

# Transplant Talk

ISSUE 01  
2015

## St Vincent's Hospital to get new transplant ward

St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, performed Australia's first adult bone marrow transplant in October, 1975, and will this year celebrate its 40th anniversary of Bone Marrow Transplants (BMTs).

To honour this milestone, Arrow and the St Vincent's Curran Foundation aim to raise \$5.5 million towards the development of a new specialist transplant ward to deliver state-of-the-art patient care. With each room in this 16 bed dedicated ward set to cost approximately \$300,000 to build and fit out, we will need your help to reach our target.

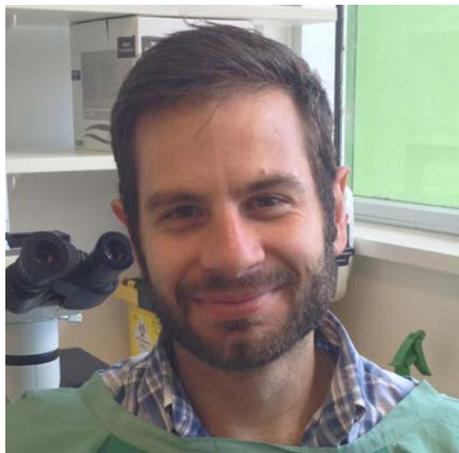
At the December 2014 Arrow board meeting, the Arrow directors committed resources to raise \$300,000 over the next 18 months to fully fit out one of the 16 rooms that the ward will have. This is a big commitment for Arrow, but we believe it can be achieved with support from our dedicated donors.

Associate Professor Anthony Dodds said, "The Haematology / Bone Marrow Transplant ward no longer meets the needs of the increasingly complex therapies being used to treat our patients with blood cancers. The need is for the greater use of single rooms with en-suite bathrooms to protect these vulnerable patients from cross infection when they are recovering from their treatment. A modern haematology / bone marrow

**To help us build a new BMT ward at St Vincent's Hospital please donate by completing the enclosed donation form or visiting: [www.arrow.org.au](http://www.arrow.org.au)**

## Hawkesbury Canoe Classic (HCC) presents Arrow with \$180,000!

The 38th Hawkesbury Canoe Classic (HCC), held in October 2014, raised a huge \$180,000 to fund: Arrow/HCC Research Scientist, Thanh Vu, four Arrow/HCC PhD scholarship students and new medical research projects.



Michael Papadimitriou

With the support of the HCC, Arrow/HCC PhD scholarship recipient, Michael Papadimitriou, will continue his research into the treatment of Multiple Myeloma using cellular therapy which

transplant ward would provide a more comfortable and dignified environment for our patients, staff and visitors and allow for the best chance of full recovery."



Associate Professor Tony Dodds

Each year, more than 60 transplants are performed on patients in both the public and private hospitals. This dedicated ward will protect patients from life threatening infections from resistant microorganisms and provide much needed privacy, while ensuring that St Vincent's continues to deliver cutting-edge treatments to patients from across New South Wales, interstate and the South Pacific islands.

uses cells from the patient's own immune system to treat the disease. Michael attended the HCC Association's presentation dinner along with Arrow board members and Paul Seshold, the inspirational guest speaker for the evening.

Mark O'Hara, Arrow's Chairman, said: "Arrow received a cheque for \$180,000 at the HCC presentation dinner. This was a phenomenal result considering paddler numbers were down by at least 20% this year. The amount was far in excess of our expectations and will be invaluable in maintaining our current PhD scholarships as well as looking to fund additional research projects in 2015."

We are very grateful to the paddlers, HCC committee members and volunteers for achieving this amazing result in support of medical research.

