



BRICC – ‘a natural choice’

When Mary-Anne (Daisy) Horgan was told she had breast cancer in April 2013 her world was turned upside down.

She had attended a routine mammogram in March after hearing that one in eight women over 50 would be diagnosed with breast cancer.

“I was asked to attend the Queen Elizabeth Centre where it was confirmed that I had breast cancer in the left breast and there was not only one, but two tumours.”

Daisy underwent surgery followed by 16 chemotherapy treatments and radiotherapy.

“I was told I would need five weeks of radiotherapy and had to choose between Melbourne or Ballarat for the treatment. As I am from Horsham this would mean lengthy periods away from my family and friends.”

After speaking with doctors and her family, she felt that having treatment at the BRICC was the best alternative for her.

With BRICC offering state-of-the-art equipment, doctors Daisy felt confident with and being only two hours from home certainly assisted in her decision making.

“When you get cancer you look at what is

best for yourself. This is what was best for me. I was getting the treatment I needed, I was closer to home and my family are around me,” she said.

Whilst Daisy was unaware of the BRICC’s zero waiting time for radiotherapy treatment, she said that would have helped make up her mind had she been facing a wait in Melbourne.

Daisy has found access to the integrated services offered at the BRICC beneficial. It has meant that she has been able to access other health professionals including the Scar Tissue Management Clinic and through the McGrath Breast Care Nurse she has been able to gain information in relation to her cancer and referrals to the Lymphedema Physiotherapist.

“Not only has the ability to access these professionals while I am here been important but also the fact that when I require follow up I only need to return to BRICC and Ballarat and not have to travel to Melbourne.”

Daisy also said the friendliness of all the BRICC staff has made her daily visits easier.

“The staff are outstanding. They are all so friendly, caring and make you feel so

welcome. They always remember my name and take the time to remember what I have been doing throughout my time here. Their professionalism has made me feel that I am in good hands.”

Whilst spending long periods away from home during treatment, Daisy stayed at Rotary House, which is operated by St John of God Ballarat Hospital. She returned home on weekends.

By staying close to BRICC, she felt it was reassuring to know that nursing staff were easily accessible, “you know you are only five minutes away from a nurse if you need them.”

Daisy completed her round of radiotherapy on Christmas Eve and was happy to be able to spend Christmas with her family.

“Finishing my treatment and being able to go home was the best Christmas gift I could have been given,” she said.

Although she has finished her treatment at BRICC, Daisy will continue to return regularly for her follow up appointments.

To book a mammogram, contact Breast Screen on 13 20 50 or visit www.breastscreen.org.au

What does a Linear Accelerator do?

A linear accelerator (LINAC) is a machine most commonly used for external beam radiation treatments for patients with cancer and is used to treat all parts/organs of the body. It delivers high-energy x-rays to the region of the patient’s tumor. These x-ray treatments can be designed in such a way that they destroy the cancer cells while sparing the surrounding normal tissue.

How does it work?

A Linear Accelerator uses high energy x-rays which are shaped as they exit the machine to conform to the shape of the patient’s tumor and the customized beam is directed to the patient’s tumor. The beam is shaped by a multileaf collimator that is incorporated into the head of the machine. The patient lies on a moveable treatment couch and lasers are used to make sure the patient is in the proper position. The treatment couch can move in many directions including up, down, right, left, in and out. The beam comes out of a part of the accelerator called a gantry, which

can be rotated around the patient. Radiation can be delivered to the tumor from any angle by rotating the gantry and moving the treatment couch.

Who operates the machines?

The patient’s radiation oncologist prescribes the appropriate treatment volume and dosage. The Radiation Therapists and Physicists determine how to deliver the prescribed dose and calculate the amount of time it will take the accelerator to deliver that dose. Radiation therapists then operate the linear accelerator and give patients their daily radiation treatments. Radiation is usually given daily over a period of weeks.

How is my treatment planned?

Before treatment is delivered to the patient, the treatment plan is developed and approved by the radiation oncologist in collaboration with the radiation therapists and physicist.

