

Diane is in safe hands



Diane Berki, 54, went for a routine breast screen where she was told there were two lumps and a lymph node that looked abnormal. Her biopsy results revealed Stage III melanoma.

Within a week she was at MIA under the expert care of Professor Andrew Spillane. The gene mutation in her melanoma made her a perfect candidate for an MIA-led clinical trial of a combination of targeted therapy and immunotherapy given before surgery called NeoTrio, so Professor Spillane referred her to his colleague, MIA Co-Medical Director Professor Georgina Long.

"I can't thank Professor Spillane, Professor Long, Jane, my Clinical Trial Coordinator, and the MIA team enough. I couldn't be in better hands."

In the six weeks after starting treatment, Diane's largest tumour shrank from 40mm to 8mm, and when it was analysed after her surgery, just 5% of the melanoma was still present.

"I feel like a big weight has come off my shoulders. There is always that

thought in the back of your head – what if it comes back? – but hopefully it will stay away."

"My life has been saved and I am determined to make the most of every day."

After a car accident some years ago, walking for long periods is difficult for Diane. However, that didn't stop her signing up for this year's Picton Melanoma March, where she raised over \$1800 and was the highest fundraiser at the Picton event.

"Now, it's all about giving back as much as I can."



To support MIA's life saving research please donate now at melanoma.org.au

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Welcome to our Winter edition of Momentum.

Winter is upon us, but even as we focus more on staying warm than staying out of the sun, we can't become complacent. Being sun safe should be a way of life, regardless of the season. At MIA, winter is a time for us to consolidate our research effort and strengthen and build our community and healthcare education programs.

In this edition we are proud to highlight our ground-breaking research which dominated at the recent ASCO international oncology conference. We are also proud to be launching our SunSafe Student Ambassador Program across the eastern seaboard and I invite all relevant high schools to register to take part.

I would like to thank all our patients and their families, our donors, our corporate partners, and our wonderful volunteer committees for making this year's *Melanoma March* campaign the most successful ever. Featuring 23 family friendly March events, our first ever corporate event, as well as *Jay's Longest Melanoma March*, we covered every Australian state and territory, raised more money and involved more participants than ever before. I am truly humbled by this support, which not only fuels our research effort but also fuels our resolve to keep moving forward in our quest for zero deaths from melanoma. We simply couldn't do it without you. I am also delighted to have received many responses to our Supporter Survey and look forward to sharing insights with you in our next edition.

Finally, I am delighted to highlight our story on page 3, featuring our wonderful ambassador and benefactor, Kay Van Norton Poche AO, on her recent Order of Australia award, recognising her distinguished services to Indigenous Health and medical research.

Matthew Browne
Chief Executive Officer
Melanoma Institute Australia



Research Successes

We are exceptionally proud of our research and clinical team which took centre stage at the American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting in Chicago recently, with the largest contingent of presenters from one institution. Each member is pushing forward the treatment landscape for our patients, edging us closer to our goal of zero deaths from melanoma.

A highlight was the presentation by Dr Inês Da Silva at the Clinical Science Symposium focusing on patients whose response did not match what would be predicted by analysis of their melanoma tissue. These patients are crucial in increasing our understanding of therapy resistance and response, helping us find new treatments that will work for patients who currently don't respond.

Our current pathology fellows, Dr Teresa Bailey and Dr Andrew Colebach recently presented at the 43rd Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australian Division of the International Academy of Pathology. Their presentations – Dr Bailey's on molecular margins and recurrence of acral melanoma and Dr Colebach's on molecular genomics of melanocytic naevi – were outstanding highlights of their research.

We have recently had some groundbreaking research published in the prestigious peer-reviewed journal *The Lancet*, including a paper outlining the outcome of the OpACIN-Neo trial. This international collaboration found the ideal dosing schedule of ipilimumab and nivolumab for resected Stage III melanoma patients that produces good response with less toxicity.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome to MIA Dr Iris Bartula, who will lead our Psychosocial Research. Her years of experience in clinical psychology and her passion for research that changes outcomes for cancer patients and their loved ones will be an asset for our team.

Finally, we are bidding a fond farewell to Professor Graham Mann, a valued faculty member, former Research Director and Chair of MIA's Research Committee. On behalf of everyone here at MIA, we thank him for his many years of commitment to MIA, congratulate him on all that he has achieved and wish him well in this next stage of his career.

Professors Georgina Long and Richard Scolyer
Co-Medical Directors
Melanoma Institute Australia

Melanoma March Success

This year's *Melanoma March* campaign was our most successful yet.

Featuring 23 family friendly March events, our first ever corporate March event with Google, and *Jay's Longest Melanoma March* from Adelaide to Sydney, this year's campaign attracted some 8,000 participants and raised over \$1.4 million.

