Cancer Council Queensland

50 YEARS OF HOPE

FOR A CANCER FREE FUTURE

Creating hope for a cancer free Queensland

Since 1961 when we first started supporting Queenslanders affected by cancer, our efforts have contributed to dramatic improvements in cancer survival rates in Queensland.

Survival rates for men have increased from 50 per cent during the 1980s and early 1990s to 65 per cent today. Among women, the increase has been from 61 per cent to 70 per cent.

There are several reasons for this increase in survival, including improved screening and diagnostic services, better treatment, and greater support of cancer patients and their families.

This means that many more people diagnosed with cancer will survive and lead a healthy life.

This fact sheet provides an overview of our work in the local region, which helps to improve cancer control and reduce the impact of cancer on the community.

This year, we are continuing to work towards achieving our vision of a cancer free Queensland.

Cancer facts: North Queensland Region

In the North Queensland region (including Mackay), more than 1729 people are diagnosed with cancer each year and more than 601 people die from cancer each year.

The five most common cancers diagnosed in the North Queensland region are prostate (males only), melanoma, bowel, breast (females only) and lung cancer.

Northern Queensland Region

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50 Years in the Fight Against Cancer

50 years ago, in 1961, 12 dedicated Queenslanders came together and made up their minds to do something about cancer.

Their vision has become our mandate, spirited by the great hope that we can beat cancer.

CCQ's contribution over the past fifty years and its record achievements over the past 12 months are worth sharing and celebrating:

• Over the past 50 years (1961-2010 inclusive) total income from all areas was $416,433,521.

• This income has funded mission-related expenditure on cancer research, prevention and early detection, and support services.

• Over the past 12 months, the Viertel Centre for Research in Cancer Control has secured grants from external sources totalling more than $3.1 million, an increase of about 35 per cent on the previous year and an outstanding achievement.

• Last year alone, our Cancer Council Helpline received nearly 26,000 calls from Queenslanders affected by cancer, an increase of 30 per cent on previous year.

• 4,446 Queenslanders affected by cancer have been referred to our Cancer Counselling Service since mid-2004, when the service commenced, providing 11,147 hours of specialised cancer counselling at no cost, a contribution worth about $2.3 million.

• Last year, more than 1,600 cancer patients and their loved ones were accommodated at our facilities in Townsville, Rockhampton and Brisbane.

• Following the purchase of our two new lodges in Cairns and Toowoomba, CCQ will invest nearly $3 million each year in operating and maintaining our five lodges statewide, a worthwhile investment which enables regional patients to access life-saving cancer diagnostic and treatment services.

• With all five lodges, CCQ will provide patients and their loved ones with 73,000 bed nights each year, reflecting the significant breadth of our capacity.

With thanks to community support, cancer survival rates have increased by 30 per cent in Queensland during the past 20 years.

Each day, we make sure that community donations make an immediate difference in the lives of cancer patients.

We are fortunate to benefit from the efforts of many researchers, fundraisers, staff, volunteers, and supporters who take part in our fight against cancer, giving generously to our campaigns because they care about Queenslanders affected by cancer.

This fact sheet lists just some of the outcomes that have resulted from our work in the past year. Of course, none of these achievements would have been possible without people like you. Thank you!

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Investing in Research

In 2010, we invested over $13 million in cancer research, including work by our Viertel Centre for Research in Cancer Control (VCRCC) and the Queensland Cancer Registry.

Our research projects included:

- Seven PhD student scholarships to encourage promising young scientists into cancer research and to train our next generation of cancer scientists.
- Five Senior Research Fellowships, to allow more experienced scientists to dedicate their time to research.
- Our ongoing work in prostate cancer continues with some key results indicating significant differences in the patterns of care for men diagnosed and treated for prostate cancer.
- Enrolling 150 Queensland couples who have been affected by prostate cancer in the VCRCC's research project, ProsCan for Couples. The project aims to find better ways to help men and their partners adjust to changes they may experience following surgery for prostate cancer.
- Awarding grants totalling $1.1 million to 20 hospitals and medical centres across Queensland undertaking cancer clinical trials, which enrolled more than 2000 patients in Queensland in 150 phase two and three clinical trials.
- Publishing the comprehensive report Childhood cancer survival in Australia: 1985-2004.
- Publishing over 40 peer-reviewed scientific papers on our latest research in cancer control.
- Commencing a new VCRCC breast cancer outcomes study. The study aims to recruit over 3000 women newly diagnosed with breast cancer and will investigate reasons why there are inequalities in clinical and psychosocial outcomes.
- Continuing our work on our lifestyle and cancer program CanChange, a randomised-controlled trial of a telephone-delivered intervention to improve lifestyle behaviours for over 300 colorectal cancer survivors.
- Continuing our analysis of information of more than 2500 long-term melanoma survivors as part of our skin cancer research program. Results have shown that a significant proportion of survivors continue to have high levels of distress up to eight-years after diagnosis.
- Reviewing over 4000 pathology notifications of thyroid cancer as a first step to help understand why rates of thyroid cancer have increased so dramatically in the past decade.

