

23 March 2018



**OVER 35 YEARS OF CARE AND
SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**

Dear Members and Friends

1. **ADSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SATURDAY 7TH APRIL 2018**

Our organisation, the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia Incorporated (ADSA) will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Saturday 7 April at 2:00pm at 11 Royal Street, Osborne Park – City of Stirling Library – Osborne Park Community Centre. The Centre is located almost diagonally across from our office in a north-east direction behind the BP service station on the corner of Main and Royal Street – opposite the Osborne Park Hotel car park. Limited parking is available under the Community Centre building off Royal Street. However, adequate parking can be accessed at the car park of the Osborne Park Hotel and the adjacent IGA supermarket opposite our office in Main Street. It is regrettable that we have been unable to continue with our unbroken Sunday AGMs for some 35 years. However due to the City of Stirling changing its booking schedules we have no choice but to take the Saturday which will likely inconvenience a number of our friends and members. However, all Dockers fans are excused from attending, including myself, as they may be needed at Optus Stadium to urge their mighty Dockers to victory (only joking!). All members and friends are cordially invited to attend the 2018 AGM. As always, afternoon tea and light refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the AGM. In addition, there will be an opportunity for members and friends to meet with others in a similar predicament to exchange information or valuable experience gained. **To assist us with catering arrangements would you please call our office on 93444077 by Thursday 5 April to confirm the number of persons attending the AGM.**

The formal part of the Agenda, as in previous years, will include receiving reports of the Society activities during the preceding financial year and there will be election of the office bearers and the ordinary committee members of the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia Incorporated for the calendar year 2018. The current members of the Management Committee of the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia Inc have consent to accept re-nomination for the 2018 calendar year. However, additional nominations will be accepted provided they are in writing nominated and signed by two financial members of the ADSA, accompanied by the written acceptance of the nominee who is a financial member of the ADSA. All nominations should be addressed to the Electoral Officer of the ADSA, PO Box 1394, Osborne Park 6916 and must be received by 5:00pm on 6th April 2018.

Upon conclusion of the formal part of the Agenda several eminent speakers (Professor Anna Nowak, Dr Melvin Chin, David Michael MLA, Member for Stirling, Dr Greg Deleuil, Tricia Wong from Slater & Gordon) have graciously accepted our invitation to the AGM to speak with members and friends and some will make presentations in connection with the latest medical research investigations and treatments for asbestos malignant diseases such as lung cancer/mesothelioma. We are waiting for confirmation from other invited special guests. It gives me great pleasure to announce that the Hon Kate Doust MLC, the President of the Legislative Council will be attending our AGM. The Hon Kate Doust MLC will provide us with the latest information on the very important legislation.

2. **COMMON LAW (PROVISIONAL DAMAGES) AND BENEFITS TO DISABLED RELATIVE**

On 31st October 2013 the Honourable Kate Doust MLC introduced a Bill to the Upper House of the Western Australian Parliament to enact provisional damages and also to restore Sullivan v Gordon Damages (Plaintiff no longer able to provide assistance to Disabled Relative) in Common Law matters. In May 2014 the Honourable Attorney General Michael Mischin was unable to support the Honourable Kate Doust Bill, but decided to refer the matter to the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia. The Law Reform Commission has recommended (1) *Provisional damages be permitted where there is a chance that a different injury or disease (a new condition) may arise after the initial judgement or settlement and from the same causal event or circumstance (not a deterioration of the injury or disease giving rise to the judgement or settlement).* (2) *Provisional damages be permitted in relation to all classes of personal injury or disease.* (3) *Plaintiffs only be entitled to seek further damages for a new injury or disease where the potential for the development of that injury or disease was expressly identified at the time of*



the initial judgement or settlement. (4) Plaintiffs not be restricted in the number of claims that can be made for further damages, provided that such claims relate to the development of a different injury or disease which was expressly identified at the time of the initial judgement or settlement. (5) When assessing further damages, courts be allowed to take into account the provisional damages initially awarded to the plaintiff. (6) There be no additional time limit imposed on when the further injury or disease must arise after the initial judgement or settlement. (7) Estate claims be allowed where the deceased victim had commenced, but not completed, an action for further damages prior to his/her death.

