

WORLD LEADING LIVER CANCER DISCOVERY

Rodrigo Carlessi always wanted to be a scientist.

“As a young kid, I always said I wanted to be a scientist. I guess it was something about discovery that sparked an interest for me.”

Rodrigo was awarded a 2023 Seed Grant funded by long-term donors, Len and Fran Mihaljevich & David Clegg, leading research on how clinicians can better predict who is at risk of developing liver cancer and therefore provide early detection and treatment. Liver cancer is one of the deadliest types of cancer in the world, with approximately 10% of all cancer-related deaths attributed to the disease. In Australia, liver cancer diagnoses are continuing to grow with a 425% increase over the past 25 years.

“Liver cancer is usually diagnosed late and there isn't much that can be done for the patient by the time they start treatment,” said Rodrigo

Rodrigo and his team want to do something about this and recently had a huge breakthrough in their work, which could provide an opportunity for prevention, before the cancer reaches an incurable stage.

“Earlier this year, we have been able to prove the genetic signature of premalignant cells as a very good bio marker for risk,” he said.

“Thanks to the Spinnaker grant, we have validated in tissue samples from Fiona Stanley Hospital, test biomarkers that show that liver cells with unique genes are top candidates for developing liver cancer.”

Rodrigo wants to highlight the importance of Spinnaker Grants, which allow researchers to undertake work that leads to greater opportunities.

“Researcher's like me need seed funding to get preliminary data and results as proof of concept, which then allows us to compete for larger funding opportunities with a competitive edge.”

“Thank you to all Spinnaker donors for your investment. It is so important, and it is a way to make sure there is a more equal playing field in the research world.”

If you would like to learn more about how you can support research like Rodrigo's, please contact Spinnaker's Executive Manager, Philanthropy Emma Breidahl on ebreidahl@hospitalresearch.org.au



Rodrigo Carlessi



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

to treatment, management, and survivorship; that has a local, national, and international impact.

Effective since October, our partnership is enabling the sharing of established governance, compliance, financial management, grant management, research assessment and cyber security resources, meaning an even greater percentage of donors' and partners' gifts can go directly to research and impact.

Importantly, funds generated by you here in WA will continue to go directly to the benefit of West Australians. All of our wonderful staff have been retained and we look forward to growing the team.

There has been a lot of work, due diligence and thought behind the scenes into this new phase of our important Foundation. We are so pleased that we continue to receive nothing other than positive responses to the collaboration, across all of our different areas of supporters.

However, while this work has been going on, we haven't stopped our

normal activity! We have been busy in the community with the Telethon Family Trail, the Janine Chalwell High Tea, leading donor tours of the Fiona Stanley Hospital, being part of the Men's Shed WA State Conference and attending the Bunning's Fair.

We have also continued to grow MHT Foundation and are working on some exciting new partnerships, which we will share with you soon.

The team and I are always happy to spend some time to update you on the great work happening here in research so please don't hesitate to contact me. We love hearing your feedback and we are always looking to learn from our community, as your ideas on what really matters to you, is critical to the work we fund.

Dana Wallace-Campbell,
Executive Director,
Spinnaker Health Research Foundation
dwallacecampbell@hospitalresearch.org.au

To our dear friends and supporters,

Since our last newsletter, we have entered a new phase of the Spinnaker journey.

As you know, Spinnaker Health Research Foundation has a proud 27-year history of supporting our community, and in another exciting chapter we have now started our formal collaboration with The Hospital Research Foundation Group (THRFG), in South Australia.

THRF proudly fund research and patient care across the full spectrum of healthcare - from antenatal to end-of-life; from disease prevention

DONOR FOCUS

ROTARY CLUB OF FREMANTLE

Since 1996, the Rotary Club of Fremantle has donated over \$280,000 to Spinnaker, to support impactful research in the South Metro area.

When Fremantle Hospital Medical Research Foundation (FHMRP, now Spinnaker Health Research Foundation) was founded, George Booth, a member of Fremantle Rotary, headed up the fundraising committee for FHMRP and he asked Rotary Club of Fremantle to help assist with fundraising. Over the next nine years Rotary held annual quiz nights raising over \$28,000 in total. Then FHMRP Chairman Len Hitchen was a great supporter of the quiz nights which were hosted by the irrepressible Irishman Gerry Gannon.

A charity golf day has been held since 2012 and raised ever increasing amounts for a number of different charities, including

Spinnaker. It continues to be a real team effort with supporters, partners and sponsors all coming together.

A number of long term sponsors have been on board since 2012 including LWP Group as the event major sponsor as well as Ray White, Devon Settlements and Cash Converters. Other regular main sponsors have included Doctors who Donate,

Neometals, Rallou Charitable Trust, British Sausage and Melville Motors and the Royal Fremantle Golf Club who have supported with subsidised green fees and amazing help from ground staff, catering and administration.

2023's Golf Day was again a huge success and planning is now underway for 2024's big event. New sponsors and supporters are always welcome.



Dr Duncan Purtill receiving his Rotary Club of Fremantle grant, enabled by Rotary fundraising.



MELANOMA RESEARCH FUNDING UPDATE

A few short years ago, Spinnaker worked with the Chalwell family to ensure the Janine Chalwell Fund was able to be formed in memory of their beloved wife, mother and friend. With a mission to fund more Melanoma research, we strongly believed in working with our donors to see their vision come to life.

