



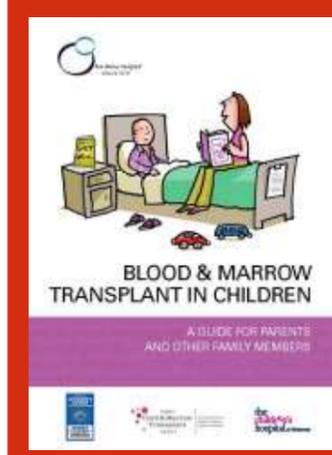
Arrow PhD Scholarship Success

In addition to her achievement of the 2006 Australian Postgraduate Award, scholarship recipient Dr Dipti Talaulikar (who is currently working as an ANU Medical Fellow in the Department of Haematology at the Canberra Hospital) has recently had two papers accepted for publication in world renowned medical journals!

The first was published in *Pathology* and the other in the *Journal of Clinical Pathology*. Dr Talaulikar has also submitted a third paper to *Histopathology*.

Arrow thanks the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic's support of our successful PhD scholarship recipients.

- 1) Accepted for publication in *Pathology*: Talaulikar D, Dahlstrom JE, Broomfield A, McNiven M, Shadbolt B. Occult marrow involvement in Diffuse Large B-cell Lymphoma: results of a pilot study.
- 2) Accepted for online early publication in the *Journal of Clinical Pathology*: Talaulikar D, Gray JX, Shadbolt B, McNiven M, Dahlstrom JE. A comparative study of the quality of DNA obtained from fresh frozen and formalin-fixed decalcified paraffin-embedded bone marrow trephine biopsies using two different methods.



Two new books from the Arrow sponsored Patient Information Guide Series are now available!

Autologous Bone Marrow Transplant - A patient's guide, and Blood & Marrow Transplant in Children - A guide for parents and other family members, which follow from the allogeneic version of the guide, are now available free of charge to all BMT patients in the public health system in NSW.

Copies can be ordered from the BMT Network NSW website: www.bmtsw.com.au

Volunteers needed

For what we predict to be a very eventful year!

It doesn't take an astrologist for us to know that 2008 is set to bring with it fresh and exciting challenges for Arrow. Thanks to our wonderful supporters, Arrow is now able to further expand existing fundraising initiatives and create new ones! So if your new year's resolution is to do more to help others, then please contact Arrow today!

We are calling for Sydney based volunteers to help form a sub committee for fundraising events to be held throughout 2008. Whether you're sporty, a disco diva, a master of trivia - there's an event to suit everyone.

Please contact Robyn Flood on 02 8382 2698 or email rflood@arrow.org.au for more information.

Karma Currency

Whatever the occasion, whether it is Christmas, birthdays, weddings, births or condolences, you can now give a priceless gift to both the gift recipient, and to Arrow, through the Karma Currency website.

Arrow is proud to be a part of this new Charity Gift Voucher initiative which allows the gift recipient to redeem their voucher via the website and give it to the charity closest to their hearts.

For more information, visit www.karmacurrency.com.au



Arrow sponsored travel assistance

In addition to our funding of vital research projects, Arrow is proud to support a number of patient services including travel assistance, which is available to Bone Marrow Transplant patients both during and after transplant treatment.

Please contact Arrow on 02 8382 2698 or email info@arrow.org.au for details.

newsletter

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2008

His Eminence George Cardinal Pell joins Arrow in support of advances in adult stem cell research for leukaemia and related diseases



His Eminence George Cardinal Pell

Cardinal George Pell, the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, is now the official Patron of the Arrow Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation. For twenty years Arrow has funded research into adult stem cell therapy leading to positive results in the treatment of blood cancers like leukaemia, lymphoma and a number of non-malignant disorders.

Stem cell research is at the forefront of biomedical advancement but it is not widely known that adult blood forming stem cells from the bone marrow (hematopoietic stem cells, HSCs) have been successfully used in transplants for over 30 years and are currently the only type of stem cell commonly used to treat human diseases.

Each year, a staggering 7300 Australians are diagnosed with leukaemias, lymphomas or myeloma and a bone marrow transplant offers the best prospect for recovery in many cases. An advantage of using the patient's own stem cells (autologous) is to avoid the technical problems of immune rejection. The latest data summary released by the Australasian Bone Marrow Transplant Recipient Registry (part-funded by

Arrow) shows that almost 20% of deaths in the first year for patients requiring donor cells (allogeneic transplant) is due to immune rejection. Cardinal Pell shares Arrow's vision which is ultimately to find a cure for leukaemia and related diseases and to further advance the use of autologous adult stem cells in regenerative medicine.