DAMAGES FOR GRATUITOUS SERVICES (1) Such damages be introduced for all personal injury claims. (2) Such damages only be available for gratuitous domestic services. (3) Such damages be restricted to the services provided to 'relatives', which should align with the definition used in the Fatal Accidents Act 1959 (WA) and include unborn children of the plaintiff. (4) The services must have been provided before the plaintiff's injury for a defined number of hours per week and consecutive period of time. **Notwithstanding, waiting more than five years since the legislation was introduced into Parliament and the favourable recommendation of the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia. The Liberal Government made no further efforts to proceed with the legislation in the matter of provisional damages and damages for gratuitous services. Our members, in particular sufferers from diseases, were enormously disappointed then and still are now that the Liberal Government failed to legislate the amendments. However we are hopeful that the newly elected Labor Government will be more compassionate and do the right thing for asbestos diseases victims and their families by legislating the important legislative amendments.**

3. 2017 CALENDAR YEAR

Regrettably, the preceding calendar year showed alarming increase of asbestos caused diseases, and in particular staggering number of mesotheliomas, lung carcinomas and non-malignant diseases i.e. asbestosis, diffuse pleural fibrosis, and pleural plaques. Sadly, more than 317 of our members and friends have sadly succumbed to the asbestos-causes diseases during the 2017 Calendar Year.

Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia Walk for Research and Awareness 2017

Merredin to Perth Walk from 10th September to 15th September 2017. The walkers were greatly received by appreciating country folks, in particular the Walk Around Town in Northam was a successful event with a number of Northam residents participating to fund raise for the Mesothelioma medical research. The Walk raised \$85,000 which will be placed to sponsor eminent researcher Dr Wee Loong (Melvin) Chin which is being funded by our organisation through UWA.

Asbestos Awareness Week 2017

Asbestos Awareness Week provided our organisation with the opportunity to provide copious amounts of information on asbestos risk and its consequences to Western Australians through our information stand at Royal Perth Hospital and other places throughout suburbia.

Ecumenical Memorial Service 24th November 2017 the Ecumenical Memorial Service 2017 was greatly appreciated by a large number of people and the Church was filled to capacity. The memorial photo presentation on the screen was also well received and more families have provided the photograph of their passed loved one. We will definitely continue with the screen presentation at the next service, which is due on Friday 23rd November 2018.

4. DR HELEN CLAYSON MANAGEMENT OF MESOTHELIOMA FOR PATIENTS, FAMILIES & CARERS WORKSHOPS APRIL 15-18, ADSA IN OSBORNE PARK (AN AUSTRALIAN FIRST)

Our organisation is enormously pleased to be in a position to offer our Mesothelioma friends and their families and carers a 2 ½ hour practical workshop on managing Mesothelioma with eminent Dr Helen Clayson, the author of the Mesothelioma Handbook (which our organisation provides to all Mesothelioma patients absolutely free and can be collected from our office). The workshops are based on Dr Clayson's Doctoral study 'The experience of Mesothelioma in Northern England' and her clinical work with people diagnosed with mesothelioma. The aim of the workshop is to share the learning on this disease (mesothelioma) and improve the experience of managing this disease for both patients and their carers. (a) Amongst other things, the workshop will cover the patient's experience and the carer's experience; (b) Being 'In it together' – the value of open communication; and (c) Self-help ideas. Then it will be followed by an open session for patients and carers to ask questions and discuss helpful suggestions with the group.

The workshops are sponsored by the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia Inc. (our organisation) and there will be no cost involved in this particular workshop. Please take advantage of workshops as we feel that you will benefit immensely from Dr Clayson's research and practice. (For more information, please contact our office at your earliest on toll free number 1800 646 690 to secure your place).

5. THE LATEST MESOTHELIOMA RESEARCH UPDATE

At the beginning of each year, our organisation representatives meet with NCARD team of medical researchers. At this year's meeting we were introduced to our own PhD Sponsored researcher Dr Melvin Chin. Wee Loong (Melvin) Chin attended Cambridge University on a full scholarship granted by the Public Services Department of Malaysia for exceptional students based on national O-level examinations. Commencing in 2008, he first completed a BA in Pharmacology with first class honours, then his medical degree and a subsequent Masters. Dr Chin has been undertaking Royal Australasian College of Physicians' Advanced Training in Medical Oncology at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital since January 2016. In 2017, Melvin undertook bioinformatics work using specialised software to look at RNA sequencing data, co-supervised by Dr Joost Lesterhuis from NCARD and Dr Timo Lassmann from the Telethon Kids Institute. Observing the close working relationships between UWA faculty clinicians, laboratory scientists and computational biologists convinced Melvin that this would be a good place to undertake a successful translational PhD. He looks forward to "generating clinically meaningful insight from research," observing that "in cancer immunotherapy, evidence of clinical benefit has surged ahead of our molecular understanding of treatment."

