Queenslanders like Linda are benefiting from your support

WORKING OUT A BETTER WAY TO BEAT BLOOD CANCER

Linda Hennessy was only 23 years old when she was diagnosed with lymphoma, a dangerous blood cancer that develops in the body’s lymphatic system. She spent weeks lying in hospital - at one point in an induced coma - facing the prospect that she wouldn’t survive.

“They found tumours around my heart, left lung and sternum as well as both breasts,” the registered nurse explains.

Linda endured months of chemotherapy, targeted radiation and a bone marrow transplant. A lung haemorrhage, an uncommon complication from the transplant, sent her to intensive care for a week.

Incredibly Linda fought her way to remission but attending a normal gym to help rebuild her fitness was daunting. “I was worried I would be pushed beyond my limits,” Linda said.

Linda was still bald and had a line coming out of her chest when she started on the Leukaemia Foundation’s 12-week exercise program, Fit to Thrive.

“At Fit to Thrive I’m exercising with other people facing the same challenges. I love working out with these people and my exercise physiologist, Molly, has been amazing.”

Proven benefits of the program include improved muscle strength, flexibility and balance. After 12 weeks on the fitness program the highlight for Linda was simply being able to walk in her favourite boots again.

A year on from achieving remission, Linda has just undergone shoulder surgery, necessary due to complications from previous treatment and will soon begin rehabilitation once again.

Linda Hennessy
An independent research report has shown the Leukaemia Foundation’s free 12-week exercise program, Fit to Thrive, is helping blood cancer patients of all ages cope better with treatment and return to their normal lives more quickly.

The program, only made possible by your support, has challenged the previous theory that rest and relaxation is best for those dealing with a blood cancer diagnosis. Instead it encourages physical activity as a means to gaining pre-diagnosis fitness and well-being.

The health implications of a blood cancer diagnosis and complications from its treatment can be long-lasting and debilitating.

Diagnosis rates continue to climb with more than 60,000 Australians now living with a blood cancer or related disorder, and another 35 people diagnosed every day.

Thanks to you, Fit to Thrive has already helped 167 Queenslanders, but there are more people with blood cancer that would benefit from this innovative program.

A new evaluation by social market research company IPSOS has shown participants report increased well-being and energy, decreased fatigue and reductions in pain.

In just 12 weeks participants made significant measurable improvements in overall fitness and mental health.

Leukaemia Foundation CEO Bill Petch said the results prove a personalised exercise program can and should play an important part in helping someone to beat their blood cancer.

“The impact of this program on participants’ fitness and quality of life has been substantial,” he said.

“Some time ago we saw exercise education and services for those facing blood cancer were in scant supply. Fit to Thrive helps putQueenslanders back on the path to what life looked like before their diagnosis.

“A special at-home program also encourages them to integrate exercise back into their daily routines to ensure long-lasting results.”

The Fit to Thrive program is currently held in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Townsville and Cairns.

A new young adult program supported by Commonwealth Bank Staff Community Fund now offers 15- to 24-year-olds the opportunity to exercise specifically with other patients their age.

Leukaemia Foundation support services coordinators run the program in partnership with the accredited exercise physiology team at Aspire Fitness and Rehabilitation. It’s partly funded by a grant from the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation, but only until June 2017.

Find more information about Fit to Thrive and the full IPSOS report at leukaemiaqld.org.au/thrive.
Aiming to identify better treatments for blood cancer, Associate Professor David Curtis recently presented his research at the Brisbane Diamantina Health Partners (BDHP) Blood Cancers Group Seminar in Queensland.

The Director of Malignant Haematology Research at the Australian Centre for Blood Diseases at Melbourne’s Monash University spoke of the challenges people with acute leukaemia face when they respond to chemotherapy but then relapse often.

“We believe one of the important reasons for relapse is the leukaemia cells that aren’t killed by the chemotherapy. They’re essentially hibernating like a bear and they’re protected from the cold, or the chemotherapy,” said Assoc Prof Curtis.

Using mouse models of leukaemia, Assoc Prof Curtis has been able to wake the hibernating cells, making them more responsive to chemotherapy.

“Ideally we’ll be able to personalise available treatments before, or at the same time, someone undergoes chemotherapy, or maybe even once they’ve gone into remission,” he said.

The BDHP Blood Cancers Group Seminar was proudly presented by the Leukaemia Foundation and Amgen Oncology.

