

Message from the President and CEO

The overarching value of Cancer Council WA is ‘making a real difference’ and this year we continued to do just that, working with passion and commitment across the entire spectrum of cancer control to reduce the incidence and impact of cancer.

As we entered the second year of our current strategic plan, with the incredible West Australian community right by our side we moved forward in our journey towards a cancer-free future. We continued to take a step-by-step sustainable approach to growing our investment in research, using our rigorous peer review process to ensure that the funds the community entrust to us are directed to where they will have the greatest possible impact. Our funding supported the best and brightest researchers in Western Australia across leading universities and institutes, from the earliest career investigators to leaders in their field. Our goal of improving collaboration amongst WA cancer researchers was further advanced this year most notably through our Research Equipment Grant initiative generously funded by BHP Billiton. The equipment purchased through this initiative will enable researchers from a number of different institutes to make progress in the fight against childhood and adult brain cancer, a disease that has a devastating effect on the patient and their family.

This year unfortunately another 11,500 West Australians heard the distressing words “you have cancer”, joining the 87,000 West Australians already living with cancer. For a significant number of these people, their cancer journey has been made a little easier because we were by their side when they needed us. Nearly 35,000 West Australians accessed our specialist information and advice, from our extensive range of practical and emotional support to our survivorship programs that focus on helping people to live as well as possible after their cancer diagnosis. We introduced a number of evidence-based initiatives to help assist people as early as possible in their cancer journey, ensuring we continue to tailor our services to best meet their individual needs. One of these initiatives was the opening of a Cancer Council information hub at the new Fiona Stanley Hospital Cancer Centre, adding to the one that we have at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital Cancer Centre. These information hubs are supported by extraordinarily skilled and dedicated volunteers who have undertaken a purpose designed training program to enable them to effectively guide people in accessing information and support.

Prevention and education play a critical role in realising our vision of a cancer-free future and we continued to work in partnership with a number of like-minded organisations to inform, encourage and assist people to address the lifestyle factors that will reduce their risk of getting certain cancers. More than 30% of all cancers can be prevented through adopting a healthy lifestyle - by quitting smoking, protecting ourselves from the sun, being physically active, eating a healthy diet, maintaining a healthy weight, and limiting alcohol intake. Our evidence-based world class programs focused on these risk factors, and we have built on our existing programs as well as developed innovative approaches to most effectively reach the West Australian community. One such example is our new “16 Cancers” campaign, a Make Smoking History campaign which has been extremely successful and has been picked up by other health organisations nationally and internationally.

As always, across all of these areas we have continued to work to influence changes in legislation and policy that will help us all lead healthier lives as well as champion better outcomes for cancer patients and their families.

This year also saw the realisation of a long held strategy to bring together in one place our metropolitan staff, who were scattered in four buildings over three sites, to improve our effectiveness and productivity and ultimately enhance our ability to achieve our mission. With the help of expert volunteer advisory committees, we considered and then implemented the most cost effective way of achieving this. We are now working together in new offices in Subiaco, and even in the short period of time we have been there, we have already seen appreciable gains.

As we look back over the past year we have achieved much, making critical progress towards our mission and vision. All of our work and achievements are absolutely dependent upon the incredibly generous support we receive from the people and businesses of Western Australia. We are also blessed to have remarkably talented and dedicated staff and volunteers and a wise and committed Board to guide the organisation forward. Our deepest thanks goes to each and every one of you – thank you for your commitment to our mission and vision, thank you for walking by our side, thank you for making a very real difference to the lives of thousands of West Australians.



Professor George Yeoh
President



Susan Rooney
Chief Executive Officer