The plan is double-checked before treatment is given and quality-control procedures ensure that the treatment delivered is the same as was planned. Quality control of the linear accelerator is also very important. There are several safety systems built into the accelerator so that it will not deliver a higher dose than the radiation oncologist has prescribed.

During treatment the radiation therapist continuously watches the patient through a closed-circuit television monitor. There is also a microphone in the treatment room so that the patient can speak to the therapist if needed. Safety of the staff operating the linear accelerator is also important. The linear accelerator sits in a room surrounded by up to 2.5 metre thick concrete walls so that the high-energy x-rays are shielded. The radiation therapist must turn on the accelerator from outside the treatment room after activating a laser curtain which shuts off the beam if breached, this prevents any accidental exposure if the room is entered when the machine is delivering radiation.

Cancer touches us all in some way during our lives.

While each experience of the disease is different, we are united by a common understanding - no one can beat cancer on their own. It requires a concerted team effort, and everybody can play a part.

A gift from you will help us at the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (BRICC) broaden the range of support services we offer patients through our dedicated Wellness Centre.

For the thousands of people from the Grampians region undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy at BRICC each year, the Wellness Centre represents a supportive sanctuary away from the clinical, often harsh, demands of their disease.

Specially designed to nurture not just the body, but mind and spirit as well, it caters to patients’ emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing before, during and after treatment.

Since opening last year, BRICC and the Wellness Centre have completely transformed the way in which we look after our patients. There are no waiting times for treatment, and it is now possible for patients to remain close to home, family and friends while receiving care.

We are among just a handful of public facilities of this kind Australia-wide, and are extending cancer services to other towns in the Grampians region.

While the Wellness Centre model of care is still under development, we do know that isolation, helplessness and loss of control are common, detrimental feelings experienced by people affected by cancer.

So the best way to help people cope with these feelings and the effects of their disease is to create an environment like the BRICC Wellness Centre, where patients and their loved ones can feel accepted, safe and supported.

We have a strong focus on psychological support and education, as well as relaxation therapies including massage, art, music, yoga, and dog therapies. We also offer Look Good...Feel Better workshops, which help improve the well-being and confidence of people undergoing treatment for cancer by focusing on managing the appearance-related side-effects that may be caused by cancer treatment.

There is growing evidence to support the practice and efficacy of such therapies, with patients who feel well cared for more likely to maintain hope and participate actively in their treatment.

Therefore, it is our goal at BRICC to provide all Wellness Centre services free-of-charge to cancer patients and their carers.

However, many of these activities and therapies are unfunded and require extra resources.

This is where you can help.

Our team at BRICC is reliant on the generosity of community members like yourself to help raise extra funds so we can provide a complete Wellness Centre program for our patients.



What people power can do for patients of BRICC:

- \$500 would fund Delta Dog Therapy for a year;
- \$2500 would provide Art Therapy for 40 weeks;
- \$4000 would fund Massage Therapy for 40 weeks;
- \$5000 would provide Exercise Therapy three-times-a-week for 40 weeks.

Many hands make light work

Whether your contribution is large or small, every bit helps to ensure those affected by cancer continue to receive the individual, holistic care they deserve.

After all, many hands make light work and together we can make a real difference!

If you would like to discuss your support for BRICC, please call Director of Foundation and Fundraising Geoff Millar on 5320 4093 or email geoffm@bhs.org.au



Base Hospital
Drummond Street North
PO Box 577 Ballarat 3353
Phone: (03) 5320 4000
Fax: (03) 5320 4828

Queen Elizabeth Centre
102 Ascot Street South
PO Box 199 Ballarat 3353
Phone: (03) 5320 3700
Fax: (03) 5320 3860

Mental Health Services
Sturt Street
PO Box 577 Ballarat 3353
Phone: (03) 5320 4100
Fax: (03) 5320 4028

BHSNEWS

The Ballarat Health Services community newsletter

SUMMER 2014



No waiting for radiotherapy treatment at the BRICC

The Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (BRICC) has achieved a number of very significant treatment improvements since commencing operations in April 2013.

The Centre’s most significant achievement to date is the elimination of the radiotherapy waiting list. Prior to the BRICC patients were waiting up to 16 weeks to commence radiotherapy treatment. Today patients can begin treatment immediately.

