

## **Dr Farshad Foroudi, Director of Radiation Oncology, Austin Health Our September Meeting Guest Speaker**

Dr Farshad Foroudi, the Austin Health's new Director of Radiation Oncology, will be the Guest Speaker at our September meeting. He will give us an update on recent developments in radiation treatments for prostate cancer.

Dr Foroudi has a particular interest in stereotactic radiotherapy, which is highly accurate and highly focused radiation that targets radiotherapy precisely at the tumour, minimising dose to surrounding normal tissues. He was the lead investigator of the POPSTAR (A Pilot Study of patients with Oligometastases from Prostate cancer treated with Stereotactic Ablative Body Radiosurgery) study. He is introducing a full stereotactic radiotherapy program targeting a wide range of cancers to the Austin Hospital.

Dr Foroudi is also Chair of the Scientific Committee of the Trans Tasman Radiation Oncology Group, the main radiation oncology trials group in Australasia.

### **www.prostateheidelberg.info**

Have you visited our website [www.prostateheidelberg.info](http://www.prostateheidelberg.info) lately?

There is a page of information for newly diagnosed men. You can view or download copies of the current and previous newsletters. There is a Search box on the bottom right of the webpage. This can be a quick way to find information.

Check out the links on the website to some useful resources about prostate cancer. These include:

PROSTIMATE [www.prostmate.org.au](http://www.prostmate.org.au) is a free online personalised support system for men dealing with prostate cancer. It has been developed in partnership with leading cancer agencies, researchers and clinicians. It offers access to the latest research information, personalised support, specialised programs and consultations with prostate cancer specialist nurses and psychologists.

Prostmate also provides a free online support for partners of men with prostate cancer  
[www.partners.prostmate.org.au/](http://www.partners.prostmate.org.au/)

## **Our Next Meeting**

Date: **Wednesday 9 September 2015.**

Time: **10:00 am to 12.30 pm**

Place: **Ivanhoe Uniting Church, Seddon Street, Ivanhoe** (Melways 31 F8)

- Meetings are open to anyone interested in getting support or information on a prostate cancer journey. Partners or carers are welcome to all meetings.
- **There is no charge for attending.**

## PROSTATE HEIDELBERG

<http://pcfa.org.au/> Our Group is affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia. This is the peak national body for prostate cancer in Australia. Lots of good information, including some multilingual resources.

[www.ustoo.org/](http://www.ustoo.org/) Us Too is an American peer-to-peer support group with very good information available on their website about prostate cancer, treatment options and related side effects. They publish a monthly newsletter, the HotSheet  
<http://www.ustoo.org/Read-the-HotSheet-Newsletter>

The Continence Foundation of Australia [www.continence.org.au](http://www.continence.org.au) Urinary incontinence, is experienced by many men following prostate surgery. Incontinence can be treated, managed and in many cases cured. The Continence Foundation of Australia manages the National Continence Helpline (1800 33 00 66), a free service staffed by continence nurse advisors who can provide information, referrals and resources 8am – 8pm on weekdays. If you are unsure who you need to see, call the National Continence Helpline can help you. The National Continence Helpline can also assist you with information about continence products and suppliers of continence products.

We are very grateful to The Continence Foundation of Australia, especially Tina Addison, for their work in mailing out the ProstateHeidelberg newsletter to members each month.

<https://askdrmyers.wordpress.com/> The blog by Dr Snuffy Myers

Sometimes at meetings Dr Charles “Snuffy” Myers may be mentioned. A number of attendees have asked who is this “Snuffy” Myers.

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“Snuffy” Myers is a leading American medical oncologist who is also a prostate cancer survivor. His regular video is one of the most informative and intelligible (non-technical) sources of information on current issues about prostate cancer.

We have a number of books by “Snuffy” Myers which can be borrowed from the ProstateHeidelberg library. His monthly newsletter “Prostate Forum” is circulated to members on our email list.

[www.cancervic.org.au/](http://www.cancervic.org.au/) The Cancer Council Victoria is an excellent source of information. Check out their various fact sheets about living with cancer. Phone support is also available by calling 13 11 20 between 9am and 5pm on weekdays where you can talk to experienced cancer nurses with oncology qualifications. Although the nurses can't give individual medical advice, they can talk about the effects of prostate cancer and what will happen with different treatments.

Rekindle <http://rekindleonline.org.au/> is a free private, personalised online resource that addresses sexual concerns for all adults affected by cancer. It will provide you with information to better understand common sexual concerns after cancer and to teach proven strategies to manage them. This resource is being trialled as part of a research study.

