PERKINS NEWS

APRIL 2022

THANK YOU

FOR BEING PART OF THE PERKINS FAMILY.
WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

DRIVING DISCOVERY
AT THE PERKINS

HARRY PERKINS INSTITUTE
OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

A message from the Director

Welcome to the April 2022 edition of Perkins News.

I think the very first thing I must ask you is how are you? And how is your family?

Like you, I am deeply troubled with the risks that face us near and far right now. COVID is taking its toll on our health and the mental anguish cannot be denied either.

The Ukraine is a global tragedy and I deeply sympathise with any of you who hold fears for the safety of loved ones caught up in this terrible situation.

The floods in Queensland and NSW, recent fires in WA and storms across Australia are stark reminders that we are also at the mercy of the elements.

Added to all the above is the pressure we all feel here at the Perkins to keep pushing forward with research on your behalf. The diseases we are tackling haven't gone away just because COVID is dominating our lives.

Cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and rare genetic diseases are here right now – in our community and in our families and we must not take our eye off the ball.

Because finding answers to the diseases that most affect our families gives us the one thing we all need right now – more time with our loved ones.

Given everything that is happening in the world, the concept of Family couldn't be more important. This magazine is a testament to the combined efforts of the Perkins family to keep the diseases we research as a priority. And by Perkins family, I mean you and all our loyal supporters because without you, the researchers would not have the means to continue their work.

So please enjoy this issue that is dedicated to family because there is no greater gift than the family you have or the family you create around you.

Stay safe and healthy.

Peter

Professor Peter Leedman AO
Director, Researcher, Doctor, Donor

PS: Thank you for keeping the Perkins in your thoughts and for supporting us in these difficult times.

We recognise you may feel helpless and want to do something to help the flood and war affected families.

If you can afford to, consider a gift to one of the following organisations.

Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)
msf.org.au/donate/ukraine

NSW State Emergency Service
ses.nsw.gov.au/donate

Foodbank Queensland
foodbank.org.au/QLD/flood-emergency-appeal

If world events are having an impact on your wellbeing, please contact Lifeline crisis support on 13 11 14

WA cancer patients need you to drive change

I spoke to a supporter the other day to thank them for donating and she said something that touched me greatly.

She said... *"if not now – when, if not me – who?"*

That statement was a reminder to me of a very important project. One that has been in development for many years. A project that is close to my heart and the hearts of so many who have been cancer patients or have seen loved ones tackle this difficult journey. This project is the establishment of a Western Australian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (WACCC).

As most of you know, aside from being the Director of the Perkins, I am also a cancer researcher and practising physician.

Wearing these three hats means I have seen firsthand the best approach to cancer research and treatment... and, unfortunately, I have also heard some of the stories of the inadequacies.

A true comprehensive cancer centre servicing the people of WA, including those in rural and remote regions, would mean that research, clinical trials and the most up-to-date treatments and facilities would be in one purpose-built facility situated right next to our Northern building on the QEIIMC campus.

Researchers, clinicians, nurses and support services would work together to provide a personalised plan for every patient. The patient's journey would not be fragmented and uncoordinated. Rather it would be bespoke and patient-centered.

The WACCC would house operating theatres with cancer wards, Perkins discovery labs, clinical trial facilities, day suites, a chemotherapy lounge and radiotherapy suite. Importantly, it would also include complementary therapies and wellness programs (exercise, music, massage therapy).

It would be a one-stop-shop for cancer.

The power of collaboration means that the best cancer specialist teams in WA will work side by side with patients and their families to tackle the hardest to treat cancers. And the facility will be right here in WA and not thousands of kilometres away.

This model works very well elsewhere in Australia, most notably in Sydney's Chris O'Brien Lifehouse and in Melbourne's Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

On Sunday 27 March, the Prime Minister attended the Perkins to announce the Federal Government's commitment of $375M in support of this $750M project.

Here is a conceptual design of how the facility might look courtesy of our friends at Hames Sharley Architects who also designed the Perkins buildings.

