



July 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 14th August 2025
10:15 am – 12:00 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

Information and discussion day



July Meeting — Val Siemionow

The July 10 meeting commenced at 10:45 am. There were 16 members in attendance. Apologies were received from Helen Cotter, Helen Reynolds, Bruce and Wini MacFarlane, Chris Moyle, Jaqui Cole and Marilyn and Rodney Doak. It was wonderful to see John Morley with us again after a long absence.

Marina provided us with an update on the coming months' agendas including our forthcoming **Xmas in July lunch to be held at the Mawson Club on Friday 25th, starting at 11:45 am** and continuing into the afternoon. She also mentioned that she would be giving a talk to the Queanbeyan View Club on the 17th of this month on lungs, lung disease, and the Canberra Lung Life Support Group.

Marina also advised the group that SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together) was disbanded as at 30 June 2025. A brief discussion ensued on our relationship with SHOUT and quite a few regrets were expressed on its passing.

Caroline urged members to join HCCA (the Health Care Consumers' Association) which is the peak advocacy organisation for health consumers in the ACT. Information on HCCA and its services for patients and their carers, for consumer representatives, for its events and training services and for its publications can be obtained from the HCCA website at <https://www.hcca.org.au>.

Marina then provided an end of financial year report, providing a summary of the Group's financial position and incomings and outgoings for the last 12 months. We were pleased to hear that the Lung Life Support Group finds itself in a good financial position.

At this point our guest speaker arrived and it was over to her.

Niagara Therapy

Our guest speaker was Maryanne Kent (pictured at right), a consultant for the Niagara Therapy group, who introduced us to her company's products and how they can assist in improving blood circulation, body healing and mobility.

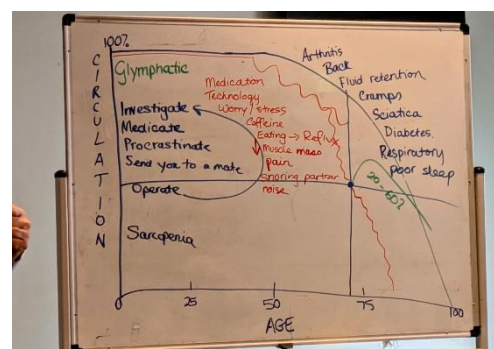
Niagara's products are primarily massage chairs, massage pads, and hand held massage tools that have been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for a number of applications.

In her presentation Maryanne covered the circulatory system, consisting of the heart, blood vessels, blood and the lymphatic system which includes the lymphatic vessels and glands which form part of the immune system. The lymphatic system keeps body fluid levels in balance, defends the body against infections and removes toxins. She also briefly covered the glymphatic system which facilitates the removal of metabolic waste products and toxins from the brain.



Maryanne started her talk with a series of questions that led to a discussion of medical conditions and ailments. The merger of the presentation with the discussion and the audience feedback led to some interesting facts.

- Our circulation system consists of over 90,000 kilometres of veins and arteries driven by some 100,000 heart beats every 24 hours
- The number of annual diabetes related amputations in Australia is 4,500
- The clearance of toxins from the lymphatic system is dependent on the quality and amount of a person's muscle tissue
- The length of the lymphatic system in the average human body is around 160,000 kilometres
- Most people suffer from sarcopenia (a loss of skeletal muscle mass) as they age



- The glymphatic system is crucial for maintaining brain health. Its dysfunction is linked to various neurological disorders
- To clear the toxins from the brain it has been found that the glymphatic system needs to harness 5 hours of uninterrupted and absolutely still sleep
- We discussed the various causes and impacts of poor sleep such as
 - Medication, use of technology, worry/stress, caffeine, eating disorders (e.g., reflux), muscle mass, pain, snoring partner, noise, etc
 - Long term results of poor sleep can lead to weight gain, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases including heart attacks, high blood pressure, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's disease.

There were a few asides in the presentation.

- Firstly, after it was mooted that people who can stand unsupported on one leg for twenty or more seconds are likely to have a longer life expectancy than those who can't, the group was invited to stand and balance on one leg. And the winners were **Marina and Caroline**, pictured at right, doing their thing.
- Our other aside was a discussion of the idea of the six step "Medical Merry-go-round" where the patient goes to the doctor for help and is (1) investigated, (2) medicated, then (3) procrastinated, (4) sent to a mate (specialist), (5) operated on, and then (6) sent back to again be investigated. As funny as it sounds, several members said that they had experienced the "Medical Merry-go-round" for themselves.



The information we were provided with indicates that the Niagara Therapy technology is effective in the treatment of:

- Poor circulation
- Painful/swollen joints
- Diabetic complications
- Back pain
- Fluid Retention / Lymphoedema
- Cramps / muscle spasms / aches
- Joint mobility
- Breathing difficulties
- Restless legs
- Headaches / migraines
- Wound healing
- Leg ulcers, and
- Poor sleep.



Anyone interested in contacting Maryanne for more information on the Niagara Therapy products can contact her on 0414 238 194 or at mke2707@bigpond.net.au.

The meeting then closed and we adjourned for lunch which proved a very pleasant social experience.








End of Month Lunch: Christmas in July
Friday 25 July; Mawson Club 11:45 am

TAKE CONTROL – LIVE WELL PROGRAM




From Canberra Southside community newsletter via Helen Crombie

Take Control - Live Well is a **FREE 3-week group program** for adults in the ACT who have a chronic condition. It helps you find ways to reach your health goals and manage your condition. Connect with others in a safe and welcoming space.

