

Priceless



**Clifford
Craig**
Medical
Research Trust

THE NEWS BULLETIN FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE CLIFFORD CRAIG MEDICAL RESEARCH TRUST

North West Medical Research

Professor Michael Buist, who holds a position with the University of Tasmania's Rural Medical School and is the Director of Medicine at the North-West Area Health Service has received a \$30,000 grant from the Trust.

Professor Buist will develop a screening method to distinguish between patients who have been admitted for "true medical conditions" and those who are admitted for less acute conditions.

In every hospital in Australia, patients are admitted for genuine medical and surgical conditions that can only be given in a hospital setting. However, there are a large number of patients that get admitted simply because hospital admission is the only alternative care option when care at home is not viable. These patients currently receive the full medical model of care which involves multiple medical assessments from medical students to consultants, radiological and laboratory investigations and high intensity nurse and allied health care. If there was a reliable method to distinguish between these two groups of patients, it may be possible to design an appropriate care pathway for patients who do not have a true active medical condition.

The aim of this research project is to develop a predictive tool or scoring system that will allow staff in hospital emergency departments to distinguish between patients that need genuine hospital type medical care as opposed to patients that need more problem orientated patient care management with less medical interventions.

Professor Buist's motivation for this research was speaking to elderly people every day asking "why do I have to talk to another person about my medical history, why do I have to have another blood test, why another x-ray?"

The researchers will look at 100 patients at the Mersey Community Hospital and the North West Regional Hospital. The coast is an ideal region for this type of research as there are only two hospitals, making it easier to look at this population compared to six hospitals in Sydney. The scoring tool could provide a solution to the health staffing crises



Clifford Craig CEO Peter Milne, Prof Michael Buist and NW Medical Research Fund Chairman Peter Mancell.

faced in many areas around Australia and the savings to the Australian health system is potentially enormous.

Peter Mancell, North West Medical Research Fund Chairman, is thrilled with the project which will benefit the community. Over eight years the North West Medical Research Fund has been raising funds to allow research to occur in the region, with a significant amount being raised from the Rainbow Ball, and five projects have been funded to date.

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Research Update

Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus: Treatable Dementia, Missed Diagnosis Diagnostic



Associate Professor George Razay

Associate Professor George Razay and his research team at the Launceston General Hospital are investigating the prevalence and early diagnosis of a potentially treatable form of dementia – Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus. This is a three year research project funded by a \$315,000 grant from the Trust.

Importantly, this three year research project aims to develop better methods for diagnosing the condition through the assessment and treatment of 400 older

Tasmanians with memory problems. Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus (NPH) is one of the few treatable forms of dementia but it is notoriously difficult to diagnose. Symptoms include balance and walking problems, dementia and urinary incontinence. Treatment involves a simple operation to insert a shunt to drain excess fluid from the brain. There are no clear diagnostic criteria and the condition is often missed, with patients being misdiagnosed with conditions such as Alzheimer's disease.

There are currently around 230,000 people with dementia in Australia (6,000 in Tasmania) and this is projected to increase to over 730,000 by the year 2050. Dementia is a debilitating condition mainly affecting older people, resulting in cognitive and physical decline.

Progress to date

Associate Professor George Razay has assessed 113 patients in his memory clinic at the Launceston General Hospital and 21 of these patients have been diagnosed with Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus (NPH). From these 21 patients all have undergone balance and cognitive assessments, four have undergone surgery and 14 are on the waiting list for the neurosurgeon or under review.

Case Study

76 year old gentleman, with a one year history of memory problems, 2-3 months worsening balance, had multiple falls, very unsteady on walking and used a stick to mobilise. He had a deteriorating memory, his memory test score was 20/30 and immediate recall was 0/3. Brain CT scan showed enlarged cavities inside the brain. He had a shunt inserted to drain away the fluid.

Following surgery he can remember more recent events, is less repetitive in asking the same questions, his balance has improved and he no longer has falls or requires a stick to walk. His memory test score is now 27/30 and immediate recall is 3/3.

Nobel Laureate for Medical Research Week



Professor Peter Doherty

An important date on the calendar each year is Medical Research Week which will be held from June 2-10 in 2011.

Medical Research Week provides an opportunity to create awareness on the importance of medical research, to focus on the many medical research achievements and also recognise those who dedicate their careers to medical science.

A major feature of Medical Research Week will be the visit to Launceston by Nobel Laureate Professor Peter Doherty, to deliver the 2011 Dare Shott Lecture. Professor Doherty is highly recognised for his research in the area of defence against viruses and was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1996 and named Australian of the Year in 1997.

The Dare Shott Lecture is a public event and will be held at 6.00pm on Monday 6th June at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre at the University of Tasmania - Newnham Campus.

Anyone wishing to attend is asked to contact the Trust office to reserve a seat or visit our website for more information www.cliffordcraig.org.au

Hospital Receives Top Marks for Patient Care

The Launceston General Hospital has been recognised for the excellent quality of care that it provides and has been awarded Australian Council of Health Care Standards (ACHS) ongoing accreditation until 2015.