We are delighted to have such an outstanding candidate as Melvin as the recipient of the ADSA PhD Scholarship. Dr Chin has already started work and some of our patients will be meeting him shortly. We look forward to your feedback. Dr Chin will also be reporting on his research to us at our AGM and we will also make this available on our website.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that the **DREAM clinical trial**, combining chemotherapy with immunotherapy which we have reported to you in the past newsletters has now been completed and the results have been promising. Our researchers are also following a number of approaches to battle mesothelioma mainly through mouse models as mesothelioma tumours respond similarly to human mesothelioma tumours. These are novel approaches which are showing promise in treating other aggressive cancers and we look forward to the research applied to mesothelioma receiving funding. It has our support.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF NCARD RESEARCHERS ON CURRENT MESOTHELIOMA RESEARCH

Dr. Jenette Creaney – In collaboration with researchers at QIMR Berghofer Medical Research, we are currently using advanced technologies to determine the complete DNA sequence of malignant mesothelioma tumours.

Dr. Joost Lesterhuis – We identified two related proteins that fuel the fast-growing behaviour of mesothelioma. These proteins are involved in the metabolism of sugar and fats, which is often abnormal in cancer cells. When we inhibited these proteins in mesothelioma cells from patients, the cancer cells dies, while normal cells remained unharmed. This strongly suggest that these two proteins are not only very important in mesothelioma growth, but that a drug that blocks them could be effective.



Prof. Anna Nowak – Professor Nowak is applying for funding to do laboratory studies on blood samples that were taken from people with mesothelioma who took part in the DREAM clinical trial of combination chemo-immunotherapy. She hopes that by better understanding how and why some people's immune system responds better to immunotherapy and is more effective at fighting the tumour, they will be able to find ways to tip the balance towards more responses and longer responses to this type of combination treatment. **Dr Sally Lansley** – There is strong evidence to suggest that bacterial infection in the pleural space where the tumour develops (between the lungs and the chest cavity) may increase survival of patients with mesothelioma. We aim to determine if bacteria can be harnessed as novel (i.e. never tried before) anti-mesothelioma agents. **Dr Scott Fisher** – Dr Fisher is investigating understanding the immunology and effect of exercise in cancer through murine models. Exercises may have a range of benefits in cancer management, including improvement of treatment tolerance, reduction in tumour growth, and even enhancement of treatment effects. This study uses mouse models to study whether exercise can improve tolerance of treatment, delay cancer onset, and even potentially slow tumour growth or enhance the effects of standard treatments (chemo and radiotherapy).

6. PERIODIC EXAMINATIONS OF PERSONS EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS

Asbestos caused malignant diseases are on the increase and early detection of such diseases is of absolute necessity to commence suitable treatment. Lung Cancer, in particular, has excellent treatment options if detected early and in many instances lives will be saved. Mesothelioma appears to be more complex disease and in this regard early detection is crucial for treatment options available at this time. Therefore we strongly recommend regular check-ups which are provided by Dr Deleuil at our premises every Tuesday and Thursday from 10am to 1pm. Please phone our office on (08) 9344 4077 or email adsinc@iinet.net.au to arrange your appointments.

7. AUTUMN FUNDRAISING RAFFLE Drawn on May 23rd in our Office at 2pm

The Autumn raffle is now in progress and will be drawn on 23rd May 2018. Raffle tickets are now available and we would greatly appreciate assistance from members and friends to disseminate at least a book of ten tickets amongst their friends and acquaintances. All funds raised by our raffles are used to maintain the support services for Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia members and the purchase of various items of equipment to enhance our Doctor's service to members and friends.

For now, my very best wishes and kindest regards,



Robert Vojakovic AM JP
PRESIDENT

***Very Best Wishes to
you and your family for a
peaceful and
pleasant Easter
President, Committee
and Staff***