This year, CCQ will spend nearly $35 million on cancer control in Queensland, including more than $13 million in funding for potentially life-saving cancer research.

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Reaching out to help

The following list outlines our support service achievements in 2010:

- The Cancer Council Helpline responded to more than 25,900 contacts state-wide and 2128 contacts from North Queensland. For every 1000 cancer diagnoses in North Queensland, we received more than 308 calls.
- We provided 1260 Queenslanders with $660,432 in financial assistance and 107 North Queensland patients with $59,302 in aid.
- We supported 1260 Queenslanders, including 94 North Queensland cancer patients, who lost their hair as a result of cancer treatment, with a financial contribution towards the cost of a wig.
- The Cancer Counselling Service connected with more than 890 cancer patients distressed by cancer, providing telephone and face-to-face counselling. This was an increase of 10 per cent on 2009 results.
- More than 50 per cent of counselling referrals were for Queenslanders from regional, rural and remote areas.
- 86 people received face-to-face counselling in our regional offices in Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton and on the Gold Coast. Our Townsville office responded to 21 local telephone referrals and 13 local face-to-face referrals in 2010.
- The Breast Cancer Support Service linked 413 Queensland women with breast cancer with a peer supporter who has experienced a similar cancer diagnosis themselves. In North Queensland, we connected seven women for peer support.
- The Cancer Connect Service connected 89 Queenslanders in need of peer support.
- Our Cancer Counselling Service launched its Queensland-first resource called Coping with cancer – a guide for people with cancer, their families and friends. The booklet was written entirely by our professional staff and reviewed by Queensland cancer survivors. It is available free to all Queenslanders affected by cancer through the Cancer Council Helpline.
- We provided a meeting place for 19 cancer support groups across the State with more than 1800 members, and provided them and many more with extensive advice, support and cancer resources and information.
- We provided more than 113,000 resources including brochures, booklets, DVDs and more about cancer, cancer treatment and coping with cancer.

Funding for grants, bursaries and awards in 2010

- 52 Seize the Day Study Awards, for youth aged 16-21 years who have been affected by cancer, to the value of $45,750 to provide financial support for continuing education. Five North Queensland recipients received a total of $5100 in grants.
- Six completed funding grants to the value of $56,769 to local Queensland community healthcare providers, such as hospitals and retirement villages, for medical equipment and vehicles for cancer patients.
- 13 health professionals were awarded grants to the total value of $13,500 to attend the 33rd Oncology Nurses Group Conference.
- 52 bursaries for registered and enrolled nurses, personal carers and assistances-in-nursing to attend cancer care courses in Brisbane and Townsville, to develop clinical skills and improve the care of people with cancer wherever they are in Queensland. Six bursaries were awarded to North Queensland health professionals.
- 13 bursaries to Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers to attend the Cancer Care Course for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers. Two bursary recipients were from the North Queensland region.

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Supporting those in need

In 2010, we supported Queenslanders affected by cancer in many ways:

- Our volunteers spent hundreds of hours visiting patients in 19 hospitals across Queensland.
- 422 members of the Partners of Men with Prostate Cancer Support Group attended monthly meetings in Townsville, Mackay, the Whitsundays and Mt Isa.
- Seven Brain Tumour Support Group meetings were attended by local cancer patients and their carers and families in Brisbane and Townsville.
- 13 families affected by brain tumours received neuropsychological assessment, family counselling and support in their own homes as part of Cancer Council Queensland and Griffith University's joint initiative, Making Sense of Brain Tumours project.
- A free daily bus service which transported more than 3400 Gold Coast cancer patients and their carers to Brisbane hospitals for treatment in 2010.
- A free daily bus service which transported more than 10,000 North Queensland cancer patients and their carers to Townsville hospitals for treatment in 2010.