I hope that you are as excited about this big bold venture as I am. We have a unique opportunity to really make a difference to the cancer journey for our WA patients and improve their outcomes.

Join me in this quest, something we can all play a part in.

If you wish to help, please contact your local Minister to express your support for the WACCC. You can also find more information on the project at **wacancercentre.org**

Thank you from Lauren and Logan

You may have read our recent appeal about the important work done at the Perkins in rare genetic diseases. It was written by our very own Fundraising Manager, Lauren McDermott.

Lauren shared her personal journey of making the incredibly brave decision to be tested for the genetic disease, Huntington's. This disease, which currently has no cure, claimed the life of her beloved dad.

Lauren had a 50% chance of inheriting the disease.

Having found her life partner and hoping to have children, Lauren decided at 30 that knowing what was ahead of her instead of waiting to find out was her best outcome.

After months of tests, genetic counselling and sleepless nights, Lauren and her partner, Shaun got the news they were hoping for... she had not inherited the gene associated with Huntington's.

Jump forward one year, and we are so happy to introduce you to Logan William Rice. Born on 27 January 2022.

It's because of genetic researchers like those at the Perkins that tests for Huntington's and other rare genetic diseases exist.

And it's because of people like you who give to the Perkins that we can share such lovely stories of hope and health.

Thank you to all those who donated to Lauren's appeal.

MEET THE NEW PERKINS CHAIR

After three years at the helm of the Perkins board, the Honourable Wayne Martin AC QC has stepped down as Chair. He's been replaced by current board Director, Mr John Barrington AM.

John is co-founder and managing director of artificial intelligence company Artrya Ltd, which is developing AI solutions to improve the diagnosis of coronary heart disease. Artrya was established with Perkins Professor Girish Dwivedi, the inaugural Wesfarmers Chair in Cardiology at the University of Western Australia.

John has founded several technology innovation companies and advised boards and CEOs of some of Australia's leading organisations on growth strategies.

With a strong background in the information technology sector, he founded big data firm Nerve Systems. He is also a former Chair of Anglicare and the Perth International Arts Festival.

John is also a strong advocate for Perkins donors and understands the significant part you play in the sustainable future of the Institute.

A horse, a zebra and your genes

Did you know that over 30 million people around the world have a rare disease? And that all rare diseases combined affect more people than asthma?

At the Perkins, an amazing group of researchers led by Professor Nigel Laing AO and Dr Gina Ravenscroft are responsible for discovering over 30 disease genes.

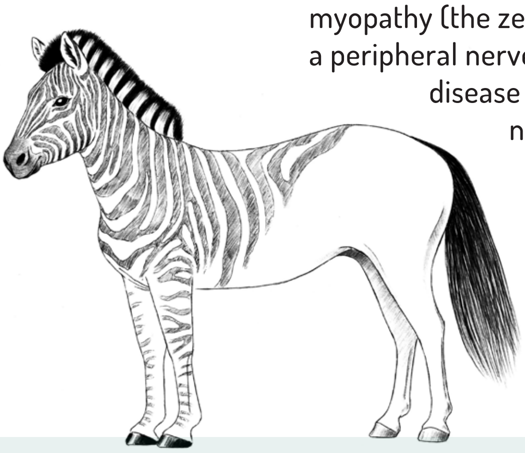
This team not only discovers new disease genes, but they also work on treatments and diagnostics. Some of the diseases they work on may only affect a handful of people in the world but providing answers to anyone affected by a mysterious and debilitating disease with no cure is worth it.

The zebra has been adopted as the symbol of rare disease. This is because of the phrase:

"When you hear the sound of hooves, think horses, not zebras."

This phrase is used as a metaphor to explain that the most obvious answer to an enquiry is usually the right one.

In medical terms, trainee doctors are encouraged to assume that the simplest explanation for an illness or condition is usually correct.



But sometimes diseases are zebras and not horses. Sometimes, a seemingly common disease might at first look like a horse but turns out to be the much rarer zebra. And then you find yourself looking for a rare disease.

