ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

OVARIAN CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION

OCRF ANNUAL REPORT
www.ocrf.com.au
ARBN 130 949 834 | ABN 24 898 129 866
Incorporated in Victoria (Registration No A0039603U) Members' liability limited.

CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I am, once again, extremely proud to present the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation (OCRF) Annual Report for 2019-20. We 'turned 20' this year, and despite the impact of COVID-19, we have much to celebrate and be grateful for.

We celebrate the fact that despite the impact of the pandemic on our revenue for this financial year, we have been able to continue supporting our ovarian cancer researchers in their vital work, be it research on finding new and effective treatments, or finding an early detection test for this deadly disease. Our ability to maintain research support is due to the careful financial management of our reserves, together with the fact that our CEO, Lucinda Nolan, runs a 'tight ship', and focuses on keeping our expenses down, so we can spend more on research funding. I thank Lucinda and the OCRF team, who have truly done a remarkable job in the difficult circumstances we all found ourselves in.

We also celebrate the delivery of our State of the Nation in Ovarian Cancer:Research Audit. This landmark report is the first ever national audit focused on ovarian cancer research. Views from clinicians and researchers across Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America were incorporated in the audit, resulting in a report that clearly informs where we are at, and what the future research priorities and funding should be to save women's lives. In the words of our digital 'I will survive' campaign, the next generation deserves better. This landmark report is a great launching pad to ensure our girls today have a brighter outlook tomorrow.

We are so very grateful for the unwavering support of our corporate partners and sponsors, who themselves were financially impacted by the pandemic, and to our ever growing team of Ambassadors, donors and volunteers who have thrown themselves behind our campaigns, and contributed, in no small part, to our ability to keep working towards that glorious future where every woman, everywhere, is free from the threat of ovarian cancer. I thank each and every one of you.

Lucinda and the team were, as always, very well supported this year by our hardworking and highly talented Committee of Management, who remain dedicated to the cause. I thank them for never losing focus, as I do the many sub-committee members who so generously give up their time and never say no.

The 20 year old OCRF should justifiably be proud of herself - she has survived, and in fact in so many ways, has thrived, despite having endured a year like no other.

- Julie Toop, CHAIRPERSON

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

2019/20 in focus

The OCRF enjoyed a great start to the 2019/20 Financial Year, with significant increases in revenue and our greatest ever investment in ovarian cancer research. Unfortunately, by the time 2020 came along, Australia was hit by bushfires across most of the country. Then COVID-19 arrived, impacting our lives and livelihoods in a way never seen before. It was devastating to see the myriad of financial, social, and psychological impacts on our community members, particularly those living in Victoria, where pandemic restrictions were longer and stricter.

The conditions many of us were living in brought the lives of women with ovarian cancer into stark relief. Undergoing ovarian cancer treatment, such as chemotherapy, leaves women with weakened immune systems. They are advised to stay home, avoid people, sanitise their hands and socially distance. In other words, live in a lock-down pandemic environment for many periods of their life. This experience has left me and OCRF staff more sensitive and mindful of how women experience this disease and how best we can support and advocate on their behalf.

Pandemic response and impact

Due to our strong financial position, the OCRF was able to navigate without standing down or reducing staff numbers. We immediately implemented our business continuity and pandemic response plans and all staff commenced working from home full time. We reduced expenses as far as possible and relinquished our office lease to ensure all available funds could be directed to research funding. While our financial position remains strong and sustainable, the pandemic has critically impacted global and national economies, as well as creating uncertain times for retail and community sectors. As we are small and agile, we have been able to adapt to the circumstances and change our focus and activities to suit our environment. We are proud of our staff, our supporters, and our community for staying the course and stepping up in these circumstances.

Looking to the future

One of our greatest achievements for the year was our commissioning of the State of the Nation in Ovarian Cancer: Research Audit. The report provides clear, ambitious but achievable goals to improve the survivability rates for women with ovarian cancer – now and into the future. On the back of the State of the Nation report, we will pursue greater funding for ovarian cancer research from Government, the community and from organisations such as ours that are dedicated to pursuing better outcomes for women with ovarian cancer. We have a responsibility to advocate for these women who cannot always advocate for themselves, as we know research is critical and time is a luxury these women do not have. We look forward to announcing further progress towards achieving our goals and improving the lives of all women facing an ovarian cancer diagnosis - in our 2020/21 Annual Report.