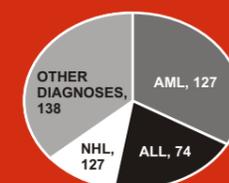
The controversy over the use of embryonic stem cells, since the December 2006 Senate vote to lift a ban on the therapeutic cloning of human embryos, has helped to draw attention to the groundbreaking advances of adult stem cell research. Scientists have found adult stem cells in more tissues than once thought possible and more advanced techniques of collecting, or "harvesting," HSCs are now used to treat leukaemia, lymphoma and several non-malignant disorders. Research has shown that adult stem cells may prove to have similar developmental potential as embryonic stem cells but ongoing funding and support is needed to continue research into this vital area.

Robyn Flood, Executive Officer of Arrow says, "the process of adult stem cell transplantation has been used in Australia to treat certain types of blood cancers for over 30 years. This process in Australia evolved from pioneering work at St Vincent's Hospital in the 1970's. In the last ten years, advances in medical research and the clinical application of adult stem cell therapies, have seen a dramatic improvement in survival rates of patients post transplant. However, the application of adult stem cells as treatment for human disease is yet to reach its full potential."

"I am delighted to lend my support to both Arrow's research efforts and its care and support of patients. We all want to find cures for terrible diseases like leukaemia and lymphoma. Good science, good ethics and good patient care are a powerful combination in this work, and Arrow exemplifies how well it can be done," Arrow Patron Cardinal Pell said.

Bone Marrow Transplant Statistics

In 2006, there were 1,114 bone marrow transplants in Australia - 672 for males and 442 for females. Patients ranged in age from 41 days to 81 years. Of these transplants, 333 were allogeneic (which is when a patient receives matched blood stem cells from a sibling or related volunteer) and 781 were autologous (when a patient receives an infusion of their own stem cells after high-dose chemotherapy). In 2005, the procedural related mortality within 100 days for allogeneic transplants performed in Australia was 9.6%, compared to 21% in 1993 (source: ABMTRR).



Allogeneic bone marrow and stem cell transplants by major indication, Australia, 2006
AML: Acute myeloid leukaemia
ALL: Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia
NHL: Non-Hodgkin lymphoma

donations in memoriam

We gratefully acknowledge donations received in memory of:

- Katherine Robertson
- Matthew Rennie
- Steve Showell
- Stephen Fisse
- Neil Brown
- Keith Burling
- Diane & David Cresswell
- Suzie Amigo

in this issue

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Story ideas and photos are welcome. Please contact Gloria Vincent on (02) 8382 2696 or email gvincent@arrow.org.au

YES.. I would like to become a Member (\$22)

YES.. I would like to donate \$75 \$50 \$100 Other amount \$ _____ Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible

Title. _____ Given Name. _____ Surname. _____

Address. _____ Suburb. _____ State. _____ Postcode. _____

Phone. (H) _____ (W) _____ Mobile. _____ Email. _____

My cheque/money order is enclosed Please charge my credit card: Name on Card. _____

MasterCard Visa American Express Expiry Date: ____/____/____

Credit Card Number _____ Cardholder's Signature. _____

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Date: ____/____/____

Information & Privacy Policy: Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive further correspondence from Arrow.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO: ARROW BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT FOUNDATION. 16 Leichhardt Street, DARLINGHURST NSW 2010.



My story - Michael Faust

I was diagnosed on March 2, 2004 with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia.

I had just returned to Sydney from college in the USA, while on a tennis scholarship, and I was extremely fit and healthy. I had been experiencing excruciating upper back pain which then moved into my lower back and both legs. I thought the pain was just an injury from going to the gym or playing tennis, but blood tests revealed something very different.