You will learn how to:





-  get the best out of your health appointments.
-  look after your mental and physical health.
-  find reliable health information.
-  set and achieve your health goals.
-  find local support services.

After the 3-week program, you will have:

-  a plan to reach your health goals.
-  a program book of resources to take home.
-  the option to receive SMS support for up to 3 months.

The program is run either **online** where each session runs once per week for 2 hours; or **in person** where each session runs once per week for 2.5 hours. The program runs at various locations across Canberra.

Below is a list of upcoming programs:

-  Belconnen Community Health Centre - starting Thursday 7 August 2025 at 1:30 pm
-  Tuggeranong Community Health Centre - starting Tuesday 9 September 2025 at 1:30 pm
-  Phillip Community Health Centre – starting Tuesday 26 September 2025 at 1:30 pm
-  Belconnen Community Health Centre - starting Friday 7 November 2025 at 9:30 am

You can refer yourself to this program. To register, please call [Central Health Intake](#) on [02 5124 9977](#). If you'd like more information about the program, please feel free to email us: SelfManagement@act.gov.au.

Membership Payment

Membership fee is \$20.00 pa which can be paid as a direct transfer into our Beyond Bank account. See details below or pay in cash to the treasurer at any meeting.

BSB No: 325 185

Account Name: Community Account

Account number: 04043535

Reference: please write your name in full.

Given the low membership fee, we ask for a small voluntary donation at each meeting which could just be a gold coin.

Why won't my cough go away?

<https://theconversation.com/why-wont-my-cough-go-away-241899>

Do you cough a lot for no apparent reason? This can be embarrassing, especially as people may think you have an infection. Presumably you've talked to your doctor about this and they've checked out any medical cause such as postnasal drip, asthma or reflux from the stomach.

Sometimes coughs persist long after a viral or bacterial infection. After an infection, **cough hypersensitivity** may develop thanks to inflamed airways and over-responsive cough receptors. Even minor irritants will then trigger the coughing reflex and this can trigger an unhelpful feedback loop. Excessive and unhelpful coughing tends to further fatigue the recovering cilia and irritate the airway lining.

Doctors now understand that both the peripheral and central nervous systems play a role in this. But they don't yet understand the relationship between hypersensitivity and chronic cough.

What treats a persistent cough?

Assuming you've had it checked out for – and cleared of – underlying illnesses:

- Antibiotics are not the answer as the chronic cough is not caused by infection.
- Saline nose sprays and washes, inhalations or medicated sore throat sprays may help if there is sticky mucus.
- Honey may also reduce throat irritation and the need to cough.
- The effectiveness of cough syrup is less clear. As these mixtures have potential side effects, they should be used with care.
- Speech pathology treatments may also be effective.

There are some new medications in the pipeline that block cough receptors, and seem promising for persisting, troublesome coughs. But as yet the causes of the persistent cough are not fully understood and we need to deal with it as best we can.

The following has been written by the late Douglas Adams of "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" fame.

HOW TO IDENTIFY AUSTRALIANS

- They pronounce Melbourne as "Mel-bin".
- They think it makes perfect sense to decorate highways with large fibreglass bananas, prawns and sheep.
- They think "Woolloomooloo" is a perfectly reasonable name for a place, that "Wagga Wagga" can be abbreviated to "Wagga", but "Woy Woy" can't be called "Woy".
- Their hamburgers will contain beetroot. Apparently it's a must-have.
- How else do you get a stain on your shirt?
- They don't think it's summer until the steering wheel is too hot to handle.
- They believe that all train timetables are works of fiction.

Meet the staff 'behind the curtain' in Canberra's health services

<https://region.com.au/meet-the-staff-behind-the-curtain-in-canberras-health-services/881433/>



courtesy of Caroline Polak Scowcroft

Professors Richard Scolyer and Jane Dahlstrom are the guests on the first episode of the Canberra Health Services' new podcast series **Behind the Curtain**. (Photo: Canberra Health Services).

On 10 March this year, Richard Scolyer was told he had three months to live. Richard, the 2024 Australian of the Year, a pathology specialist and co-medical director of the Melanoma Institute, is the star of a new podcast series published by Canberra Health Services (CHS), designed to “highlight our health care heroes”.

Alongside is a former colleague of many years, Jane Dahlstrom, to discuss their personal experiences “facing cancer from both sides”. Jane was diagnosed with breast cancer more than 20 years ago but since her last surgery in 2020, she has not had a reoccurrence.

Jane moved from Sydney to start her local pathology career in the old Canberra Hospital on Lake Burley Griffin in 1985 and she has been working with CHS almost non-stop since 2000.

Podcast host Dr Sanjaya Senanayake is also known nationally and internationally for his work as an infectious diseases expert at Canberra Hospital and also lectures at the Australian National University and the University of NSW. Two years ago, he realised too many health care workers in Canberra were flying under the radar. By recognizing them, it will make them feel more valued and make our Canberra Health Services and our ACT community realise how privileged we are to have such people with us.

[Behind the Curtain](#) features “open and interesting conversations” with 10 professionals from across the ACT’s health care industry. Topics range from responding to car accidents and the ins and outs of organ donation to myths about breast cancer and what really happens in the hospital’s mortuary. Each of the 10 episodes, available on all the usual podcast platforms like Spotify and Apple Podcasts, are about half an hour long. And there could be more coming.

Newsletter Request

Many thanks to those who have sent in contributions to our newsletter. We really appreciate them. Our newsletter (your newsletter) is generally written by a couple of people and we love those contributions from other people. We like things that 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. Hope to see some lovely items.