- Lucinda Nolan, CEO

OUR IMPACT - 2019/20 AT A GLANCE

Leadership in ovarian cancer research

- Investment in research increased by $634,210 (43% YOY)
- 25 new grant applications
- Exciting progress in project findings (e.g. Precision Medicine treatment effectiveness)

Highly Influential

- Commissioning the State of the Nation Research Audit
- Setting out an ambitious vision for a national ovarian cancer funding program
- Research partnership with University of Melbourne
- Increasing our reach (our campaigns reached 11.9 million people via outdoor advertising, radio and social media)

Building great networks

- We leveraged over $8,000,000 million additional funding for ovarian cancer research via collaboration with other cancer agencies
- Generated $4.66 million in Probono Support

Striving to be the best

Continued income growth

Frocktober up by	41%	PayPal donations up	306%
Community fundraising up	50%	Regular giving up by	12%
Online donations up	389%	Trusts and Foundations up	34%

Investment in digital transformation

Striving to be the best

Welcoming new supporters

New Ambassadors

Abbey Way
Channel 7 presenter

Nadia Bartel
Fashion entrepreneur

Morgan Mitchell
Olympic athlete

Miranda Tapsell
Actress

Jules Sebastian
Presenter & lifestyle influencer

New Corporate supporters

AFT Pharmaceuticals
Maxigesic campaign

Skip
Sponsorship of Silver Lining Ride

Digga Australia
Annual support program

New Volunteers with expert skills

Journalism

Legal and regulatory compliance

Project management

Strategic communications and marketing

WHO WE ARE

The OCRF is the largest non-governmental funder of ovarian cancer research in Australia, and the major funder overall of research into early detection and diagnosis. The OCRF has a clear research strategy and plan to significantly shift the current low survival rates for women with ovarian cancer.

With the support of our international Scientific Advisory Committee and the input of our Consumer Representative Panel, we fund promising and innovative research that will have the greatest impact on the greatest number of women.

We acknowledge that investment in research cannot just focus on future gains, but needs to focus equally on research areas that will assist women today, as well as significant investment to save the next generation of women. We will continue to work with governments and the community to achieve this.

OUR VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The OCRF wants to ensure a future where ovarian cancer no longer threatens women's well-being. While there have been many advances in our understanding of the basic biology of ovarian cancers, we have been unable to meaningfully improve survivability rates of ovarian cancer patients.

Our funding is directed to research that is focused on having the greatest impact on women's lives, both in the future, and in the here and now. We are fulfilling our vision and mission by focusing on extending women's lives, through research that explores individualised and targeted therapeutic approaches, and research that explores how to save women's lives through early detection, prevention and cure.

Vision

Every woman, everywhere – free from the threat of Ovarian Cancer.

Mission

Funding innovative ovarian cancer research to save women's lives through early detection and personalised treatment.

Objectives

- Develop and implement an early detection program for ovarian cancer that is non-invasive, highly accurate and widely available.
- Improve the mortality rate, management, and long-term survival of women with ovarian cancer.
- Attract and fund the most innovative and skilled researchers.

OUR ORGANISATIONAL GOVERNANCE & STRUCTURE

OUR CHALLENGES

What we know about Ovarian Cancer

SURVIVAL RATES ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY IMPROVING

IN 2020 MORE THAN **1,800** AUSTRALIAN WOMEN WILL BE DIAGNOSED WITH OVARIAN CANCER.

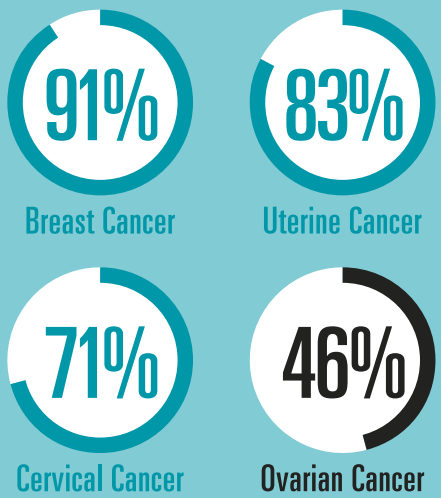
BY 2025 ONLY 830 OF THESE WOMEN WILL STILL BE ALIVE.

AN INCREASING NUMBER OF WOMEN ARE AFFECTED

OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS AN ESTIMATED 14,000 AUSTRALIAN WOMEN WILL LOSE THEIR LIVES TO OVARIAN CANCER.