At first, I didn't believe the diagnosis. I couldn't believe that someone my age could have cancer. I wanted to know what I had done for this to happen to me. My doctor explained that the only possible cure would be to undergo a Bone Marrow Transplant. My sister Chloe was tested immediately but we were devastated to learn that she was not a compatible match. The next step was to search among the 10 million volunteers listed on international donor registries. After undergoing numerous rounds of chemotherapy and six months of constant searching, The Australian Red Cross finally found my perfect match on the Gift of Life Donor Registry in the USA. I felt as though I had won the lottery. I felt as though all my dreams had come true and I remember thinking just how special and courageous this person from half way around the world must be to donate their stem cells to a complete stranger. Ten days before I was scheduled to enter hospital for the transplant, a lumbar puncture revealed I had relapsed. I underwent extensive chemotherapy and full body radiation which made me terribly ill. Finally, on October 28th, 2004, I received my stem cell transplant. My doctor was surprised to see that after only a few days my new stem cells had started to engraft and my blood counts were coming up. I did experience severe acute Graft Versus Host Disease, but after some very tough and gruelling times I was well enough to leave the hospital within 3 weeks of the transplant.

That may have been quite an accomplishment but it is my donor who is truly a remarkable and extraordinary man. He has given me a great deal more than blood stem cells. He has given me another chance to be with my family; get back on the tennis court; start my own family; accomplish my dreams and most importantly, he has given me a second chance at life.

Just a few months ago I had the amazing opportunity of coming face to face, for the very first time, with my donor who has a very special place in my heart, and will always be a part of me. Words cannot begin to explain the love and admiration my family and I have for him. He is a truly outstanding individual and an inspiration to me, my family and all my friends.

My recovery process was a roller coaster ride but today I am a healthy man looking forward to a more enriched life than I ever could have imagined.

To find out more about becoming a bone marrow donor in Australia, contact the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry on: (02) 9229 4318

Lisa Cuthbertson wins gold!

Written by Lisa Cuthbertson

The heat and humidity did nothing to deter some 1500 transplant recipients, supporters and donor families as they arrived Bangkok; they were too busy renewing old acquaintances, and making new ones.

As participants of the single biggest organ donation and transplantation awareness event in the world, they descended on Bangkok for the 16th World Transplant Games (25 August - 2 September 2007). A biennial event held every two years, the World Transplant Games was established for three main reasons: to raise awareness of the need to increase organ donation; to show the world that life - and a healthy one - after transplantation is possible; and to give thanks to organ donors and their families.

Some 69 countries fielded a team for the 2007 Games, with athletes competing in eleven different sports. Competition aside, it's the camaraderie which is the clear winner; it's a week when likeminded individuals celebrate a life that they wouldn't otherwise have had, were it not for the generosity of others, and of course, the wonders of modern medicine.

As a 'veteran' of the World Transplant Games, having been to eight summer and two winter games, I strongly encourage all bone marrow transplant recipients to find their feet, arms, legs and a sport to go with them, and to consider participating in the 11th Australian Transplant



Left: Lisa Cuthbertson Gold Winner

Games, to be held in Perth, 4 - 11 October 2008. Whether you take up bowls, bocce, cycling, swimming, golf or a game of badminton, your spirit is what counts, it's about participation and celebration.

I recall competing in the 2004 World Winter Games in Bormio, Italy, standing at the top of a downhill race in the freezing cold, beside an Italian woman who had received her bone marrow transplant from a matched donor from Ireland - something not possible 22 years ago, when I received mine from my sister. As the only Australian competitor in the Winter Games, I distinctly recall waving the Australian flag during the opening march, held on a clear, cold, winter's night. As I watched the Games' torch being ignited, I was once again given a timely reminder to stop, think and reflect; there's no greater gift than the gift of life and World Transplant Games athletes, from so many countries worldwide, are living proof of that.

The 17th World Transplant Games will be held on the Gold Coast, Australia, 22 - 30 August 2009. For information on these Games and the forthcoming Australian National Games visit <http://www.transplant.org.au/>



Michael Faust

'Light the Night' tribute to Matthew Rennie helps to bring Arrow researchers closer to a cure



Left to right; Toni Rennie, Jaime Smith, Col Rennie, David Nomchong, Monica Smith, Greg Smith and Scott Marler

Researchers at St Vincent's Hospital (Sydney) Blood Diseases and Cancer Research Unit have identified a gene that appears to be crucial in cell survival. The goal of the project is to discover the role of the gene in the development of cancer and how it may influence the response of cancer cells to chemotherapy. "This gene is a potential target for developing new drugs to cure cancer," says Professor David Ma.

