing cancer growth
- **Triple negative breast cancer** – a type of breast cancer that tests negative for all three main receptors: oestrogen, progesterone and HER2

Supporters like you are helping to identify new treatments for every type and stage of breast cancer and save lives.

Your impact through clinical trials research

What are clinical trials?

Clinical trials look at new treatment options to determine if they're better than those currently used.

They also investigate prevention strategies for women considered high risk of developing breast cancer, new options for diagnosing and detecting breast cancer, and ways to reduce the overall impact of breast cancer—physically, emotionally and financially—on those diagnosed and their families.

This research is costly and complex, however it's a necessary step in testing every treatment or prevention strategy before making it available to the public.

How do trials make a difference?

Through your support, our clinical trials are improving the treatment options available and reducing side effects from treatment.

Ultimately, this leads to curing more people with early breast cancer and ensuring people with metastatic breast cancer live longer with good quality of life.

Many of the improvements we see today in treatment options and survival rates are the result of past clinical trials which have been made possible because of you, our wonderful donors.

Together we can continue to significantly lessen the impact of this devastating disease for future generations.

What are our researchers currently working on?

Thanks to you, there are several important clinical trials currently in progress which address breast cancer subtypes and various patient needs.

Following the breakthrough results from our Neo-N clinical trial where 50% of patients on the trial had no evidence of breast cancer following treatment, the next phase of this trial has just opened to patients thanks to your generous support.

Neo-N demonstrated a successful link between the use of immunotherapy, which helps boost the body's own immune system to fight the cancer, in combination with chemotherapy to treat early-stage triple negative breast cancer.

Our researchers have extended the Neo-N trial by adding an additional immunotherapy to the treatment regimen to see if this can further increase the



Professor Sherene Loi
Study Chair of the Neo-N clinical trial

number of patients who are breast cancer free following treatment.

Our Neo-N and CHARIOT clinical trials investigated the use of immunotherapy in the treatment of breast cancer. Our researchers are now working to optimise its use by developing a new clinical trial. This trial aims to identify patients in whom immunotherapy is most effective so that we can tailor treatment to patients who will benefit the most.

Join the

Hike for Hope Movement



You may have heard the exciting news that a wonderful group of people are taking their support of Breast Cancer Trials global by trekking 100kms of the iconic Camino de Santiago trail in northwest Spain this September.

Interested in joining Hike for Hope? Well, not only do we have a few spots available on the Spain trek, but due to popular demand we've officially launched a domestic trek as well. Introducing **Hike for Hope: Bay of Fires, Tasmania**—the most idyllic and serene destination imaginable!

Why join Hike for Hope?

- The chance to challenge yourself like never before in one of the world's most spectacular destinations.
- Make friendships and memories that will last a lifetime.
- Be part of a community united by one common goal—of a world where **no more lives are cut short** by breast cancer.

How it works:

- Register and become part of the Hike for Hope community.
- Commit to raising the minimum fundraising target (you will be offered support calls and plenty of resources to help you reach and exceed your target).
- Invite a friend, family member or colleague to keep you motivated; or look forward to meeting new friends.

Go on the trip of a lifetime!

Spots are limited, so get in quick! For all the details, visit:

breastcancertrials.org.au/hikeforhope



Camino de Santiago, Spain



6-12 September 2025



100kms trekking distance



\$3,299 travel cost* paid upfront or in instalments

*excluding airfares & registration fee.



\$3,500 fundraising target



Bay of Fires, Tasmania



27-30 October 2025



40kms trekking distance



\$2,900 travel cost* paid upfront or in instalments

*excluding airfares & registration fee.



\$3,000 fundraising target

Your support for bright young researchers

Dr Tivya Kulasegaran, recipient of one of our 2024 Clinical Fellowships, thanks to your support



New research ideas and supporting the next generation of researchers is at the heart of our Clinical Fellowship Program, which is only possible thanks to supporters like you.

The program is aimed at early career researchers working in the disciplines of medical oncology, pathology, psychology and other supportive care specialties.

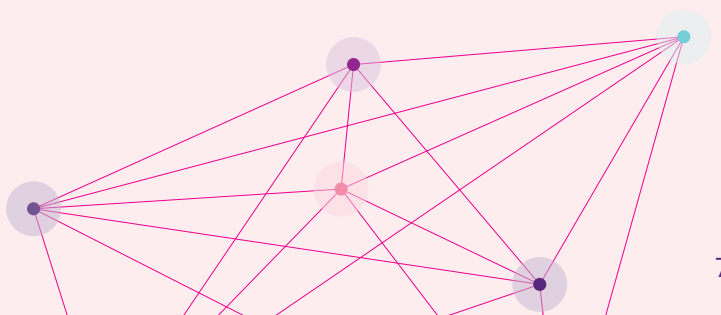
One of the recipients of our 2024 Breast Cancer Trials Clinical Fellowship is medical oncologist Dr Tivya Kulasegaran whose research is looking at improving the early detection of invasive lobular carcinoma (ILC).

Dr Kulasegaran will investigate biomarkers for ILC and how we can detect cancer early, with the aim of initiating therapy when the cancer is smaller and more manageable. It's hoped this will translate to an improvement in survival.

"The implications for patients are extensive. If we can identify those cancer cells early, we can initiate therapy early. We can identify mutations which can open up a window of opportunity for targeted therapies.

We can also pick up on the patients that have a higher risk for relapse, and maybe these are the patients that will benefit from more intensive treatment and follow up," said Dr Kulasegaran.

Your support makes new discoveries from the next generation of researchers possible, improving treatment options for patients today, and in the future.



A community dedicated to **no more** lives cut short

Last year, thousands of supporters nationwide joined our 100km in July Challenge—walking, running or swimming 100kms throughout the month to raise over \$545,000 for breast cancer research.

Since launching our Challenges in 2023, our inspiring community has raised over \$2.2 million. Thank you for standing in solidarity for all those impacted by breast cancer and for making vital research possible.

To find out more, visit: breastcancertrials.org.au/100km-in-july-challenge



100km in a month all in the name of breast cancer trials research



The beginning of the year is often marked with new energy for getting affairs in order, so we can enjoy the rest of the year assured that they are.

If making or updating your Will is on your 'to do' list, please consider including a gift to Breast Cancer Trials. A gift of any size, made after first looking after your loved ones, is a deep reflection of your care for those whose lives are interrupted, changed—or even lost—because of breast cancer.

Your legacy will be a day when everyone affected by breast cancer can look forward to their future and see a clear way ahead.

For more information, please email bequestenquiries@bctrials.org.au, phone (02) 4925 3022, or you can tick the box on the enclosed form and return it in the reply-paid envelope provided.

Thank you!



breastcancertrials.org.au

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