Urging people with acute leukaemia to “become part of the solution”, Assoc Prof Curtis said patient involvement in clinical trials of new treatments and ongoing funding is vital.

“Thanks to your generous support Assoc Prof Curtis received funding that helped form his research program.

“This support has been absolutely critical as we’ve have no real improvement in the cure rate for acute leukaemia in the last 20 or 30 years,” he said.

“If you don’t have that foundation you’re just not going to make those big jumps. And that’s what we need now.”

For information on upcoming seminars in Queensland, please call the Leukaemia Foundation on 1800 620 420.
He successfully battled blood cancer and now one generous supporter has chosen to give back by donating to the Leukaemia Foundation the proceeds from the sale of his home.

The Emu Park man, who wishes to remain anonymous, sold his six-bedroom home late last year and gifted the sale price to help more Australians survive blood cancer.

The 41ha property, which offers 360-degree views of Coorooman Creek, the hinterland, coastline and islands, was bought by a young couple from Rockhampton.

His incredible donation will help fund a Leukaemia Foundation support worker in the Rockhampton region.

The Leukaemia Foundation’s CEO, Bill Petch, said the owner had wanted to donate the money after staying in one of our accommodation centres during his blood cancer treatment.

In 2015-16, the Leukaemia Foundation helped provide a home-away-from-home for 777 families from regional and rural Australia who had to move to the city for months of life-saving treatment.

In Queensland, we have five accommodation centres close to hospitals in Brisbane and Townsville, providing accommodation to families at no cost.

“This is his way of giving back,” Bill said. “Many people choose to support the Leukaemia Foundation with a generous gift in their Will, but this is the largest donation we have ever received from someone who is still out there enjoying life.

“We’re incredibly grateful for his donation, which will go an awful long way to helping more Queenslanders survive blood cancer.”

There are so many different ways you can help support people with blood cancer, including one-off donations, regular giving, or by leaving a gift in your Will.

Talk to us about how you can make a difference by contacting Emma Quigley, Donor Liaison Officer, on 3318 4459 or equigley@leukaemia.org.au.

You're helping in so many ways

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

A new drug for the second arm of the AMLM20 trial - the first international trial under the Leukaemia Foundation’s Trials Enabling Program (TEP) - will be used in Australia.

Investigational drug, tosedostat, will be used for the Australian arm of the trial, conducted by the UK National Cancer Research Institute in collaboration with investigators outside the UK under the sponsorship of Cardiff University in Wales.

AMLM20, the first trial in the TEP partnership between the Leukaemia Foundation and the Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group, and made possible by our supporters, is assessing promising new drugs for older people with a blood cancer called acute myeloid leukaemia (AML).

Four study sites in Australia have already been identified from an expected total of 10 sites. The trial target is to recruit 60 people over four years.

Potential participants for this trial are people aged over 60 years with AML or high-risk myelodysplastic syndrome who aren’t suitable to be treated with conventional chemotherapy.

Your support is moving forward the Trials Enabling Program

NEW TRIAL OFFERS HOPE FOR BETTER LEUKAEMIA TREATMENT
Brotherly love leads to hairy sacrifice

YOU CAN HELP CHARLIE'S TUFF FIGHT AGAINST BLOOD CANCER

After seeing his older brother Charlie go through months of gruelling blood cancer treatment, Jamie Grant knew he wanted to do something to make a difference.

When his workmates at Tuff Bullbars in Toowoomba said they wanted to get behind the Leukaemia Foundation’s World’s Greatest Shave, he thought it was the perfect opportunity.

Before he was diagnosed, Charlie and his wife were going through IVF treatment in the hopes of welcoming a sibling for their daughter.

“I had niggling back pain that was giving me trouble,” Charlie explained. “I went in for blood tests as part of the IVF and they came back with some strange results.”

Charlie was eventually given the devastating news he had a blood cancer called myeloma.

“I started chemotherapy immediately,” Charlie said. “I was like a deer in the headlights.” Thanks to the generosity of your support, Charlie and his family were able to stay together at our accommodation centres in Brisbane during his treatment.

“Eventually, more than 20,000 Australians get sponsored to shave or colour their hair during World’s Greatest Shave. Each year, more than 20,000 Australians get sponsored to shave or colour their hair during World’s Greatest Shave.

Jamie and his Tuff Bullbars colleagues hope to raise $2,000, with Tuff Group Australia hoping to raise an incredible $30,000 nationwide. "I will be sad to see my hair go but I know I’m very lucky to still have my brother," 43-year-old Jamie said. “It’s my way of doing something for him.”