PROGRESS HAS NOT KEPT PACE WITH OTHER CANCERS

FIVE-YEAR SURVIVAL RATE



EARLY DETECTION & RECURRENCE PREVENTION ARE CRITICAL

- One woman now dies every 8 hours
- When found early, patients have over 90% chance of survival past 5 years
- However only around 19% of new cases are diagnosed at these early stages
- Women who carry a mutation in their BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes have a 20% greater risk of developing ovarian cancer than women with normal BRCA genes. However less than 20% of all women with ovarian cancer have a genetic link to the disease
- More than 80% of women will experience a recurrence of the cancer
- Chemoresistance is responsible for treatment failure and mortality for more than 90% of patients with advanced stage cancer

The reality of an ovarian cancer diagnosis

Ovarian cancer remains one of the most lethal and least understood cancers affecting women in Australia and around the world. Women with ovarian cancer face a challenging outlook, with 5-year survival rates of only 46% today. Sadly, this survival rate is lower than the 5-year rate for all cancers in 1975, when the modern cancer research era began.

Sadly this survival rate is lower than the 5-year rate for all cancers in 1975, when the modern cancer research era began.

Treatment for ovarian cancer has not changed significantly over the last thirty years and predominantly involves surgery and chemotherapy. First line therapy with surgery and chemotherapy results in complete remission in more than 80% of cases, meaning there is no evidence of cancer on imaging or in blood tests. Despite this, more than 80% of women experience a recurrence of the cancer. If recurrence of ovarian cancer is suspected, blood and imaging tests will be conducted to determine the extent of cancer and to develop a treatment plan. While sometimes surgery may be possible, most commonly chemotherapy is administered.

With repeated relapse and chemotherapy treatments, the cancer will change and will eventually become resistant to chemotherapy. **Chemoresistance is responsible for treatment failure and mortality for more than 90% of patients with advanced stage cancer**. While different chemotherapy agents can be used, cancers will generally become resistant to all chemotherapy drugs.

The reality of ovarian cancer research funding

Unquestionably, investment in cancer research translates into significant improvements in survival. Survival rates across all cancers improved 44% between 1975 and 2015, transforming many cancers from terminal illnesses into chronic diseases or preventing the occurrence of cancer altogether. The lack of breakthroughs for ovarian cancer is largely a product of an inadequate understanding of the underlying biology, which in turn is associated with a history of underfunding of research relative to other major cancers. Historically, low levels of funding can be attributed to a focus on the relative rarity of ovarian cancer rather than a focus on the lethality of the disease, and also to the lack of survivor advocates to sustain campaigns for research funding. As a consequence, while many cancers have seen survival rates substantially improve over the modern cancer research era, ovarian cancer has not.

The need for increased research funding to address low-survival cancers has been increasingly recognised by developed nation governments. In the United States, for example, the federal government passed legislation in 2012 mandating investment to improve survival for so-called recalcitrant cancers. This action was echoed in Australia in 2017 with the Senate Select Committee similarly calling for urgent investment to increase survival outcomes for low-survival cancers to 50% by 2027.

Funding for ovarian cancer research has been increasing over time, at an average annual rate of 13% from 2010 to 2019. The Australian Government's commitment to ovarian cancer research of $16.2 million in 2020 has contributed to a 58% increase in total funding on 2019 levels, reversing a downward trend of -1.0% growth from 2016 to 2019.

Research funding for ovarian cancer demands an urgent review. The success stories of other cancer-types clearly show that realising improvements in survival outcomes requires high-impact research across a range of research areas. Research is the only way to improve our understanding of disease biology, reduce disease incidence, expand treatment options, and detect cancer early, when it is easiest to treat.

OUR CHALLENGES

Covid-19 Impacts

The latter half of the 2019/20 Financial Year brought significant challenges to all Australians with the impacts of COVID-19. The OCRF was very mindful of potential and real impacts on our supporters, fund raisers, corporate sponsors, our Ambassadors, and our staff.

The Not-For-Profit sector was especially vulnerable. A report by Social Ventures Australia alongside the Centre for Social Impact in June 2020 modelled that if charities suffered from a 20% drop in revenue due to COVID-19, then 17% of Australian charities would be at high risk of being forced to wind up within a six-month period. A 20% loss in revenue could also result in over 200,000 jobs being lost due to closures and cost-cutting efforts by charities. The ripple effects are widespread and hard to model and assess as we find ourselves moving into a new Covid-19 normal.

Being a small and nimble organisation, we were able to adapt quickly and immediately moved to a working from home model, with the necessary occupational health, safety, and welfare considerations. Our business continuity plan was effective and successful, and we bolstered our work from home arrangements with new software to cover key processes when working remotely. Similarly, we reviewed our proposed 2020/21 Business Plan, budget estimates, modelling and cash flow analysis and worked at ways to significantly limit our expenditure where possible, given the unfavourable economic forecasts. Comprehensive pre-planning and financial considerations have left the OCRF in a financially viable and sustainable position which enables us to continue to fund the most promising and innovative ovarian cancer research available.