The ACHS, the nation's leading independent authority on health care, surveyed hospital facilities and staff in October last year and the hospital was awarded seven "Excellent Achievement" ratings.

These were achieved in; pressure ulcer management, blood transfusion services, safety systems in food services, medical imaging, manual handling and dangerous goods, supply and equipment, emergency response, security and waste management.

The Minister for Health, Michelle O'Byrne, presented LGH Chief Executive Officer John Kirwan with the hospital's accreditation certificate and congratulated the hospital staff on the achievements in the accreditation survey.

"Accreditation sends a clear message to the community that hospital management and staff are committed to excellence in health care and we are delighted and very proud that this hospital has been recognised for continually meeting patient expectation of a high standard of health care", she said.

The accreditation is valid until 2015.



Ita Buttrose creates a luncheon sell-out

High profile journalist and businesswoman Ita Buttrose proved to be a drawcard guest speaker at the recent International Women's Day Luncheon, held at the Boathouse on Northbank in Launceston and organised by the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust.

A woman with an extensive career in print, radio and television, Ita completely enthralled the audience at the sold-out function to highlight International Women's Day.

Her presentation reflected upon her career as the only woman in male dominated boardrooms whilst working for the Packer and Murdoch media empires. During her career she was editor of the Daily Telegraph, Sun-Herald, Australian Women's Weekly, Cleo and ITA.

During her talk to more than 200 people at the lunch, she also provided an insight into her new book, *A Guide to Australian Etiquette*, and took time to personally sign copies for the guests.

Thank you to the sponsors of the event, Women Tasmania, Penguin Books, Southern Cross Television, AT&M, the Examiner Newspaper and Fullers Bookshop.



Chief Executive Peter Milne with guest speaker Ita Buttrose.



Above: Guests enjoying the luncheon. Below: Ita Buttrose book signing





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Eating for strong bones

Many people have heard about osteoporosis. Osteoporosis occurs when bone density decreases, resulting in bones that are fragile and more likely to fracture.

Osteoporosis affects both women and men, particularly as they get older. While it is difficult to replace bone density once it is lost, the good news is that there are some simple things you can do to protect your bone strength.

- Enjoy regular physical activity, particularly weight-bearing activities such as walking, going to the gym and Tai Chi.
- Get enough sunshine every day or speak to your doctor about taking a Vitamin D supplement.
- Make sure you have enough calcium in your daily diet.

How much calcium do I need for strong bones?

Nutrition experts recommend that women over 54 years have 1000 milligrams and men over 54 years have 800 milligrams of calcium in their daily diet.

In practical terms, this means having about 3 serves a day of high calcium foods such as 1 glass of cow's milk or calcium enriched soy milk or 1 X 200g tub of yoghurt or 2 slices (40 grams) of hard cheese or 1 cup of custard each day. Fish with soft, edible bones such as canned salmon or sardines are also good sources of calcium.

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and custard can increase the fat content of your diet if full fat products are used. If you need to watch your weight or blood fat levels, then reduced fat or low fat versions of these products are recommended. These foods not only provide a good source of calcium but they are also high in valuable nutrients such as protein, vitamin B12 and riboflavin. Make sure you eat enough of these foods each day to keep your bones strong now and into the future.

The Healthy Eating segment in Priceless is kindly supported by the Nutrition Department and the Food Services Department at the Launceston General Hospital.

Yes, I would like to help the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust

- I would like to make a one-off donation of \$ _____
- I would like to have monthly donations of \$ _____ deducted from my credit card.
- All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Please complete the following details:

Title/s: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Other _____

Given Name/s: _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: () _____

Email: _____

Please accept my donation/s in the form of:

- Cash Cheque/Money Order*
- *Payable to the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust

OR

Please debit my:

Visa Mastercard

Credit Card No.: _____

Expiry Date: / _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

- Please send me information on remembering the Trust in my Will.
- Please send me information on making an annual gift using your courtesy reminder service.
- Please apply my gift to the North West Medical Research Fund.

Thank you for your support

Please post to:
CLIFFORD CRAIG
MEDICAL RESEARCH TRUST
PO Box 1963
Launceston
Tasmania 7250



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Entertainment Book 2011-2012

We are pleased to advise the Trust will again be an outlet for the annual *Entertainment Book* this year. Many of our supporters seek to purchase the Entertainment Book through the Trust each year as it is a valuable fundraiser for our research work.

The new *Entertainment Book* features some great savings at a large range of outlets including restaurants, attractions, cinemas, sports and accommodation, with \$11 from the purchase of each book sold going to the Trust.

For further information on how to purchase the book please visit our website www.cliffordcraig.org.au or contact the Trust office.



Message from the Chief Executive



We all look forward to a life of good health and wellbeing. However, at some stages in our lives we will be affected by illness whether it strikes ourselves, our families, friends or colleagues.

Fortunately, there are people who have dedicated their careers to improving the health and wellbeing of others. We are lucky to have people just like that living and working in our community.