Support Groups with a specific focus

[Advanced Prostate Cancer Support Group](#)

[The Younger Age PCSG](#)

[The Gay Men's PCSG](#)

**DISCLAIMER:** Information in this newsletter is not intended to take the place of medical advice. You should obtain advice from your doctor relevant to your specific situation before acting or relying on anything in this newsletter. We have no liability whatsoever to you in connection with this newsletter.

## Book Review: An ABC of Prostate Cancer in 2015

This is a self-published book by Alan Lawrenson, who lived near Terrigal on the New South Wales Central Coast when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2012.

The book is subtitled “*My Journey Over 4 Continents to Find the Best Cure*”. On his website Alan who proclaims himself to be a “Bestselling Author” says “Hopefully, the presentation of the technical aspects of the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer within the narration of the author’s own prostate cancer challenge makes compelling reading.” Unfortunately this reader was not compelled.

Alan trained as a scientist. Although he claims that this “easy-to-read book, is targeted at the layman, and is written in easily understood language”, I found parts of the book difficult to read. In my opinion, the level of readability for those parts of the book dealing with scientific research and with the technical aspects of prostate cancer treatment was more at the level of a university science graduate, rather than that of a lay reader.

**The bottom line:** If you’re looking for a book with introductory information about prostate cancer and treatments, I think that there are better ones

## Two patients with the same doctor, Which patient has the best care experience?

“Patient activation” is a term which refers to the knowledge, skills, and confidence a patient has for managing his health care.

Research<sup>1</sup> has found that highly activated patients have better care experiences than less

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activated patients, even where they have the same doctor.

This research supports the advice that prostate cancer survivor and blogger Ralph Blum has been giving:

*“Be proactive. The days of the passive patient with a “Whatever-you-say-Doc” attitude are over. The single most influential decision maker when it comes to obtaining the best care and treatment is you. Do your own research, and become actively involved with your doctor in the decision-making process. Ask your doctor about all your treatment options, and make sure you understand their short-term and long-term side effects.”<sup>2</sup>*

The respected American medical oncologist, Dr Stephen Strum<sup>3</sup>, agrees that patients should be actively involved in the decision making process. Strum says that patients should not view doctors as Gods: “MD does not mean Medical Deity”. He believes that doctor and patient should work together as a team. It is important for the patient to do his “homework” and be willing to read and learn. Strum cautions that being confident in managing your health care does not mean being rude.

The research found that the care experience was shaped by the interaction between the doctor and the patient. Patients who do their homework and ask questions are the ones who get better outcomes.

### References:

1. Health Affairs vol. 32 no. 7 1299-1305
2. <http://tinyurl.com/om9gvqh>
3. Prostate Cancer. Essential Concepts for Survival

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**Prostate Heidelberg provides information, education and support for those affected by prostate cancer. At the meetings, we**

- 1. Show respect to members and speakers;**
- 2. Allow people to speak and we listen;**
- 3. Respect confidentiality;**
- 4. Allow new ideas to be shared.**

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (February to December) from 10:00am -12:30pm.

We meet at the Uniting Church Meeting Room, Seddon St, Ivanhoe (behind the Commonwealth Bank in Upper Heidelberg Rd).

Free parking is available in a large public parking area at rear of the church. Ivanhoe railway station is nearby.

Meetings are open to anyone interested in getting support or information on a prostate cancer journey.

Partners or carers are welcome to all meetings

**There is no charge for attending.**

After the meeting you are welcome to join us for lunch in a local Thai restaurant.

If you can't attend daytime meetings, the Diamond Valley Prostate Cancer Support Group has evening meetings: <http://www.dvpcsg.org.au/>

**COMMITTEE:**

Max Shub, Facilitator 0413 777 342  
Paul Hobson Secretary 0405 086 869  
Chris Ellis  
Spiros Haldas  
Patrick Woodlock

**MEETING VENUE:**

Uniting Church Meeting Room  
Seddon St, Ivanhoe  
(behind the Commonwealth Bank in Upper Heidelberg Rd).

Please contact Paul Hobson to redirect or cancel receipt of this Newsletter

**CORRESPONDENCE**

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**CALENDAR** Meetings: **10:00am -12:30pm**

Wed 9 September '15  
Wed 14 October '15  
Wed 11 November '15  
Wed 9 December '15 (Christmas lunch)

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