



April 2025 Newsletter

Our mission is to provide a supportive and informative environment for people with lung conditions and their carers.

Editor: Helen Cotter
lung.life1@hotmail.com

Coordinator: Marina Siemionow 0429 629 180
lung.life1@hotmail.com

NEXT MEETING: Thursday 8 May 2025
10:15 am – 12:00 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

Speaker: Ben Cropp, liaison officer, ACT Police
Dealing with hackers, scams and elder abuse

April Meeting – Jacqui Cole

Convenor: Marina Siemionow

The meeting commenced with a greeting to the group, stating: We are a face-to-face support group for those of us in our community who are affected by chronic lung conditions.

- A number of members were noted missing at this meeting including: Janette Morgan— in rehab with a broken neck, Caroline Scowcroft – In Vancouver, Sandra and Les Hudson (Les having a knee replacement), Margaret Geaghan returning from her cruise to Hobart, is on the train from Sydney as we speak, Helen Reynolds, Helen Cotter had another commitment.
- The CLLSG Advisory group met on 31 March. The group reviewed the annual programme and discussed how to get a broader and more timely input to the Newsletter. We are still looking for a new and permanent Editor. Meeting participants were asked to submit any articles of interest to our email address lung.life1@hotmail.com including photos of interest.
- The CLLSG flyer will be reviewed and updated and reprinted this year.
- The following updated version of our logo was shown and approved by the Group. It will be used on all our official publications from now on.



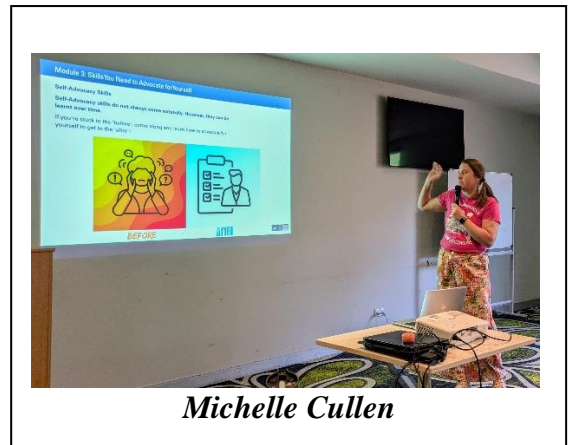
- For this year two new social events/visits have been added to our program: a visit to the National Botanical Gardens on 4 May and another to the Arboretum on 24 October (if the bus tour has recommenced by that date). Details will be sent out by email closer to the dates.
- Ideas for lunch venues were sought. We will try to alternate between clubs and restaurants. Any suggestions can be added to the list by emailing lung.life1@hotmail.com.

We then formed groups of 3 to discuss 3 questions that were put to us to help us get to know each other better. As requested at the January meeting the 5 step, Breathlessness Episode Recovery Plan, was once again recapped and practiced by all.

1. STOP, 2. THINK, 3. BREATHE SLOWLY, 4. AIRFLOW/ COOL, 5. TAKE BACK CONTROL

The two guest speakers arrived - **Michelle Cullen** who is the **Chronic Conditions Network Coordinator** at Health Care Consumers Association (HCCA) and "**C**" **Moore** who is their **Health Literacy Officer**. The topic for this meeting was: "**health care consumer's rights and navigating the health system**".

HCCA has around 14 people working in their team and 160 members overall, and their Group is one of their organisational members. Health literacy is HCCA's chief aim. They use a range of communication mediums - radio, websites, online meetings, written material and other media.



Michelle Cullen

The Chronic Conditions Network is for community organisations and support groups and was formed to identify key issues affecting consumers with chronic conditions and strengthen collaboration on systemic advocacy in relation to these issues. Some of the organisations involved in the Chronic Conditions Network include Diabetes ACT, Carers ACT, Hepatitis ACT, The Canberra Lung Life Support Group, the Cancer Council and Parkinsons ACT.