**The 39th annual Hawkesbury Canoe Classic will be held on the 24th October 2015.**  
**To get involved or find out more visit: [www.canoeclassic.asn.au](http://www.canoeclassic.asn.au)**

## donations in memoriam

We gratefully acknowledge donations received in memory of:

- Katherine Robertson
- Michael Griffith
- Sylvia Hartog

## 2015 events

**Hawkesbury Canoe Classic (HCC)**  
24th October, 2015.  
Paddle, sponsor a paddler or volunteer.  
[www.canoeclassic.asn.au](http://www.canoeclassic.asn.au)

**Allan Frenkel Foundation Dinner**  
Saturday 20th June, 2015 at 7pm.  
Tickets \$135 per person, including canapés, dinner and beverages.  
To book visit:  
<http://www.allanfrenkelfoundation.org.au>

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## Light the Night's

final show raises \$30,000 to fund medical equipment

The Light the Night (LTN) grand finale brought cheers, tears and provided two vital pieces of medical research equipment valued at \$33,000 for the research team at St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney. The enchanting charity benefit concert, inspired by Matthew Rennie, has raised awareness of the importance of blood donation, and over half a million dollars in support of leukaemia research over the past decade.

The final event took place in October 2014, and funded the purchase of:

- an electroporator which genetically alters human stem cells and leukaemic cells, enabling researchers to study the role of key genes in the development of leukaemia or biology of blood stem cells; and
- an inverted microscope with a fluorescence attachment which ensures the highest level of clarity and magnification for the visualisation of human cells, including stem cells and leukaemic cells, grown outside the human body.



Our most sincere thanks goes to Monica and Greg Smith and Shaun, Adam, Toni and Col Rennie as well as the artists, audience and volunteers that have worked so hard to raise funds for medical research into a cure for leukaemia over the past ten years.

L to R: Greg Smith, Shaun Rennie, Monica Smith



L to R: Shaun Rennie; Samantha, Monica, Jaime and Greg Smith

## Dave 'Coke' Wards memorial raises \$16,000 for Arrow

Arrow's longest standing fundraiser, the Dave 'Coke' Wards memorial, celebrated its 25th anniversary with a trivia night followed by the annual surf and swim competition held at Forrester's Beach in October, 2014.

The trivia night was organised by Wayne King, Chris Beeby and Megan Balfour, who shared her husband Mark's touching transplant story with guests. Wayne and Chris have been nominated for the Wyong Council's Australian of the Year Award in honour of their tireless fundraising efforts over the past 25 years and we wish them the very best of luck.



Nathan Cook wins 2014 Coke Memorial

***"If my daddy didn't have a BMT he would never have known me, and I would never have known him".***



Balfour family

On 26 June 2007, my husband, Mark, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML), he was 37 years old and we had a 6 and half month old baby girl and a 6 year old boy. Within days of being diagnosed, Mark was admitted to M2 Cancer Care, Gosford Hospital, and received lifesaving chemotherapy. However after three months it was evident that Mark would need a bone marrow transplant (BMT) to save his life. Mark had a great deal working against him, and had less than a 10% chance of finding a donor worldwide.

In December 2007, we were called to St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, and told a donor had been found. We were told to possibly prepare for a year in hospital. Our doctor said to go on our intended holiday, enjoy our family time, get our affairs in order; and told Mark to surf as much as possible to get strong for the transplant. We had a fantastic summer, but also knew that Mark's life depended on the success of the transplant in April 2008. In late March, we received a call nine days before the transplant, informing us that Mark's AML had returned. Things were not looking great. The team at Vincent's decided to go ahead with the transplant, and on the 13th of April, 2008, Mark received his life saving bone marrow transplant.

After six weeks in hospital and very few complications his was back at home.

So let's fast forward to 2013. At the end of August I received an email to announce LTN13. I was really excited and couldn't wait for the night. In the weeks that followed, my health started to fail once more and I'm no longer in remission. My lymphoma is back. This time it's behind my left eye and lymphoma cells were also found in my spinal fluid.

The first stage of my treatment plan has seen me undergo chemotherapy and I'm scheduled to commence radiation treatment next week. If that's successful, the next stage is a stem cell transplant. I feel honoured to be offered this treatment, which is long, painful, difficult and very expensive.

When I tell people the news of my condition, universally they say: "what is it that I can do or how can I help?" Well, during my transplant, it's likely I will need MANY blood and platelet transfusions. So I ask of you, if you can, please give blood. Your blood might save my life, or save the life of the person sitting next to you.

Make a donation today! Visit [www.arrow.org.au](http://www.arrow.org.au) or complete the form overleaf.