We could not have achieved this level of awareness, participation, and fundraising without the support of our Principal Partner, Ricky Richards, our corporate supporters SunSense, Kensington Parry, and Toyota Australia, and our partner organisations melanomaWA, Australian Melanoma Research Foundation, and Skin & Cancer Foundation Inc. We could not operate and deliver these events without the time, effort, and dedication of our 23 *Melanoma March* volunteer committees, *Jay's Longest Melanoma March* volunteer committee and the wonderful committee for the Gala Ball held at the conclusion of the walk. Special thanks must also be given to our

generous fundraisers, donors and event participants. Your contributions will help us achieve our mission of zero deaths from melanoma.

Funds raised through our *Melanoma March* family friendly events will support a national collaborative research project called The Personalised Immunotherapy Project that will allow researchers and clinicians to personalise immunotherapies for patients – in essence, to match the treatment to the tumour.

Funds raised through *Jay's Longest Melanoma March* will support a world class melanoma research project, the ABC-X trial, for patients whose melanoma has spread to the brain. In this trial, Stage IV melanoma patients will be recruited to test if adding radiation to immunotherapy further increases response and progression free survival rates.



Thanks again to all involved!

We look forward to you joining us again in 2020.



A round of applause for Kay Van Norton Poche AO

Congratulations to Kay Van Norton Poche AO, ambassador and benefactor for Melanoma Institute Australia, who has received an Order of Australia for her distinguished service to the community as a benefactor and supporter of Indigenous health and medical research initiatives.

We would like to thank Mrs Van Norton Poche AO for continuously inspiring others in the fight against melanoma. "I am a caring and passionate supporter of all melanoma patients and those who have lost loved ones to melanoma, and all who are working so hard in the research and treatment necessary to wipe this from the face of the earth," Mrs Van Norton Poche AO said.



Cate Campbell and Sophie Monk have joined the fight against melanoma!

Cate Campbell is a world record holder, Olympian and national swimming champion. A mole on her arm was removed during a skin check, which turned out to be Stage I melanoma. Cate's melanoma diagnosis inspired her to advocate for the importance of sun safety and skin checks.

After having a close friend diagnosed with melanoma, and watching her dad battle skin cancer, media personality Sophie Monk is also determined to use her profile to warn other young Aussies of the risk of sun exposure.

SunSafe Student Ambassador Program



Ensuring teenagers are aware of the danger of melanoma and the importance of sun safety is the mission of our new education program for secondary school students.

The one-day SunSafe Student Ambassador Program is designed to meet learning outcomes for the Year 8 and 9 PDHPE curriculum. Representative students from each school will learn what melanoma is and how to prevent it, while also developing their presentation skills through a workshop with a presentation skills expert. The students will then craft their personalised sun safe presentation to take back to their school. This free program will run in six locations across NSW, ACT and QLD.

To register, visit melanoma.org.au/sunSAFE

Date	Location	Venue
28 Aug	Sydney	The Poche Centre, Melanoma Institute Australia
4 Sep	Newcastle	Newcastle High School
13 Sep	Canberra	Campbell High School
18 Sep	Western Sydney	Westmead Institute
11 Oct	Brisbane	St Aidan's Anglican Girls School
18 Oct	Townsville	St Margaret Mary's College



Keeping up with melanoma: free education for health professionals

Melanoma Institute Australia has launched a free e-learning portal to educate healthcare professionals about the latest advances in melanoma diagnosis and treatment to ensure best practice and equity of care for melanoma patients around the country. The new online education portal is designed for healthcare professionals including specialists, dermatologists, GPs and nurses. It provides accredited videos and comprehensive training modules relating to the rapidly changing melanoma diagnostic and treatment landscape.

Melanoma Institute Australia Co-Medical Director, Professor Georgina Long, said the e-learning portal would ultimately improve melanoma patient care and outcomes within Australia and internationally. MIA Co-Medical Director, Professor Richard Scolyer, added, "The portal will ensure healthcare professionals have free 24/7 access to the latest advances in melanoma clinical practice and research, regardless of where they are located."

Help us spread the word! Tell your healthcare team to check out this free resource at melanomaeducation.org.au

MIA Speakers' Hub

Our Speakers' Hub presenters have had a busy first half of the year with engagements covering four of our great states - from Sydney NSW, to Carrum Downs VIC, Kwinana near Perth and Carina in QLD.

MIA's speakers have featured at an array of events from play groups to senior's information sessions as well as schools, clubs, corporates and community fundraisers. All have been moved by the many personal stories while also learning valuable information about melanoma and sun safety. Requests for our speakers continue to come in regularly, with some events even booking a year in advance!

If you, your club, or even workplace would like one of our Speakers' Hub members to share their story and provide an overview about the life-saving research at Melanoma Institute Australia, please get in touch at melanoma.org.au.