Medical professionals can forget that 'zebras' DO exist. So, getting a diagnosis and treatment can be more difficult for people with rare conditions.

Perkins Professor Nigel Laing AO explains this based on the 'zebra' disease he discovered, which bears his name – Laing distal myopathy.

"Every patient in the world who has Laing distal myopathy (the zebra) is clinically diagnosed as having a peripheral nerve disease Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease (the horse) because peripheral neuropathy is so much more common. Clinicians are not trained to notice that the Laing distal myopathy horse actually has zebra stripes that make it so easy to diagnose if you know the stripes to look for."

WIFE AND SON HONOURED THROUGH SUPPORT

It's a rare donor who invests in a researcher's career as Mr R has with Professor Nigel Laing AO.

Mr R – who prefers to keep his identity hidden – has been supporting Nigel since 2017 when he made his first donation in memory of his late wife and son. This was to be the start of a lasting relationship between donor and researcher.

Mr R is no slouch when it comes to research. With a keen interest in epigenetics, he was drawn to Professor Laing's work.

"I wasn't interested in supporting the diseases with high profiles," Mr R said.

"I've always been fascinated in how outside elements and the environment can affect and modify the way your genes work.

"So Nigel's work in neurodegenerative disorders was a good fit."

Nigel credits Mr R with being instrumental in securing a significant grant in 2021.

"The donations he has generously made to our team since 2017 enabled us to investigate genes that cause devastating conditions. This work resulted in our team publishing three papers in the world-renowned journal *Brain*," said Professor Laing.

"National Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) applications require research teams to list publications and show there is public support for their work.

"Thanks to Mr R, we were in a very strong position to apply and secure the MRFF grant for $2.9M."

This is one of many stories of the wider Perkins family collaborating to deliver outstanding results.

Thank you, Mr R, for your unswerving support and generosity.

You're part of a family of 1500!

There's no bigger Perkins family reunion than the MACA Cancer 200 Ride for Research.

Each year, new and returning riders take on the 200km, two-day cycle challenge. In 2021, the Ride reached a record-breaking 1500 participants and raised $7.1 million for WA cancer research.

And with the following calibre of people on board for 2022, it's sure to be another blockbuster year!

WA MACK MUSTER & TRUCK SHOW RARING FOR ROUND TWO

Anyone who took part in the 2021 MACA Cancer 200 will remember the jaw-dropping moment that a Mack Truck drove through the wall of the tent to drop off Perkins Director, Professor Peter Leedman!

Meet the people behind the trucks and the remarkable donation they gave to the Perkins.

The WA Mack Muster and Truck Show is a grassroots organisation that runs a unique community event featuring some of the best-looking Mack Trucks on the road.

In 2020, 140 trucks and 3,500 spectators attended the inaugural show raising $100,000. The entire amount was donated to the Perkins to support the MACA Cancer 200 and WA research.

The WA Mack Muster and Truck Show became the official Saturday Night Celebration partner in 2021 – a partnership they are continuing in 2022.

The 2022 WA Mack Muster and Truck Show will be held on May 22. They're committing to match last year's significant donation, but (secretly) they are hoping to better it.

Thank you all, we can't wait to see those mighty Macks back again in support of cancer research at the Perkins.

IT'S CANCER'S TURN TO BE AFRAID

SAT 15 & SUN 16 OCTOBER 2022

Sign up at cancer200.org.au

maca cancer 200 RIDE FOR RESEARCH

FINDING YOUR TRIBE

Like many of you, every rider has in some way been touched by cancer. And while each of you has your own personal reason for taking on the cycling challenge, one first-year rider captured the hearts of many with her unwavering dedication and immersion into the MACA Cancer 200 family.

Alison Barker rode for the first time last year as the proud Captain of Team Hunter. She wanted to do something in memory of to her beloved nephew, Hunter.

Devastatingly, Hunter lost his three-year leukaemia battle and passed away in early 2021 at the age of 14.

Despite her loss, Alison has been a ray of sunshine within the Ride family, and she shared her story at the 2021 Honour Roll VIP Night, captivating the audience with her love and positivity.