We were told that the **Australian Charter of Health Care Rights** was developed to protect the community from harm and to improve the quality of health service provision across the country. The Charter describes the rights that consumers can expect when receiving health care in public or private hospitals, day procedures, general practice and other community health services. The 7 principles of health care rights are - **Access, Safety, Respect, Partnership, Information, Privacy and Give Feedback**. Some of these are covered as follows.

- Access to services such as access to casualty or to specialists.
- Our rights to access information include that information is physically accessible and that it is affordable.
- To be **treated with respect** and not be discriminated against. This may include respecting our end-of-life choices and the type of treatment we choose.
- **Effective communication** between the healthcare provider and the consumer. Often patients feel they are on an unequal power base with their provider. Consumers should be prepared to ask questions for clarity and to check their understanding.

- **The information provided should always be clear** to ensure a proper understanding. Costs and all the financial options surrounding any treatments offered should always be spelt out clearly no matter if it is public or private.
- **Privacy** needs to be spelt out to all consumers. Generally no information or data is shared or collected by others without the consumer's consent. In the case of children older than 14 who are health care consumers parents do not have automatic access to their child's information or data .
- **Feedback** should be ongoing.

Patients need to learn to advocate for themselves. This may not be natural for many and involves the consumer preparing themselves before attending any healthcare facility or appointment. It includes having all your relevant medical documents with you including lists of all your medications and their dosages. It may also involve asking questions and knowing your health rights. Sometimes it may require you to ask for a second opinion, or ask questions about a test or procedure, taking time to think before making your medical decisions.

Here is a link to some of the support tools provided by HCCA to help you prepare:
<https://www.hcca.org.au/for-patients-carers-and-families/speaking-up-for-yourself/>

Below are photos of some booklets available at HCCA. They contain information on what to do if you need to go to hospital, when you are in hospital, and when you go home.



If you would like copies:

https://www.hcca.org.au/publications/resources/?_sfm_publication_year=2022

Annual voluntary membership of \$20.

Traditionally, we donate some money at our meetings for Lung Life's expenses. But fewer people are using cash and cannot donate at the meetings. Paying an annual amount would solve this issue for us all. If you would like to donate, here are our banking details: Our bank is **Beyond Bank**,

- ✚ **BSB Number: 325-185**
- ✚ **Account Number: 04043535**
- ✚ **Ref. No.: member's first name and surname**

Lung Life's expenses include membership of SHOUT; events like Seniors Expo; pamphlets; pens and other paraphernalia for Expos etc; extras for special lunches; and general running costs.

Are you saving money on medicines?

Sourced by Caroline Scowcroft from [this resource](#).

Are you missing out on saving on the cost of your medicines? Nearly 500,000 Australians are qualified for

potential savings on medicines, but didn't make use of the **PBS Safety Net** scheme. Pharmacists say the bureaucracy of the scheme is so "clunky" thousands of people are missing out.

Once you spend more than \$1,694 a year on prescription medicines, your script price drops. If you are a concession card holder like a pensioner or low income earner, your scripts become free once you spend over \$277 annually.

Many people are missing out because of not knowing about this safety net scheme. You need to shop at the same pharmacy or keep a handwritten log using a form downloaded from the Services Australia website. It becomes more complicated if your family is on a single Medicare card - these are not automatically linked in the pharmacies' systems, and you must tell the pharmacist. It's further complicated if one member of your family is in aged care.

If you feel that you are eligible for the PBS Safety Scheme because of the annual cost of your prescriptions and are not already on it, talk to your chemist.



March lunch at Rocksalt



*Joe Marks
Rocksalt*



*Rodney and Marilyn Doak; Margaret Geaghan at
Rocksalt*

End of month lunch:

There was no lunch this month as our lunch day fell on ANZAC Day this year.

May 1: Global Love Day

[Global Love Day](#)



May1 is Global Love Day, a day to promote love, compassion and harmony throughout the world, reminding people of the importance of mutual care, kindness and unity.