Day in the life of Shahn Coburn

Shahn Coburn is MIA's surgical Clinical Nurse Consultant. Based at The Poche Centre, Shahn works with our surgeons to ensure patients get the very best care from the moment they walk through the door, through their post-surgery follow-up and beyond.

"My typical week includes assisting surgeons with minor procedures, wound dressings and patient education," Shahn said. "My role also involves liaising with community nurses, GPs and other care providers to ensure patients are being followed up appropriately and their wounds are being properly managed."

Shahn is also heavily involved in education projects for staff at MIA and external healthcare providers.

"I help with the running of our Friday multidisciplinary team meetings, making sure that we have all the information necessary to assess and make clinical recommendations about complex cases. I'm also currently working with MIA's Education team on our annual Nurse Conference that helps

nurses to understand the intricacies of melanoma, from detection through to treatment of advanced disease."

With such a varied role, no two days look the same for Shahn.

"Each day is different for me which I love about this job," she added. "The best part, though, is working in a team where everyone is working tirelessly towards the same thing – better patient outcomes. Working with such a fantastic team motivates me to show up every day for the patients."

Melanoma Institute Australia invites all nurses to attend the 2019 Nurse Conference: Melanoma in Practice on 1st August 2019.

To register, please visit: www.melanomaeducation.org.au



“Working with such a fantastic team motivates me to show up every day for the patients.”

SHAHN COBURN,
MIA Clinical Nurse Consultant

Danny is proud to be a Melanoma Life Saver

When Danny Strosberg noticed dizziness, daily headaches, and started to lose his vocabulary, he knew something was wrong.

A CT scan in May 2014 revealed an egg-sized melanoma in his brain.

Danny underwent surgery to remove the tumour followed by six months of treatment. After a number of other tumours had appeared throughout his body, he was placed on an immunotherapy clinical trial. It proved to be life saving.

"I had a complete response within about six months. All of my tumours disappeared."

Wanting to give back, Danny became a Melanoma Life Saver.

"I feel it's important to support research into vanquishing melanoma for the sake

of thousands of cancer sufferers across the world. The advances in melanoma research are being translated to other cancers, and the potential benefits are limitless. I literally owe my life to the work that is being done at MIA.

Making a monthly donation is convenient for me. It comes out automatically; I didn't have to think about it once it was set up."

To become a Melanoma Life Saver to help people like Danny, please select a 'per month' option on your donation form. Thank you!

Danny remains clear of disease, and has an appreciation for the importance of friendships, family and work-life balance. He works four days a week as an Environmental Professional and enjoys yoga, surfing and time with his wife Lisa and daughter Gabby.



Emma Betts' legacy will live on

"I'm the age Emma was when she passed away. It almost feels unfair, that she has to not be here for me to be able to do this. But I will use this opportunity to push as hard as I can to reach our collective goal of zero deaths from melanoma." – **JORDAN CONWAY**, PhD Student

Conversations with one of MIA's clinicians-turned-researchers, Dr Inês Da Silva, inspired Jordan Conway to do his PhD with Melanoma Institute Australia.

Jordan's research will look at mechanisms of resistance to immunotherapy, specifically in melanoma patients with liver metastases. Up to 50% of melanoma patients are either innately resistant to current therapies or develop acquired resistance throughout the course of their treatments.

Jordan wants to know why the liver seems to be the gatekeeper of resistance. He aims to determine if it is the site of metastasis that creates a poor whole body response, or something within the biology of the

tumour that causes the melanoma to metastasise to the liver and make it resistant to therapy.

Two years after the passing of Emma Betts, her parents, Leon and Tamra, are determined to continue her legacy. Melanoma Institute Australia is delighted to honour Emma by creating the Emma Betts PhD Scholarship, to ensure the next generation of young researchers, with the same vision as Emma, are supported in their work.

"I'm so grateful to receive the inaugural Emma Betts PhD Scholarship," said Jordan. "This scholarship means that I can devote the next three years of my life to this research."



“I'm so grateful to receive the inaugural Emma Betts PhD Scholarship... This scholarship means that I can devote the next three years of my life to this research.”

JORDAN CONWAY, PhD Student.



Introducing Dr Iris Bartula

Psychosocial Research has an important role in the changing melanoma landscape.

It has played, and will continue to play, a critical role in melanoma prevention, treatment and care. We sat down with Dr Iris Bartula, who will lead our Psychosocial Research at Melanoma Institute Australia to chat about her new role, her plans for the organisation and the importance of social care.

As a Senior Lecturer at The University of Sydney and a clinical psychologist at Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, Dr Bartula has a myriad of experience helping a wide range of people affected by a diagnosis of cancer. Her passion lies in researching issues affecting people diagnosed with melanoma across their cancer journey – from diagnosis and treatment to survivorship, palliative care and end of life.