“I’ve found my tribe,” Alison said, as she expressed the deep connection she felt with fellow riders. And this year, Alison is stepping up again to be an official ambassador for the 2022 event. Hunter would be so proud of his aunty.

LATEST STAR TO JOIN THE RIDE UNIVERSE

Some of Australia’s most generous corporate partners with the biggest hearts line up year after year to support the MACA Cancer 200.

Alongside long-term partners, MACA and Woodside, we’d like to acknowledge our other loyal event supporters: Mineral Resources Ltd, WA Mack Muster and Truck Show, WesTrac and Austin Engineering.

And we welcome our newest partner, Northern Star. Thank you one and all for making cancer research a priority for your company and people.

MAJOR SPONSOR

EVENT PARTNER

EVENT SPONSORS

VALE PETER BLACKBURN

It’s with deep sadness that we acknowledge the passing of an incredible member of our Perkins family. Peter Blackburn – patriarch of the mighty Blackburn clan – was a long-term supporter and passionate research advocate. Having lost many family members to cancer in the past few years, this galvanised the family through their company, Global Civil and Mining to push on to raise more for cancer research. They did so through their long-standing participation in the MACA Cancer 200.

One of the truly memorable moments of the 2019 Ride was Peter’s son, Kane speaking at camp at the end of day one. He acknowledged that Peter was unwell but was determined to ride to the first pit stop with his team – about 20km out from the start line. Getting there, he decided to push on to the next pit stop.

Peter ended up riding the entire first day route, which was over 100km.

From your family here at the Perkins and the MACA Cancer 200, we send our kindest thoughts to the entire Blackburn and Global and Civil Mining family.

Peter pushed on to raise more funds for cancer research. We will honour him by continuing the fight to end cancer in his memory.

You're supporting the Perkins Women of Heart

The Perkins has a strong commitment to cardiovascular and diabetes research. This research brings together a cavalcade of experts – from surgeons and clinicians to researchers and biomedical engineers.

We'd like to introduce you to three of the Perkins researchers working in this important area. Each has a unique lens on the problem and some exciting solutions.

PROFESSOR SHIRLEY JANSEN

Along with a team of experts, vascular surgeon and Director of the Heart and Vascular Research Institute at the Perkins, Professor Shirley Jansen, has adapted existing technology originally used to measure oxygen saturation levels in the brain and applied it to measure blood flow to the foot.

The new application allows for earlier intervention to increase blood flow and ultimately aims to prevent amputation of a lower limb.

DR ELENA DE JUAN PARDO

After starting her career as a materials engineer working on fusion reactors, Elena transferred her engineering skills to the medical world. With extensive experience in biomaterials and biofabrication, Elena's research focuses on tissue engineering and regenerative medicine.

She has built her own 3D printers capable of producing cellular scaffolds that have the potential to replace human heart valves and other body parts with a material that allows your own body to grow cells around it, creating a new structure.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JULIANA HAMZAH

Originally a cancer researcher, Juliana developed a drug that can remove the blockage in tumour tissue to improve drug delivery in difficult-to-treat cancer. She discovered that this same drug had the ability to clear blockage and improve circulation in the blood vessels that filled with hardened fat deposit.

Blocking blood supply to your lower limbs causes Peripheral Arterial Disease or PAD, a disease that leads to pain, immobility, ulcers, gangrene and eventually amputation. Juliana is confident that her drug will turn the tide on PAD that she has put cancer research to the side for the time being to focus on taking this drug to commercialisation to help the 220 million worldwide that are diagnosed with PAD.

You can read more about Juliana's story in our 2022 Tax Appeal launching in June.

YOUR SUPPORT OF TALENT

When Peter and Patricia Miles were approached to support cardiovascular research at the Perkins, little did they know that it was to be the start of a strong and meaningful association.

Peter Miles, himself, had suffered bypass surgery as a fit and healthy 40-year-old some 40+ years ago and so, for him and Patricia, a lifelong interest in supporting cardiovascular health had developed.