It started as part of a global initiative to create a **world of understanding and tolerance** and is supported by various public and humanitarian organizations.

You can celebrate it by helping those in need or by being involved in volunteer and humanitarian programs. Or you can be extra thoughtful and kind to your family, friends and others. Meditations and prayers for peace are popular on this day. You can also care for the environment around you as part of Global Love Day.

This is a day to promote kindness and compassion in our thoughts and actions.

May 2 is International Harry Potter Day

May the Fourth – be with you.

Newsletter Request

Our newsletter (your newsletter) is generally written by a couple of people and we'd love to have contributions from other people – things which you think would interest our readers:

- ✓ Lung and health information
- ✓ Events/ meetings coming up
- ✓ Trivia
- ✓ Something that you've done or learnt
- ✓ Photos

George used to send lovely photos and information about his travels. They always were a joy to read. Alas no more.

Some people worry that they can't write very well. We could edit it for you.

Send it to the Lung Life address and put **For the newsletter** in the subject heading. And send them anytime.

Hope to see some lovely items.

Can't let a month go by without sending in a joke - again from City News - Clive Williams' Whimsy Column.

His introduction reads, 'On a lighter note'. Hope you agree.

Courtesy of Chris Moyle

Using a medium, a woman contacted her dead husband John and cried emotionally: 'How are you darling?' 'Wonderful,' came the ghostly reply. 'There's plenty of sunshine and food, flights to interesting places, and lots of swimming - you know how I always loved the water.'

The widow sighed contentedly and said: 'I can't wait to join you in heaven.'

'I'm not in heaven,' John replied, 'I was reincarnated as a duck.'



April meeting: Helen Crombie; Jacqui Cole



April meeting: Marilyn Doak

Tips for improving flexibility, balance and strength

Try to do some form of stretching every day – even if it is only while you are watching TV. Make a specific time each day to do these exercises, or fit them in whenever you can -for example – while waiting for the kettle to boil. If you can, also try to reduce the time you spend sitting for long periods.

- **Stand up and sit down (or chair raise) (for strength and balance)**

Sit on a chair with your feet flat on the floor and slightly apart. Try to keep your back and shoulders straight throughout this exercise. Slowly stand up, trying not to use your hands (or as little as possible). Slowly sit back down and pause. Do this 8-15 times.

- **Shoulder roll (for flexibility)**

Using a gentle circular motion, hunch your shoulders upwards, backwards, downwards and forwards. Do this slowly 5 times, then reverse the direction.

- **Knee lifts (for strength)**

Sit back in your chair with your back straight. Bend your knee and lift your left leg towards your chest. Hold for a few seconds then lower slowly. Do this 8 – 10 times with each leg.

- **Heels up toes up (for flexibility)**

While seated, start with feet flat on the floor and lift heels as high as you can, keeping the balls of your feet on the floor. Slowly lower heels until feet are flat, then lift toes until they point upwards. Repeat these up and down movements for 30 seconds.

- **Side leg raises (to improve both strength and balance)**

Stand sideways to the bench and hold on with your right hand to support yourself. Slowly take your left leg out to your left side. Keep your back and both legs straight. Hold the position for one second then slowly lower. Repeat 8 times at first, increasing to 15. Turn around and hold on with your left hand while you raise your right leg.

- **Half squats (to improve leg strength)**

Stand facing the bench with your feet apart (about shoulder width), feet facing forward and holding on with both hands. Leaning very slightly forward, but keeping your back straight, slowly bend both legs, keeping your knees over your feet. Do not go down too far. As you return to the up position, squeeze your buttocks together as if there is a \$5 note between them that you don't want to drop. Repeat 8 times at first, increasing to 15.

- **Heel raises (for strength and balance)**

Stand sideways to the bench, feet apart (shoulder width) holding on with one hand to support yourself. Slowly rise up on to your toes, hold for one second and lower again. Do this 8 times to begin with, increasing to 15. Make sure your movements are not rushed.

Make your move – Sit less – Be active for life!