Now 100 days post-transplant, Charlie is doing everything he can to beat his blood cancer for good and looking forward to supporting his brother’s World’s Greatest Shave efforts.

Thanks to the generosity of your support, Charlie and his family were able to stay together at our accommodation centres in Brisbane during his treatment.

“Given that Jamie, one of our long standing employees, has seen his brother impacted by blood cancer we were even more inclined to get involved.”

World’s Greatest Shave is on March 16-19. Sign up yourself or get your business involved by visiting worldsgreatestshave.com today.

Volunteering to make a difference

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers who have already spent more than 75 hours tirelessly packing close to 15,000 fundraising kits for those extraordinary Aussies taking part in the Leukaemia Foundation’s World’s Greatest Shave.

If you’d like to volunteer your time and skills for World’s Greatest Shave (there’s so many different ways to get involved!), visit worldsgreatestshave.com/take-part/volunteer.

Through the generosity of many trusts and foundations, the Leukaemia Foundation can continue to help more Australians survive blood cancer and go on to live a better quality of life.

We’re proud to acknowledge the support of the following trusts and foundations in 2015-16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The William Angliss (QUEENSLAND) Charitable Fund</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>Funding the attendance of two couples who have lost a child to blood cancer at the ‘Bereaved Parents’ Weekend</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Cory Charitable Foundation</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>Provision of whitegoods for Herston Village Upgrade</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>Final part of $120,000 grant payable over 3 years to help fund the Fit to Thrive exercise program.</td>
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You brought Christmas cheer

SANTA MAKES A SPECIAL VISIT

Life-saving blood cancer treatment can’t stop just because it’s Christmas and our accommodation centres were filled over the festive season with families all still bravely fighting their blood cancer.

It’s at this time of year the Leukaemia Foundation loves to make the families staying with us feel extra special!

Fortunately Santa was able to find time to attend the annual kid’s Christmas party at our ESA Village in Brisbane, bringing with him bags of fun and pressies for all.

Every family also received a special Christmas hamper full of goodies thanks to the generosity of a number of Leukaemia Foundation Branches and Groups, which together contributed an amazing $23,000, and the IGA Community Chest.

Our thanks also go to IGA Carina for their annual donation towards the hampers.

Regional support centres in Cairns, Townsville and the Gold Coast also hosted some pre-Christmas parties to spread some extra festive cheer.

WHAT’S ON FOR PATIENTS AND CARERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEBRUARY</td>
<td>20/30 Chat</td>
<td>BRISBANE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Grief Brunch</td>
<td>BRISBANE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Paediatric Parent Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>CAIRNS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MPN Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>BRISBANE</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARCH</td>
<td>Lymphoma Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>BRISBANE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grief Brunch</td>
<td>CAIRNS, ATHERTON</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patient information seminar</td>
<td>CAIRNS, ATHERTON</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Waldenstroms Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>BRISBANE</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRIL</td>
<td>Blood Cancer Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>INNISFAIL, MACKAY, TOWNSVILLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAY</td>
<td>Myeloma Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat - Awareness day</td>
<td>SUNSHINE COAST, GOLD COAST, TWEED HEADS, TOWNSVILLE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grief Brunch</td>
<td>GOLD COAST</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Blood Cancer Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>GOLD COAST, CHARTERS TOWERS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Paediatric Parent Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>CAIRNS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amyloidosis Support Group lunch</td>
<td>BRISBANE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bereaved Parents’ Weekend</td>
<td>MALEY</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CML Coffee, Cake &amp; Chat</td>
<td>BRISBANE</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Patient information seminar</td>
<td>CAIRNS</td>
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THANK YOU!

Elki and her family would like to pass on their sincere thanks to everyone who gave a donation to the Christmas Appeal, which raised over $115,000 to help provide accommodation to 94 families during November and December.

If you’re diagnosed with a blood cancer and live in regional, rural and remote Queensland, you’ll probably need to move to the city almost immediately to begin life-saving treatment in hospital - often for many months.

With your help, the Leukaemia Foundation was able to provide a home-away-from-home for 94 regional families, giving them access to safe and comfortable accommodation with support from trained staff, all at no cost to them. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Elki was just three when she was diagnosed with leukaemia. She spent many months in our Brisbane accommodation before moving back home to Nambour to continue her recovery.

1800 620 420
leukaemiaqld.org.au