When an opportunity to support PhD Candidate Hanane Belhoul-Fakir, a student of Professor Jansen and Associate Professor Juliana Hamzah, presented itself in 2019, Peter and Patricia kindly agreed.

Thanks to the Miles family's support, Hanane has been able to continue her research into cardiovascular disease, uncovering the link between Atherosclerosis, micro vessels and mechanical stress.

Atherosclerosis is a silent disease that is initiated by the build up of fat in the blood vessels during childhood and develops later in life.

Despite advances in preventative care and risk factor reduction, atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease kills one in six Australians every year.

Thank you, Peter and Patricia!

RESEARCHER PROFILE
HANANE BELHOUL-FAKIR

Tell us a little about yourself

I am a final year PhD student at the Perkins and Curtin Medical school. Born and raised in a small Mediterranean town called Jijel in the east of Algeria.

Tell us about your work here at the Perkins

I study atherosclerosis, a silent and debilitating disease that is initiated by the build up of fat, and later plaque, in the arteries. Current treatments don't reverse the problem, only treats the symptoms and prevents more build up. My aim is to better understand why plaques develop and to create a diagnostic tool for earlier detection, before heart attacks and strokes can occur.

How important is medical research?

Medical research is very crucial and has high value to the public health. It allows us to understand the mechanisms of a disease and investigate the cause to find potential treatments, improve patient care and reduce health problems. The direct impact of medical research on our society is a healthier population and an increased life expectancy.

What's your proudest achievement so far?

I have developed a new model for vascular wall injury and atherosclerosis initiation that will allow us to dissect the pathways involved in the very early stages of the disease.

What's your one hope that you would love to see happen in the future?

We have seen in recent years many talented scientists leaving the medical research sector, particularly early career researchers, due to the lack of funding with many bright ideas and potential new treatments were put on hold. I really hope to see more funding opportunities to support medical research in WA particularly in cardiovascular diseases to boost this sector and increase international exposure.

What's something interesting people might not know about you?

Well, I speak four languages: Algerian (a language made from a mix of Berber, French, Arabic, Spanish and Italian), French, Arabic and English. I also walked 35km along the coast from Burns Beach to Harry Perkins to raise funds for breast cancer research at Perkins.

Thank you very much for your ongoing support. Your generous contribution has helped me progress in my research and obtain a significant amount of data that I plan to publish.

You can provide a safe harbour to the next generation

It's a sad truth that many Early-to-Mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs) are leaving the industry due to not having enough runs on the board to secure substantial funding and the pressures of career stability.

Many EMCRs also find it challenging to return to the industry after starting a family. If we don't do something to nurture this cohort, we are in real danger of losing the next generation of scientific pioneers – something we simply cannot stand by and let happen.

The need to safeguard the future of research requires immediate action. By giving Early-to-Mid-Career Researchers a 'safe harbour' when they are at their most vulnerable is not only protecting the future of medical research but setting the Perkins apart from other Institutes in Australia. It is also ensuring that the most talented, young researchers stay in WA.

Committing to a career as a researcher means that you rarely have stability or the security of a steady income. This is more pronounced the earlier you are in your career. Without publications or citations, you are not as attractive to funders as your more established peers. Couple this with a gender bias that is well documented and there is a genuine concern that we may lose many gifted individuals from the next generation of researchers.

Giving EMCRs a 'safe harbour' when they are at their most vulnerable is not only protecting the future of medical research but setting the Perkins apart from other Institutes in Australia. It is also ensuring that the most talented, young researchers stay in WA.

Our hope is that the Perkins becomes a beacon attracting EMCRs to WA.

This project is funded by people like you. We already have strong interest from donors who wish to pledge their support for Safe Harbour.

Donations of all sizes will be put to the best use – funding the future of medical research.

SAFE
ESTD 2021
HARBOUR

Safeguarding the future of medical research

If you would like to know more about how you can support this important program, we'd be happy to send you more information. Please contact Shelley Mason at **shelley.mason@perkins.org.au**

“As an EMCR, job security and job funding are so hard to get. Most of us live on one-year grants. It’s a battle.”