Since the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust was established in 1992, our role has been to encourage and facilitate medical research into health issues that affect our community. In order to achieve this goal, we endeavour to work closely with the medical community and provide research funding for specialists at our

local hospitals, encourage medical students to include medical research as a component of their undergraduate training, and support our future researchers at the northern campuses of the University of Tasmania.

The importance of encouraging a strong research culture in Northern Tasmania is highlighted by some statistical information that I recently came across relating to Tasmanian population health. Our community has the dubious honour of leading Tasmania in the areas of lung cancer, lymphomas, diabetes, asthma, cervical cancer and heart disease.

Our research team has already undertaken research into several of these areas however as the figures highlight, there is plenty of work to be done to reduce the rate of chronic disease. Fortunately, our community has shown responsibility for improving the health outcomes of our region through the establishment of the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust and it is important that we, as an organisation, continue to invest in the further development of a strong medical research culture in Northern Tasmania.

Peter Milne
CEO

Wine Tasting – Penfolds Bin Release

Following the success of our first wine tasting evening in November, the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust will be holding another tasting evening at the Cataract Bistro in Paterson Street Launceston on **Wednesday 6th April at 6.00pm.**

This event is being held in conjunction with the Benchmark Wine Club and will be quite a special occasion as attendees will have the opportunity to sample some of this year's wines that have been released from the Penfolds Bin Range. Penfolds has traditionally held an annual release of Bin range wines since the first experimental bottling of 1951 Bin 1 Grange Hermitage.

Wine industry professionals from Treasury Wine Estates will again be on hand to provide their extensive knowledge on wine matching and selection.

The wine tasting evening will also provide the opportunity to stock up for winter and make some great savings on the wine you purchase. We have included a flyer with this edition of Priceless and whilst attendance is free, please call the Trust office to book a place as it is helpful to have an idea how people may be attending.



Blood Clots in Systemic Lupus Erythematosus: The Role of Impaired Fibrinolysis

Dr Murray Adams, Senior Lecturer in Haematology at the University of Tasmania's School of Human Life Sciences and Associate Professor Al Khalafallah, Staff Specialist and Consultant Haematologist at the Launceston General Hospital are undertaking a research project into Blood Clots in Lupus. A \$48,018 grant has been awarded from our 2010 grant round and will be disbursed over a two year period.

In 2006 the Lupus Association of Tasmania made a gift to the Trust of \$40,000 to be used to support research into Lupus. This is the second research project by Dr Murray Adams that has been funded by the Trust and has been assisted by the donation from the Lupus Association.

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (also known as SLE or Lupus) is an autoimmune disorder thought to affect approximately 30,000 Australians. The inflammation associated with Lupus causes damage to a variety of organ systems, including the blood, skin, kidneys, lungs, heart and brain. It can be difficult to diagnose and there is currently no cure.

Patients have a range of clinical problems, including inflammation, skin rashes, renal disorders and infections. Lupus patients are also more likely to develop thrombosis (blood clots) than the general population, but the reasons why are currently unknown. One possible explanation is that the body's natural way of dissolving blood clots i.e. fibrinolysis, is impaired in some manner by the disease. This study will investigate whether fibrinolysis is impaired in Lupus patients and whether it is also associated with other changes seen in the disorder such as Lupus antibodies, inflammation and blood vessel abnormalities. The knowledge gained from this project will aid in understanding how blood clots in Lupus occur, which will help in the development of more target specific therapies and/or approaches to treatment.

Dr Adams will be responsible for the overall co-ordination of the project, laboratory work and analysis of results. Associate Professor Khalafallah will be directly involved in the recruitment and management of patients and the analysis of results. The Lupus Association of Tasmania will also assist in the recruitment of patients.

For the Diary

Launceston Professional Breakfast Series

Especially for city professionals, our breakfast series aims to inspire and help you perform at your peak. Advance notice of dates for 2011: May, July, September, and November. Please check our website for confirmed dates

Rainbow Ball, Burnie

The North West Research Fund's Annual Ball

When: Saturday 4th June 2011
Where: Burnie Arts and Function Centre
Bookings: Please call Carla on 0427 999 696

Dare Shott Lecture

Guest Speaker: Professor Peter Doherty
When: Monday 6th June 2011
Where: Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre, University of Tasmania, Newnham Campus
Time: 6:00 pm
Cost: Gold Coin Donation
RSVP: To the Trust Office – 6348 7010

Launceston Friends of Clifford Craig – Soup and Sandwich Luncheon

When: Thursday 16th June 2011
Where: Australian Italian Club
Time: 12 for 12:30 pm

Launceston Friends of Clifford Craig – Festival of Music

When: Sunday 21st August 2011
Where: Albert Hall, Launceston
Time: 2:00 pm

John Morris Society

The dates for our JMS Members' Luncheons are **Tuesday March 29, Tuesday July 19** and **Tuesday December 6**. The John Morris Society is exclusively for supporters who have remembered the Trust in their Will. For more information please contact the Trust office – 6348 7010

Run for Your Heart

Join us on **Sunday 2 October 2011** and Run for Your Heart! Bring along your family and friends and enjoy a leisurely 5k run or walk.