Recently, Spinnaker was thrilled to show the world how far that vision has come, with the announcement of significant funding to an Australian first cancer research project, right here in Western Australia.

A \$2.5million grant has been gifted by the Cancer Research Trust to the Western Australia Melanoma Initiative (WAMI), plus an additional \$1 million will be given collaboratively by Spinnaker, Edith Cowan University, Wind Over Water Foundation, Cancer Council Western Australia and Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research.

The funding will allow WAMI to implement a specialised immune cell therapy for cancer patients in WA, something that has not been possible before and is an Australian first.

Cellular immunotherapy using tumour-infiltrating lymphocytes (TILs) is a personalised immunotherapy for advanced solid cancers like metastatic

melanoma. TILs are emerging as an important biomarker in predicting the efficacy and outcome of treatment.

Melanoma research continues to be a key focus area for Spinnaker and we are proud to have granted significant funds over the past few years to support some of the key researchers who will be part of this newly expanded research, including Deputy Director of the Centre for Precision Health at ECU Associate Professor Elin Gray. Professor Gray led a team who received one of the first Spinnaker grants dedicated to Melanoma research, the Janine Chalwell Gift, in 2021 with \$50,000 for the project

Multimodal Liquid biopsy to Predict Response of Melanoma to Immuno-Oncology.

Spinnaker is proud that this funding is now being bolstered by additional, collaborative funding, with strong philanthropic leadership.

The Chalwell family and a committed team of supporters have also been working hard to raise funds for the Janine Chalwell Fund and recently held the third annual Janine Chalwell High Tea, which raised an extraordinary \$30,000. Thank you to all involved!



The Janine Chalwell Committee at the 3rd annual Janine Chalwell High Tea event.

IN THE COMMUNITY

TELETHON FAMILY FESTIVAL

Spinnaker was proud to be one of the over 70 Channel 7 Telethon Trust beneficiaries represented at the Telethon Family Festival on Sunday 22nd October.

The weather (mostly!) held off and it was an incredible experience to see many of the thousands of families who were part of the day and feel the camaraderie between the beneficiaries.

Our model skeleton Dr Bones was a hit, as were our models of the heart, lungs, brain and eye, which kids of all ages (and some adults!) loved being able to pull apart and put back together.

Telethon weekend raised an incredible \$77,467,775 to support WA kids. We are so grateful to the Telethon Trust for your ongoing support for Spinnaker driven research projects.



Spinnaker team L to R: Emma Breidahl, Catia Furtado, Huey Yeo and Dana Wallace-Campbell.

WHAT WE ARE UP TO...

2023 has been a hugely transformative year for Spinnaker.

We launched MHT Foundation, with a focus on the complex relationships between mental and physical health for men and boys and a mandate to address the real and perceived barriers to men accessing services and implementing positive change. We have developed MHT Foundation in response to the urgent need to address the poor health outcomes of our fathers, sons, brothers, uncles, grandfathers, mates and colleagues from preventable disease and injury and we have been blown away by the response and support we have received. Not to mention the deeply personal stories that have been shared with us. We are proud to have started the journey of investing in research in this area, thanks to our donor support.

We also recently announced our new partnership with the Hospital Research Foundation, which means we now have an even wider remit within Western Australia to fund transformative and translational research that makes real change to the lives of people, right here in our backyard.

We continue to work with partners like Bank of Queensland, Austal and MG Kailis and foundations like Telethon and the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation and community groups like the Rotary Club of Fremantle and the Fremantle Hospital Women's Auxiliary, to ensure that we are truly community focussed and funded.

However, our work can only continue because of each and every one of our amazing donors. It is because of you that we continue to be able to award grant funding, invest in life changing research and world leading equipment.

WE STILL REALLY NEED YOUR HELP

Many of our long-term donors have been tremendous in continuing their support and we are of course, so proud and grateful. We know times are pretty tough for a lot of people and we don't want anyone to feel unnecessary pressure.

If you can support us this Christmas, we would be ever so grateful, and as always, we commit to ensuring it is well invested in the very best from our very brightest because now, perhaps more than ever, we have an increasing need for better health solutions. We cannot take our foot off the pedal now!



MHT Foundation launch event with Adam Gilchrist, Matthew Pavlich, Harry Fisher and Dana Wallace-Campbell.

DONATION FORM

Donate online at: www.spinnakerhealth.org.au/donate

THANK YOU. Your donation will support research that helps our community the most. Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

I would like to make a

- Single donation
- Recurring donation every:
_____ i.e. week/month

I would like to give a gift of

- \$25 \$50 \$100
- \$250 \$500 \$1,000
- Other amount \$ _____

Please direct my gift to:

- Where it's needed
- Spinnaker Grants Melanoma Research
- Men's Health - MHT Foundation

Personal details

Name: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____ Address: _____

I wish to remain anonymous My gift is in memory of: _____

Please find enclosed my cash/cheque payable to Spinnaker Health Research Foundation or;

Please debit my donation to the provided credit card:

Mastercard Visa Cardholder Name: _____

Card no: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ Expire Date: □□/□□ Signature: _____

I would not like to receive regular news, updates and invitations from Spinnaker

I would like to receive information on how to make a gift in my Will to support Spinnaker

Please return this form to Spinnaker Health Research Foundation, PO Box 480, FREMANTLE WA 6959

Email: admin@spinnakerhealth.org.au **Phone:** 08 6152 6278