Dr Liz Johnstone

“When we lose a researcher we lose talent, we lose skills. It is very difficult.”

Dr Tasnuva Kabir

“The worry, from year to year, about continuity of funding is always there. One grant application can take two weeks to complete – 80 hours or more away from your research projects.”

Dr Josh Clayton

“This is nowhere near a 9 to 5 job and I must stress that we love doing this as a career but it creates challenges for young families.

We are so grateful for the opportunities that Safe Harbour represents.”

Dr Christian Pflüger

INTRODUCING YOUR FIRST SAFE HARBOUR FELLOW

Meet Dr Oliver Clement from the Genome Biology and Genetics laboratory at the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research. His research is focused on the molecular mechanisms that control memory formation, storage and recollection.

“Memories make us who we are and are essential for our survival as they help us to predict what’s coming based on past experiences,” says Olivier.

“Thanks to the Safe Harbour Fellowship, I can focus on understanding the fine molecular processes regulating memory which are critical for the development of diagnoses and treatments for the myriad of neurodevelopmental and neuropsychiatric disorders that result in impaired memory function.”

The three-year Safe Harbour Fellowship provides Olivier with a salary and lab consumables. It gives him a safety net to focus on his research and concentrate on publishing his discoveries.

This will make him more competitive when applying for grants in the future.

With your support we will protect and fund more EMCRs because without them, there would be no research in the future.

Oh what a feeling!

The New Town Toyota Walk for Women's Cancer has been jumping for joy (much like in the Toyota commercials) as it sprung into 2022!

With a brand-new title sponsor, dozens of long-term returning teams, and new teams jumping on board, the Walk family is walking on sunshine in 2022.

NEW TOWN TOYOTA WALK THE TALK

Dealer Principal of New Town Toyota and Kalamunda Toyota, Mr Joe Zito has been a long-term supporter of the Perkins through his association with the MACA Cancer 200. This year, the organisation took that support a step further by signing on as the title sponsor for the Walk for Women's Cancer!

As a family-run business, New Town Toyota is the perfect fit for an event dedicated to the women in your lives and our families who love them.

Mr Zito said, "The unfortunate truth is that cancer has affected so many of our lives. It is also a cause very close to my heart. Tragically, my wife and the mother of our two daughters, Sandra Zito lost her life to breast cancer in 1998 when the girls were only seven and five years old."

Today, Joe's daughter, Bianca works alongside her father and has been instrumental in developing this partnership. We are absolutely thrilled to welcome New Town Toyota into the Walk family this year and can't wait to see what the future holds.

If you'd like to join the 2022 New Town Toyota Walk for Women's Cancer, please register at **walkforwomenscancer.org.au**

SOUTHERN FORREST STEPPERS PUTTING REGIONAL WA ON THE MAP

Long-term walkers and fundraising champions, the Southern Forrest Steppers are one of several teams representing regional WA in the Walk family.

Team Captain, Tracey says the team walks to raise awareness and money for women's cancer. They do so in the hope that one day, medical research will ensure that cancer is just a hurdle that we can get over and no longer a life sentence.

In 2022, their walk is more meaningful than ever. One of their past walkers is currently undergoing treatment, another is in remission, and another has had preventative surgeries as she carried the BRCA2 gene. Several walkers are also walking in memory of their mums, mothers-in-law and grandmothers. In 2018, they lost a fellow walker, Tash, and always walk in her memory.

"Together we walk to make a difference," says Tracey.

Congratulations on another amazing year, Southern Forrest Steppers and thank you so much for your hard work and dedication to the Perkins.

Will you be upstanding for the volunteering SiStars!

Volunteering superstars and real-life cycling sisters, Nina and Carol have gone above and beyond for the Perkins Community over the last few years.

Nina and Carol joined the MACA Cancer 200 in 2018 after seeing an advert on Facebook. Despite not even owning bikes at the time, the sisters took the event in their stride and soon became fundraising champions. As if that wasn't enough, they also contribute to the Perkins through their invaluable commitment of volunteering.