This exciting "Gene Switch" research project could not be undertaken without funds raised by the Light the Night Benefit Concert which was held on November 26th, 2007 in memory of Matthew Rennie who has been the motivation behind the event since its conception three years ago. Matthew's brothers, Shaun and Adam, and good friends Monica and Greg Smith said they could not sit back and do nothing while Matthew fought his courageous battle against leukaemia; so together they created an enchanting concert that celebrates Matthew's life whilst raising vital funds to save the lives of others. The audience was blown away by the diverse range of overwhelming talent on show. Matthew was loved by many and to everyone who has asked Shaun and the Rennie family if there's anything they can do to show their support, the answer is a resounding YES. Shaun has asked that as many people as possible donate blood to the Red Cross and tick the bone marrow transplant box to help save lives.

This year's event raised \$55,000 bringing the total amount achieved to a huge \$130,000 for research into a cure for leukaemia. All proceeds will directly fund the "Gene Switch" research project which will help facilitate new strategies for cancer treatment.

Thank you Hawkesbury Canoe Classic (HCC)

The forecast was for rain but the clouds parted for the 111km canoe marathon undertaken by 600 dedicated paddlers (and double that number of land crew) who took up the overnight challenge for charity. An astounding \$200,000 was donated to Arrow with proceeds supporting Arrow's PhD scholarship students, a Senior Research Scientist, and their research projects into the: prevention, treatment and cure for leukaemia.

The cheque was presented to Arrow's President, David Nomchong, at the HCC presentation dinner on 19th November 2007. "We have been overwhelmed by this extraordinary donation from the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic Association. The commitment of the paddlers, their ground crews, the volunteer services, their supporters and the executive committee of the HCC who have now raised over \$1.9 million over 12 years towards cancer research projects, education scholarships, resource grants, patient care and facilities through the Arrow Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation. This is an incredible longstanding partnership of which the value can never be underestimated," said David Nomchong.

The HCC is run entirely by volunteers and could not take place without the tireless efforts of Race Director, Caroline Kessler; President, Kent Heazlett and Wendy McLean. For information email info@canoeclassic.asn.au



Pictured L to R: David Nomchong, Arrow President; Will Warrick, Roberts & Morrow (Count member firm); Barry Lambert, Founder of Count Charitable Foundation and cheque donor; Jack Abbott, Smith Sharpe & Abbott (Count member firm) and Dave Eden, Arrow Treasurer.

Count Charitable Foundation sponsors Armidale school paddlers raising a huge \$50,000 for cancer research

Barry Lambert, Founder and Executive Chairman of Count Financial Ltd / Count Wealth Accountants, presented a cheque of \$50,000 to Arrow's president, David Nomchong, at the Windsor HCC start on Saturday 27th October 2007. This extremely generous donation was raised by way of sponsorship through Armidale community paddler groups, exceeding last year's donation by \$10,000!

Will Warrick (pictured) was among the 64 paddlers associated with: TAS, NEGS, PLC and AHS students, and their families, who were sponsored by Count Charitable Foundation for completing the overnight paddle. Jack Abbott (pictured) provided vital landcrew support along with around 80 Armidale land crew. The huge fundraising efforts of the Armidale community were particularly relevant to TAS and NEGS who lost former students, Arjun Daniel and Fiona Reynolds, to cancer this year. Funds raised at the schools enabled new boats, named after the two students, to be constructed and paddled in the 2007 event. Arrow wholeheartedly thanks Count Charitable Foundation and the Armidale Schools for their huge efforts.



Picture: Taken prior to the Open Men's final, Sunday 28th October. Max Tough, 3rd place (white), Mitchell Dempsey, 2nd place (red), Matthew Downes, 4th place (blue), Jeff Coronese, 1st place (yellow)

Surfing for a Cure

The first day of the 2007 Dave 'Coke' Wards Surfing Contest was held in October 2007 at Wamberal Beach. The annual event, now in its 18th year, is held in memory of local surfer Dave Wards who passed away from leukaemia in his twenties.

Event Director, Wayne King, says "thanks to the solid south swell, we had the opportunity to hold the event at one of Dave's favorite breaks. This set up the finals day showdown at Wamberal beach with lots of memories and passion in most of the older competitors that grew up and surfed with Dave Wards."

The competitors and friends of Dave Wards raised over \$8000 for Arrow. This brings the total raised to almost \$170,000 since the event's commencement! Special thanks must go to the remarkable efforts of the organisers, particularly Cris Beeby and Wayne King.