



**NATIONAL BREAST
CANCER CENTRE**

Incorporating the
Ovarian Cancer Program

NATIONAL BREAST CANCER CENTRE

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW



The National Breast Cancer Centre (NBCC) has had another successful year extending its work into women's cancers, in particular breast and ovarian cancer. Key highlights include the launch of the first psychosocial guidelines for the care of adults with cancer, in collaboration with the National Cancer Control Initiative (NCCI), and the completion of the National Multidisciplinary Care Demonstration Project. Both these achievements are acknowledged as groundbreaking in Australia and their implementation has the potential to greatly improve the clinical and supportive care of cancer patients.

On behalf of the NBCC Board, I would like to express our appreciation to the Australian Government for its continued support and commitment to a further four years funding for the NBCC. In addition, the work of the NBCC would not be possible without the support of the many individuals and organisations who have provided their time, expertise and skills to serve on our numerous committees and the individuals and organisations who have generously donated funds to enhance and extend our work.

I am pleased to announce that Emeritus Professor Tom Reeve has agreed to be the Patron of the NBCC. Together with our new CEO, Professor Christine Ewan, the Board and I look forward to expanding the NBCC's potential over the coming years and to continuing to work with you in 2004. We anticipate an exciting future for the NBCC.

Janet McDonald AO
Chairman, National Breast Cancer Centre Board

CEO'S REPORT



When I assumed the role of CEO in April 2003 I was greatly encouraged by the warmth of the welcome I received from the Board and the staff. In many ways 2003 was a crossroad in the trajectory of the NBCC. We can look back on a strong record of achievement under Sally Redman's leadership and we can look forward to assuming a role in a much invigorated national cancer landscape. The NBCC's achievements during the year are summarised in this report but the unreported achievements are those that have occurred behind the scenes in reorganising NBCC's working environment to better position us to take advantage of future opportunities. Feedback from the Independent Review of the NBCC will be of significant assistance in helping us to identify those opportunities.

It is with sincere appreciation that I acknowledge the staff, supporters, and members of the many expert groups that make the NBCC the successful body that it is. I have been particularly fortunate in assuming my responsibilities in the context of the strong support and wise counsel of the Chair, the Board, and our patron Tom Reeve, all of whom have shared a strong commitment to the NBCC throughout its history. I look forward to the challenges yet to come.

Christine Ewan
CEO, National Breast Cancer Centre

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROJECTS

The NBCC continues to work towards improving breast and ovarian cancer outcomes for women in Australia. Following are some of the achievements and projects of 2003.

Understanding and communicating information about risk factors.

- An economic evaluation of breast and ovarian cancer family genetic services in Australia was completed.
- The NBCC's *Summary of risk factors for breast cancer* is being revised and updated.
- A brief family history questionnaire is being trialled through BreastScreen, to identify women at increased risk.
- A follow-up survey of high-risk women attending family cancer clinics in Australia is underway.
- The NBCC's *Advice about familial aspects of breast cancer and ovarian cancer* is being revised.

Ensuring that all women with breast cancer are diagnosed as early as possible.

- The *2003 Breast health survey* was conducted, with a sample of 3,000 women nationally, to gauge knowledge, attitudes and behaviour towards the early detection of breast cancer.
- The NSW *BreastScreen Radiology training program* was implemented and evaluated.
- A guide about breast fine needle aspiration cytology and core biopsy is being developed.
- A summary card for radiologists based on reporting recommendations in the NBCC's publication *Breast imaging: a guide for practice* was produced, in association with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists.
- A site visitor training package and revised accreditation forms were developed, and ongoing support was provided for the work of the National Quality Management Committee of BreastScreen Australia.

Ensuring that all women diagnosed with breast cancer receive optimal treatment.

- The three-year *National multidisciplinary care demonstration project* was completed and a final report launched.
- A new consumer resource *A guide for women with early breast cancer* was released.
- A GP version of the clinical practice guidelines for the management of women with metastatic breast cancer was developed and a trial dissemination was conducted through oncologists.
- New recommendations about *The clinical management of ductal carcinoma in situ, lobular carcinoma in situ and atypical hyperplasia of the breast* were launched.
- A survey to investigate continuity of care for women with breast cancer was conducted.