Every Thursday, these superstar sisters volunteer at the Perkins. As seasoned riders themselves, Nina and Carol call up riders (particularly those new to the event), answer any questions and provide them with fundraising tips.

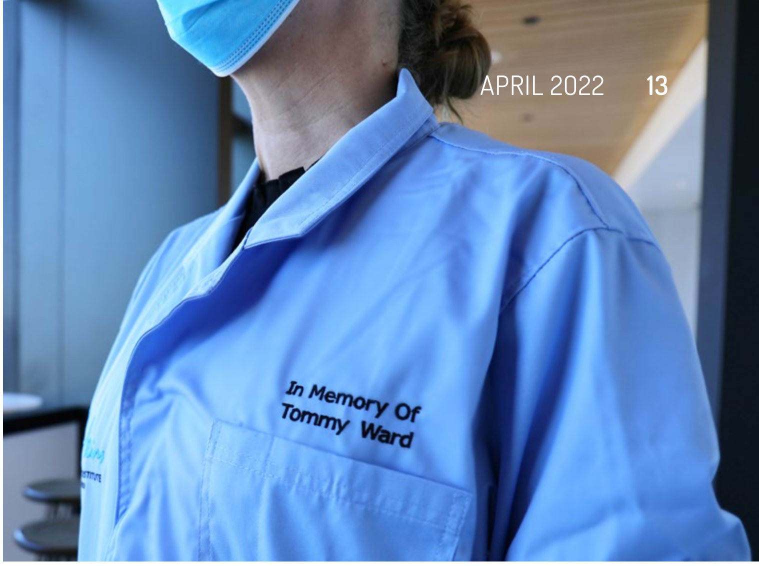
In 2021, the sisters volunteered for the Ride's sister-event, the New Town Toyota Walk for Women's Cancer and they can't wait to do it all over again on 30 April 2022!

"We loved volunteering for the Walk last year because we know how much we value having volunteers out there when we ride.

"You see the volunteers and you know they're all there for the same reason you are. They've got a connection to the cause too."

> **"We can't wait to get here on a Thursday. It's our happy place.**
> The moment we walk in the door we feel we're part of the family."

Find more info on how you too can get involved at perkins.org.au/volunteer



Remembering loved ones in the lab

In August last year, many of you gifted Perkins researchers one of the most important tools in fighting disease – the lab coat.

In this heart-warming campaign 74 amazing donors purchased 100 lab coats ensuring Perkins researchers can continue to work safely and without interruption.

As well as generously donating, supporters wrote a note of thanks or encouragement to a researcher which was placed in the pocket for the researcher to read later. Each lab coat pocket was embroidered with the donor's name, or in memory of a loved one.

While the researchers can't take their lab coats out of the lab, they can now take 100 of you in with you every day.

One generous donor, Alison Hardman purchased a lab coat in memory of her father who passed away from cancer.

"As well as providing a vital piece of equipment to a researcher to help them continue their incredible work, it was also a really lovely touch to be able to have Dad's name embroidered on the coat," Alison said.

"It's nice to think he's in the lab every day, standing side by side with a researcher helping to produce the next important scientific breakthrough."

You are our Spark

MEET JENNY, YOUR SPARK COORDINATOR

Many of you are already loyal members of our monthly giving program, The Spark. And for that, we say a very big thank you. This important group of supporters commits a monthly donation to the Perkins, which we are so grateful for.

You see, having a sustainable funding source means we can plan for the future. And with government funding being so challenging to obtain, programs like The Spark are a lifeline ensuring our research can continue without interruption.

Jenny Grice is your Spark Coordinator. She joined the Perkins after a long career in Education Administration.

We asked her three questions about her time here at the Institute:

Why did you join the Perkins?

"When I heard about the opportunity to work at the Perkins, I jumped at the chance! I felt it was an amazing opportunity to be part of a team that was doing something important and making a real difference in people's lives.

I studied Science at Uni (many years ago!) and my father has been a research scientist all his life, so I felt a real connection to an organisation that was getting behind cutting edge medical research, and incredible researchers who are working hard to achieve the next big breakthrough."