Ballarat Health Services (BHS) Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Rowe, said BRICC was established to decrease waiting lists, meet increasing demand and improve the provision of cancer care throughout the Grampians Region.

“Prior to the BRICC, some patients elected to be treated in Melbourne which brings with it inconvenience and significant costs, including travel, accommodation and out of pocket expenses for some services.”

“The two linear accelerator machines, which provide radiotherapy treatment that have been installed in the BRICC are among the most advanced in the world and provide the best possible care”.

“The vast majority of patients requiring radiotherapy can be treated immediately within

the BRICC. The only exception is for a very small number of highly specialised radiosurgery treatments only available in Melbourne.

“Most importantly, patients can receive their treatment close to home and their support networks. This means that patients have the support of family and friends when they need it the most.”

The BRICC provides services to all patients, regardless of health insurance status, with no out of pocket expenses.

In addition to radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatments, the BRICC also provides a range of support services, including a specialised pharmacy, allied health services and Wellness Centre.

Mr Rowe said BRICC offered patients a truly integrated service, “our oncologists work closely with all areas of the health service including the Emergency Department and wards to ensure treatment options are identified and therapy commences as soon as practical.”

“The BRICC receives patient referrals from other health services in the Grampians Region including St John of God Ballarat Hospital.”

SJOG Collaboration in Cancer Care

St John of God Ballarat Hospital is working in collaboration with Ballarat Health Services to provide a comprehensive cancer care service to the region.

Oncologist Dr Craig Carden from Ballarat Cancer Care also works in conjunction with St John of God Hospital and has a special interest in lung and breast malignancies.

Dr Adam Friebe, Clinical Haematologist provides

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TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION

to the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre

Please return this form to: Ballarat Health Services, PO Box 577, Ballarat Vic 3353 • Phone: 03 5320 4093
Fax: 03 5320 4828 • Email: foundation@bhs.org.au



DONOR DETAILS

(A receipt will be issued in the following name. Please print clearly.)

Title: Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr Other
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DONATION

I would like this donation to be made for the following amount (please tick):

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 \$2,500

Other \$ _____

My donation is for BRICC Wellness Centre

PAYMENT DETAILS

(Please indicate your payment option by ticking one box)

Cheque* Visa Mastercard

*Please make cheques payable to Ballarat Health Services

Cardholder Name _____

Amount \$ _____

Card Number

Expiry Date / Cardholder Signature _____

Direct Bank Deposits can be made to: Ballarat Health Services, ANZ Ballarat

BSB: 013-516, Account Number: 837-220-814

Online payments can be made at: www.bhs.org.au/onlinepayments



A message from our CEO

When the Premier, State and Federal Health Ministers and the Federal Member for Ballarat opened the BRICC in July 2013 we had one main goal in mind – to reduce waiting lists for cancer treatment.

This milestone has been achieved earlier than planned. It is extremely pleasing that patients do not have to wait to receive treatment at the BRICC, one of the best facilities in Australia using the most up to date equipment available. We have a team of highly experienced oncologists treating patients in Ballarat and the Grampians region, ensuring that patients have access to the best possible treatment available close to their homes and their support networks.

The BRICC has been future-proofed to allow for future expansion and the cancer treatment needs of our community.

BHS enjoys a very strong relationship with Austin Health, strengthened with the relocation of the Ballarat Austin Radiation Oncology Centre (BAROC) into the BRICC. BAROC staff provide radiation oncology treatment services using state-of-the-art Linear Accelerators. BHS is committed to working in partnership with BAROC to ensure patients continue to be seen quickly, and to be treated with the very best therapeutic techniques available.

Although, we are extremely proud of BRICC and the work being achieved, there is still more to be done. Through partnerships with other health services we are planning to expand satellite services in the Grampians Region with the aim of enhancing access to comprehensive cancer care and improving cancer survival rates.

Andrew R Rowe
Chief Executive Officer

World class treatment options

Head Radiation Oncologist Dr Louise Gorman said the treatment provided at the BRICC was among the best in the world.

"Here at the BRICC we have the very latest technology available to all patients, which can treat most cancers.