She will be leading the research here at MIA that will create and disseminate knowledge, translate the evidence, and increase the capacity of our psychosocial research. This initiative will assist MIA in integrating psychosocial support into routine clinical practice.

This new model of service will also include the enhancement and expansion of our support groups. Ultimately, the focus is to promote hope, reduce anxiety and improve the overall quality of life for melanoma patients. MIA provides counselling and therapeutic support services to help patients and their loved ones affected by melanoma. Please ask your treating medical practitioner or get in touch with us to learn more.



Rainbow shines over Joshua Brown Memorial Golf Day

Friday 7th June 2019 was a significant day for the Brown family. It marked one year since their son and brother Joshua lost his battle with melanoma. He was only 32.

To celebrate Joshua's life and reflect on the first anniversary of his passing, Joshua's family organised the inaugural Joshua Brown Memorial Golf Day at Shelly Beach Golf Club. The day was a huge success with over 100 people turning up to show their support and celebrate the life of a wonderful young man. Those in attendance were treated to 18 holes of golf, a morning sausage sizzle, lunch and lots of prizes. The Joshua Brown Memorial Golf Day raised over \$22,000 for melanoma research, a figure exceeding all expectations.

A special thank you to Joshua's father Stephen and his brother Adam for their time and effort in organising the event. Melanoma Institute Australia would also like to acknowledge the entire Brown family for their courage and generosity for hosting the fundraising event on such an emotional day. They have allowed us to take a further step toward achieving our goal of zero deaths from melanoma.

If you or your workplace are interested in fundraising for MIA please contact **02 9911 7326** or email **fundraise@melanoma.org.au**

Leave your lasting legacy

Melanoma Institute Australia's purpose is to prevent, treat and cure melanoma.

If you share our vision, please consider including a gift for Melanoma Institute Australia in your Will.

Your gift could fund a new program or special technology — accelerating our progress to end melanoma.



Please call **Gabriella Lang** on **02 9911 7239** or email **gabriella.lang@melanoma.org.au** for a confidential discussion.

Community events

Upcoming Running Events

Run Melbourne

Run Melbourne will once again fill the streets on Sunday 28th July with more than 20,000 people running past some of Melbourne's most famous landmarks. Contact fundraise@melanoma.org.au to participate.

City2Surf

Sydney's favourite sporting event and the world's largest fun run is taking place on Sunday 11th August. Contact fundraise@melanoma.org.au to participate.

Upcoming Golf Days

Why not make your next Golf Day a fundraiser for MIA! Join our dedicated golfers already teeing off to help end melanoma. Upcoming Golf Days include:

Bayview Ladies Gala Charity Day

Thursday 25th July at Bayview Golf Club

Randwick Golf Club Charity Day

Monday 19th August at Randwick Golf Club

North Queensland Air-conditioning & Refrigeration Golf Day

Friday 30th August at Rowes Bay Golf Club



David Holmes

Corporate & Community Partnerships Manager
Melanoma Institute Australia
T + 61 2 9911 7326
fundraise@melanoma.org.au

Michael celebrates 30 years cancer free!

Growing up on a farm in northern NSW, Michael Egan knew very little about melanoma and remembers being sunburnt often as a child and teenager.

In 1987 when Michael was 48 years old, his sister noticed a black spot on his face. He had it checked by his local doctor, with pathology showing it was a melanoma that needed to be removed. Michael was referred to Professor John Thompson AO at what is now Melanoma Institute Australia, for immediate surgery.

"I have been cancer free for 30 years now," said Michael. "But even though three decades have passed, I never become complacent and still have annual check ups at The Poche Centre."

His own surgery wasn't the end of Michael's melanoma journey. His wife of 29 years, Anne, was also diagnosed with melanoma, with hers also successfully treated.

Michael and Anne, who have eight children and 14 grandchildren between them, have a renewed appreciation for making the most of life. After retiring from his role as a school principal in Bathurst, Michael's passion is woodwork and he makes and restores rocking horses. Both Michael and Anne are also heavily involved in organising Teachers' College reunions – even though their college days were 61 years ago!

But perhaps most importantly, they are fierce advocates for living a sun safe life.

"We use sunscreen liberally and never spend more than 30 minutes on a beach," said Michael. "Our health is just too precious."



“Even though three decades have passed, I never become complacent and still have annual check ups at The Poche Centre.”

MICHAEL EGAN,
melanoma survivor

Yes, I want to support Melanoma Institute Australia

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I am considering including a gift to Melanoma Institute Australia in my Will.

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Please return this form with your donation to Melanoma Institute Australia, PO Box 1479, Crows Nest NSW 1585.

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