What's your favourite part of the job?

"It is a privilege to work with a team of lovely, dedicated and clever people who share a common vision, and work very hard to make sure that the Perkins is a world-class research institution."

What is one thing you didn't expect?

"I was surprised by the pride I felt in the Perkins when talking about my role with friends and family. They have been so interested to hear about what is happening at the Perkins, and it is wonderful to be able to share with them the latest life-saving work being done by our world-class research teams."

YOU CAN SPARK HOPE FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST.

To join The Spark by generously providing a monthly gift, call Jenny on 08 6151 1220 or email jenny@perkins.org.au

THE SPARK

Helping honour your legacy

MEET ANN, YOUR GUIDE TO GIFTS IN WILLS.

There is no greater legacy that you can leave to advance medicine than to recognise the Perkins in your Will. In 2020, we established the Silver Lining to honour that commitment and update you on the breakthroughs made possible by people like you.

This is a club designed to recognise and support people in the community who have let us know that they are leaving us a Gift in their Will. Silver Lining members are stewarded by Ann Macliver.

Coming to the Perkins with a diverse background in nursing, interior design and pharmaceutical sales, Ann loves the deep connections she makes with her growing band of Silver Liners.

We asked her the same questions as Jenny. Here's what she had to say:

Why did you join the Perkins?

"I've had a diverse work life in very different roles, and the common thread has always been working with people. My life experience has sadly included losing friends and loved ones to disease, and often far too early. I realised that I wanted to do something that actually mattered and that made a difference.

If the current successes and improvements in medical research had been achieved back then, many of those wonderful people would still be here with us today. By working at the Perkins with the incredible people who support us, I can help to make a difference."

What's your favourite part of the job?

"I feel very privileged and humbled to work with the special group of people who have chosen to support us in the future through a Gift in their Will – our Perkins Silver Liners. Many of these kind people have been through challenging health situations themselves, or have supported or lost a loved one.

Through their life experiences, they have come to realise the value of medical research and want to help us find ways to cure diseases and find new treatments more quickly. So they can protect the ones they love and future generations of their family, many of whom they may never meet. This is a truly remarkable thing to do."

What is one thing you didn't expect?

"I didn't expect in my life to ever meet such a group of amazing people who – through their own health story – now have a primary focus of protecting their loved ones and future generations from experiencing what they have been through. They have turned their experience with ill-health into something positive for future generations through their generosity and legacy to medical research. I feel tremendously privileged to help them fulfill their wishes."

Your treasured legacy is longer and healthier lives for the people you love.

To find out more about leaving a Gift in your Will, call Ann on 08 6151 0745 or email ann@perkins.org.au

Dates for your 2022 calendar

Perkins COMMUNITY Q&A

"Why are the future rock stars of research at risk of disappearing?"
Wednesday 6 April | Streaming online from 7pm

Upcoming Q&A Topics in 2022:

Cardiovascular Special
Bioengineering Special

More info at perkins.org.au/events

New Town Toyota Walk for Women's Cancer Saturday 30 April

Want to support WA women's cancer research right here at the Perkins?
You can help beat women's cancers this year by walking 35km in the New Town Toyota Walk for Women's Cancer on Saturday 30 April 2022, with 100% of donations supporting breast and ovarian cancer research at the Perkins. Register today at WalkForWomensCancer.org.au

MACA Cancer 200 Ride for Research Sat 15 & Sun 16 October

Join Australia's most loved cycling fundraiser to help beat cancer.
You can join a 1500-strong group of dedicated riders in the MACA Cancer 200 Ride for Research in the fight against cancer.

On the weekend of 15 & 16 October 2022, you'll line up at Optus Stadium and ride 200km down to Mandurah where you'll camp overnight (tents and dinner are on us!). And then you'll ride back up to Perth the next day – finishing back up at Optus Stadium. This event is much loved and life-changing. Will you help beat cancer on your bike this year? Register today at cancer200.org.au

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