"By using the inbuilt CT scanner, our Linear Accelerators allow us to treat patient's tumours extremely accurately and this gives us the best possible opportunity to provide positive outcomes for patients.

"Our Oncologists are highly experienced with a range of cancers and can provide high quality care for all patients.

"For most patients we are able to treat them close to home, meaning they don't have to go to Melbourne for their treatment," Dr Gorman said.

Welcome from the Board Chair

I am delighted to welcome you to another edition of BHS Community News.

As a Board, it's always pleasing to hear positive feedback from the community in relation to our staff, services and the quality of our care and that is what is happening with BRICC. We have established a world class health care facility that is making a real difference to people's lives.

People often wonder why the name BRICC (Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre) was chosen. The reason is simple. The BRICC is what the name suggests, an integrated cancer centre for the Grampians region. The facility provides cancer patients and their families with access to all the services they will need during and after their treatment, including oncologists, social work, speech pathology, specialised pharmacy services, dietitians and the Wellness Centre. In fact over 20 different health disciplines work within the centre meaning patients only ever have to come to one centre for all their appointments.

The Board of Management is committed to the further expansion of services provided in the BRICC as well as further development of very important research programs.

In addition, there are a number of other very exciting projects taking place at BHS. These include the multi-deck car park and helipad on Mair Street which is now under construction, the new MRI facility, construction of the new Drummond Street building, the redevelopment of the children's ward and a brand new public dental facility which is soon to be constructed on the Phoenix College site in Sebastopol.

These projects will build capacity and provide additional beds which is critical in face of record growth and demand for our services. It also highlights the important role BHS plays as the key referral point for health services in the Grampians Region.

I hope you enjoy reading this latest edition of BHS Community News.



Andrew Faulx
Chair, BHS Board of Management

BRICC: A leading cancer research centre

Incorporated within the BRICC is also a Research and Clinical Trials unit, which is actively involved in sponsored trials, collaborative group trials and investigator initiated research.

Having a Research and Clinical Trials unit within the BRICC means appropriate patients can be enrolled in trials and access drugs which could potentially improve patient outcomes but are not available outside a research environment.

The BRICC's Research and Clinical Trials Unit partners with established cancer research agencies and has a dedicated team of staff who oversee the many trials run in Ballarat. Research is a collaborative effort between the lead research agency, the trials team and the investigating doctors here at the Centre.

Of note, BRICC has the greatest number of trials on offer to patients in the Grampians region and is always looking for opportunities to increase the number of trials available locally.

At BRICC we are also investigating the impact of a cancer diagnosis and treatments on the psychological health of our patients. This research will eventually enable us to better target psychosocial therapies and ensure our Wellness program is meeting the needs of patients.

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a weekly consulting service to patients at Ballarat Cancer Care, and also provides services through St John of God Pathology.

In addition to the specialist clinical care, a further collaborative initiative in caring for the accommodation needs of cancer patients visiting Ballarat is Rotary House. Located in the grounds of St John of God

Hospital, Rotary House offers affordable short-term secure and pleasant residential accommodation.

Its primary purpose is to assist with accommodating patients, their carers and family travelling to Ballarat from regional areas for radiation oncology and chemotherapy treatment.

'Tree change' for new BRICC Oncologist

The BRICC's new Radiation Oncologist, Dr Simone Reeves, says her recently acquired role is ideal - allowing her to combine her love of regional Victoria with her passion for patient-centred care.

Dr Reeves joined the team at the Ballarat Austin Radiation Oncology Centre (BAROC) at BRICC recently, and although she worked previously in Melbourne it was always a country posting she yearned for.

"As a junior doctor I worked in Geelong and loved the country lifestyle and the people. Since then I've always wanted to return to work in the country".

"I'm really looking forward to settling into the Ballarat community with my family and making a home here."

Dr Reeves comes to BRICC with a wealth of experience. Most recently she worked as a Consultant Radiation Oncologist at Alfred Health and prior to that as the Clinical and Research Fellow at the Austin. She completed her training at the Peter McCallum Cancer Centre.