Mark's donor came from New York, he was a 34 year old male who we will never know. What an amazing gift to give another person. Without the research funded by the Arrow Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation and the amazing doctors and nurses involved in cancer care, Mark may never have survived.

Mark is extremely lucky as many transplants are unsuccessful due to complications or rejection. At the same time that Mark had his transplant, two

other beautiful people passed away from complications. They were 37 and 50 years old.

I have decided to raise funds for cancer research and Arrow, whose support of vital research will allow others to grow old, to see their children grow up and teach them to surf! To spend many more years with partners, brothers, sisters, parents and friends; and to help those diagnosed with blood cancers and disorders for which a transplant is the only option for survival.

We are so lucky to have had the wonderful outcome we have and are forever grateful to the amazing medical professionals and medical researchers that helped save Mark's life.

I would like to share a quote from our eight year old daughter to myself and a beautiful cancer care nurse of few weeks ago: "if my daddy didn't have a BMT he would never have known me and I would never have known him". Written by Megan Balfour.



## Tour de Cure donates \$15,000 to Arrow's Tracey Scone Wig Library

In December 2014, Tour de Cure generously donated \$15,000 towards the purchase of new wigs, bringing the total raised in support of the Tracey Scone Wig Library to \$91,000 since 2011.

The ongoing funding provided by Tour de Cure has eased the devastation of hair loss by giving cancer patients complementary access to a wide selection of quality wigs in all styles and colours. Arrow can welcome patients to the Wig Library

with the confidence that there is a wig to suit everyone.

Since 2007, Tour de Cure has raised more than \$16 million dollars and funded 184 cancer research, support and prevention projects for men, women and children.

To get involved as a rider, volunteer or guest rider, visit: [www.tourdecure.com.au](http://www.tourdecure.com.au)



## Snapshot of patient support in 2014

In 2014, Arrow made the transplant process a little easier for 37 patients and carers by assisting with day to day travel, food, living and accommodation costs, while also offering scholarships to registered nurses employed in the field of blood and marrow transplantation.

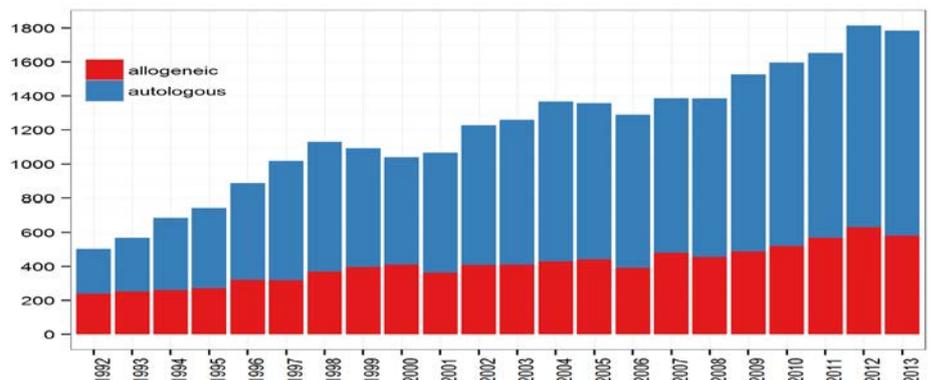
Arrow is pleased to have provided patients and their carers with:

- Petrol cards for travel to and from hospital: \$5000
- Emergency funding covering utility bills, grocery cards and other living costs: \$15,000
- Accommodation assistance: \$1700
- Nurse education for two registered nurses: \$3500

## Transplant Snapshot

The Australasian Bone Marrow Transplant Recipient Registry (ABMTRR) has released the ABMTRR Annual Data Summary 2013, a report part funded by Arrow to provide doctors, clinicians and researchers with patient data relating to bone marrow, peripheral blood and cord blood stem cell transplants throughout Australia and New Zealand.

In 2013, transplant numbers decreased for the first time in 5 years with a total of 1,544 allogeneic and autologous transplants conducted in Australia, down from 1,567 in 2012. While the number of female patients receiving transplants in Australia declined from 643 in 2012 to 546 in 2013, the number of males receiving transplants increased by 4.5% over the same period.



Source: ABMTRR. February 2015.

Arrow receives no government funding.