Caring for patients

Each year, our lodges provide cancer patients with a home away from home during their treatment. In 2010, our lodges provided the following help:

- Charles Wanstall Apex Lodge in Brisbane provided 10,979 nights of accommodation for 443 cancer patients and 363 carers.
- Gluyas Rotary Lodge in Townsville provided 5707 nights of accommodation for 213 cancer patients and 215 carers.
- Central Queensland Cancer Support Centre provided 650 nights of accommodation for 229 cancer patients 182 carers.
- And our Palliative Care Centre in Townsville provided nearly 500 terminally ill North Queenslanders with a peaceful setting to receive clinical care and comfort.
- This year, we will open two new lodges for regional cancer patients, in Cairns and Toowoomba.

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Helping Queenslanders prevent and detect cancer

Each year, we deliver vital support to help members of the community prevent cancer and detect it early. In 2010, our work engaged:

- 764 SunSmart primary schools state-wide and 31 new SunSmart primary schools; 123 of these are North Queensland SunSmart primary schools.
- 993 SunSmart early childhood centres state-wide and 58 new SunSmart early childhood centres; 71 of these are North Queensland SunSmart early childhood centres.
- 82 SunSmart high schools state-wide, including 18 new SunSmart high schools across the state.
- 295 schools, early childhood centres and community organisations applied for funding through the SunSmart Grant Scheme. In partnership with Queensland Health, we granted $248,000 across 154 of these organisations to enable them to purchase sun protective resources and equipment to enhance sun protection for the children in their care. Funded items included shade structures, sunscreen, improvements to hats and uniforms and trees for shade. In North Queensland, 20 organisations were awarded grants totalling $31,167.

Our SunSmart activity included:

- Over 200 community organisations, schools and workplaces registered for Queensland SunSmart Day on November 12, 2010. Each registered host organisation received resources to set up a skin cancer awareness display and conducted fundraising activities to raise money for skin cancer research, treatment and education.
- Production of three editions of SunSmart News, a newsletter which is delivered to 1691 registered SunSmart Queensland primary schools, high schools and early childhood centres.

Our anti-tobacco activity included:

- Involvement in The Critics' Choice program, with 423 Queensland schools and over 10,275 children aged between 13 and 17 years participating. 35 of these participating schools were from North Queensland.
- Successfully delivering Quit Educator training to 101 individuals and community groups members throughout Queensland to equip health professionals with the skills to deliver smoking cessation through the Quit Educator program. 26 of these health professionals were from North Queensland.
- Successfully delivering smoking cessation courses and brief intervention counselling and training to 215 health professionals state-wide. Courses were held in Townsville (100 health professionals) and Toowoomba (90 health professionals).
- We provided 452 free health presentations state-wide, delivered by trained Community Speakers, to more than 16,396 Queensland participants covering a range of topics around healthy lifestyle, cancer prevention and early detection. In North Queensland, we provided 43 free community presentations to 1010 participants, including:
    - Reducing Your Risk of Bowel Cancer
    - Reducing Your Risk of Skin Cancer
    - Reducing Cancer Risk for Women
    - Reducing Cancer Risk for Men
    - Healthy Living to Reduce Your Cancer Risk

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Health education

Each year, we educate health professionals to improve the quality and standard of cancer care for patients. In 2010, our initiatives included:

- Cancer care education scholarships awarded to 52 health professionals to attend specialised courses and programs held in Townsville and Brisbane.
- Over $64,624 was awarded in study and travel grants, enabling 14 health professionals to participate in training activities in Australia and abroad.
- Awarded 13 bursaries to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care workers from across the State to attend a specialised cancer care course.
- Growing the Indigenous health care workers network to 110, with network participants given direct access to our education programs, resources and scholarships.
- Continued to support the Oncology Nurses Group and Allied Health Professional Oncology Group, welcoming 286 health professionals to the 33rd annual Oncology Nurses Group Conference on the Gold Coast.

Giving back to communities

Supporting local communities in the fight against cancer is crucial to improving cancer control.

In 2010, we opened new offices in Bundaberg and Mackay, to increase our reach across Queensland. Today, we have nine offices statewide, in Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Toowoomba, and at the Sunshine and Gold Coasts. Our local office staff actively engage with communities to raise awareness of cancer control and to inspire fundraising efforts so that we can continue the fight against cancer.

Looking after our people

Our people play an important role in building our capacity in your local community.

Statewide, we employ over 240 staff. In 2008 we were awarded by the Federal Government a Leading Organisation for the Advancement of Women Award and in 2011 achieved ranking among only 11 other Queensland organisations as an Employer of Choice for Women.
We have one of Australia's highest rates of return-to-work from maternity leave, and a gender pay gap that slightly favours women, in contrast to industry norms.
Innovative workplace initiatives have inspired a work culture characterised by job satisfaction and employee wellbeing, with 90 per cent of staff reporting a high level of job satisfaction and 85 per cent reporting a good work-life balance.