Dr Reeves has a particular interest in head and neck, brain and breast tumours and stereotactic radiosurgery but also brings broad experience and will treat patients with a wide range of tumour types at the BRICC.

Dr Reeves said her new position at the BRICC would allow her to build on existing professional relationships and networks, while helping to develop the service in the Grampians Region. In addition to providing radiotherapy treatment to patients, Simone believes in the application of an holistic approach to the entire spectrum of their care; from coping with a diagnosis of cancer, optimising treatment effectiveness, minimising treatment side effects and successful transition to survivorship including secondary prevention.

In addition to her work commitments, Simone is the mother of two children, aged 13 and 15 and is undertaking additional part-time study.

"I am presently undertaking a Fellowship of Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona which is based on an holistic model of



patient-centred care that emphasises wellness and prevention rather than merely treating disease," she said. Simone said the course would take her two years to complete. Simone is passionate about developing the BRICC's wellness programs.

Dr Reeves is the BRICC's second full-time Radiation Oncologist, joining Dr Louise Gorman at BAROC.

Dr Reeves appointment also takes the number of full-time female oncologists working at BRICC to four, with Dr Reeves and Dr Gorman also working with full-time female Medical Oncologists Dr Kate Hamilton and Dr Lee Na Teo.

A third full-time Radiation Oncologist, Dr Jonathan Tomaszewski, is due to commence at the BRICC in March.

BRICC oncology service expands to Stawell

The BRICC has expanded its oncology service to include weekly visits to Stawell.

In partnership with Stawell Regional Health, Ballarat Health Services (BHS) Medical Oncologist Dr Stephen Brown has been visiting the town to hold a weekly clinic at Stawell Regional Health each Tuesday since 17 September 2013.

Dr Brown is not only providing consultations but also overseeing the delivery of chemotherapy treatments to patients in their local setting.

BHS Head of Medical Oncology, Dr Kate Hamilton, said the visiting service is increasing cancer facilities available in the Grampians region.

"For many patients from Stawell, Ararat, Horsham, and the surrounding areas, this means they don't have to travel to Ballarat for their treatment. They can remain close to home and their support networks.

"Whilst it may still be necessary for some patients to travel to the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre for their treatment, it's hoped that the majority will be able to receive their treatment and follow up appointments in Stawell," Dr Hamilton said.

BHS currently has more than 250 regional patients who would potentially benefit from seeing an oncologist closer to home. Further expansion of the service commences in February with the inclusion of palliative care and radiation oncology clinics. This will reduce even further the need for patients to travel to Ballarat for appointments.

All patients attending the clinic will be bulk billed with no out of pocket expenses.

BHS plans to further expand visiting cancer services in the region in the future, with clinics in other towns in the Grampians region.



Dr Stephen Brown



Wellness Centre



Simone Noelker



Delta Dogs

BRICC Wellness Centre

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Specially designed to nurture not just the body, but the mind and spirit as well, it caters to patients' emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing before, during and after treatment.

For more information on any of the programs listed below, contact Wellness Centre Coordinator, Simone Noelker, on 5320 8614 or via email at simonen@bhs.org.au.

WELLNESS CENTRE PROGRAMS:

The BRICC Wellness Centre offers a range of free programs and activities for cancer patients and their families, including:

- Look Good Feel Better: Next session - 11 March 2014
- Delta Therapy Dog Visits: Every Tuesday and Wednesday
- Yoga: Every Thursday
- Cooking Classes
- Exercise Classes
- Living with Cancer program
- Information Sessions
- And more....

Look Good... Feel Better at the BRICC

The first session of the Look Good... Feel Better workshop was held at the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre's Wellness Centre on Tuesday 19 November 2013.

Participants were treated to a morning of pampering, beauty tips and information and plenty of laughs.

Look Good... Feel Better workshops are conducted at more than 180 venues around Australia by volunteers from the cosmetic, hairdressing and beauty industries, who share their tips and techniques for minimising side-effects such as skin changes and hair loss.

All participants receive a complimentary take home bag of skin care and makeup products.

The workshops will be held monthly in Ballarat, alternating between BRICC and St John of God Ballarat Hospital.



Look Good Feel Better