Ensuring that all women diagnosed with breast cancer and their families receive adequate psychosocial, physical and practical support.

- The *Clinical practice guidelines for the psychosocial care of adults with cancer*, a joint NBCC and NCCI initiative, were launched by the then Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon. Senator Kay Patterson.
- *Clinical practice guidelines for the management and support of younger women with breast cancer* were approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).
- Scholarships to improve breast cancer care in rural areas were awarded to 30 nurses through the Pink Pony Program.
- The second phase of the *Strengthening support for women with breast cancer program* was completed.
- A series of communication skills training workshops to train health professionals in co-facilitation skills was conducted.
- Core competencies for Breast Care Nurses were developed.

Providing information to increase breast cancer control.

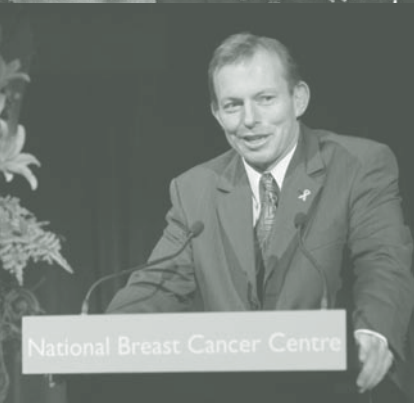
- The public health campaign *Boys Do Cry* was implemented during Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October).
- The annual NBCC Pink Ribbon Breakfast was attended by nearly 700 guests and the Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon. Tony Abbott.
- Three new websites: www.nbcc.org.au; www.breasthealth.org.au and www.myparentscancer.com.au were launched, resulting in an unprecedented number of hits on NBCC's websites.
- An annual update to the Parliamentary Support Group for Breast Cancer was presented.
- The tracking and evaluation of the NBCC's *National directory of hospital based services for women with breast cancer* continued.
- Distribution of the *Breast Fax* and *Clinical Update* newsletters and the Breast Cancer Network Australia newsletter insert, *From the Source* continued.
- Ita Buttrose AO OBE, accepted an invitation to chair the Women's Advisory Network.
- The *Healthy breasts* consumer booklet were translated into Chinese and Vietnamese.

Monitoring breast cancer control nationally.

- A report about the incidence, size, grade and surgical treatment of ductal carcinoma in situ in NSW from 1995-2000 was finalised.
- A study to examine the presentation of women with breast cancer recurrence was completed.
- Summaries of breast cancer facts were developed for inclusion on the NBCC website.
- A national trial of a feedback mechanism to pathologists reporting on breast specimens was conducted.

Improve outcomes for women with ovarian cancer by using an evidence-based approach to prevention and risk, early detection, treatment and support.

- The NBCC's *Ovarian cancer program* website, was launched; www.ovariancancerprogram.org.au
- A report about *Risk factors for ovarian cancer* was commissioned.
- The *Clinical practice guidelines for the management of epithelial ovarian cancer*, a joint NBCC and Australian Cancer Network initiative, were submitted to NHMRC for approval.
- A new consumer resource, *A guide for women with ovarian cancer*, is being developed.
- A guide for health professionals about the diagnostic pathway for ovarian cancer is being developed.
- The electronic newsletter *Ovarian e-upd@te* was distributed monthly.



NATIONAL BREAST CANCER CENTRE

The National Breast Cancer Centre (NBCC) is Australia's peak body for breast and ovarian cancer control. The NBCC works with women, health professionals, cancer organisations, researchers and governments to improve the management of breast and ovarian cancer and the well-being of women with these diseases. The NBCC aims to improve health outcomes for women with breast and ovarian cancer by ensuring that wherever they live, women receive the best possible care.

The NBCC was established in 1995. It is a company limited by guarantee, and governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Federal Minister for Health and Ageing. Its main source of funding is the Australian Government.

THANKS

We would like to thank all of the individuals and organisations who donated funds and support to assist in the work of the NBCC during 2003. In particular:

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