OUR STRATEGY

Leadership in Ovarian Cancer Research

Research excellence and attracting the best of the best

OCRF Research Plan

RESEARCH IMPACTS

Improving Survival **Decreasing the Threat**

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Treatments

Improving treatment options to increase survival rates.

Management of Recurrence

Better management of recurrent disease to enhance survival and quality of life.

Early Detection

Saving lives through early diagnosis.

Prevention

Reducing disease prevalence through preventative research.

THE GAME CHANGERS

Having the Greatest Impact on the Greatest Number of Women

RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

TARGET

The most lethal ovarian cancer subtypes.

SUSTAIN

Long term research funding to attract and retain the best and brightest to the field.

COLLABORATE

Connecting funding, resources, expertise, data and biospecimens to promote research.

DISSEMINATE

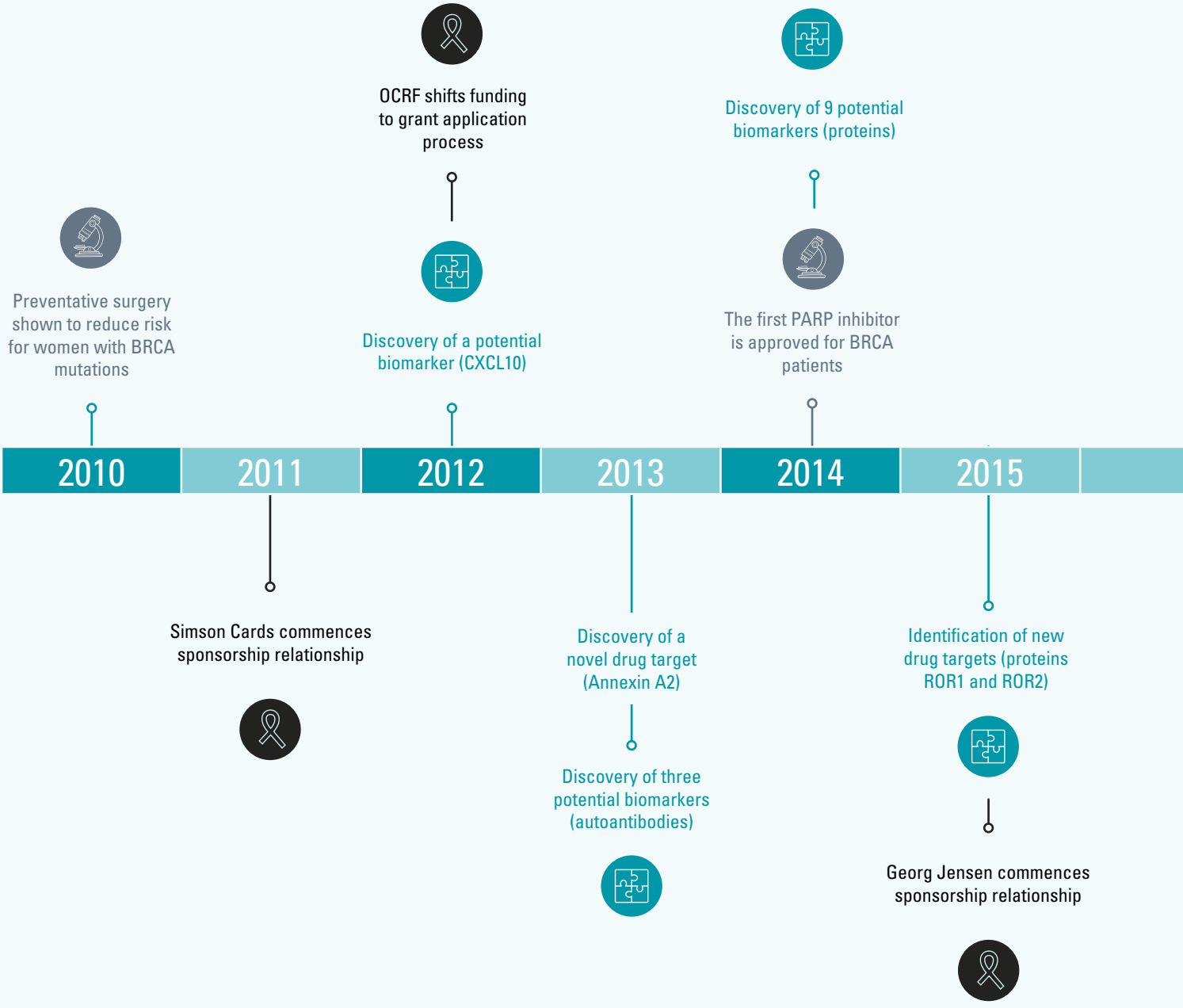
All research results, new findings and evidence-based practices to the research community.

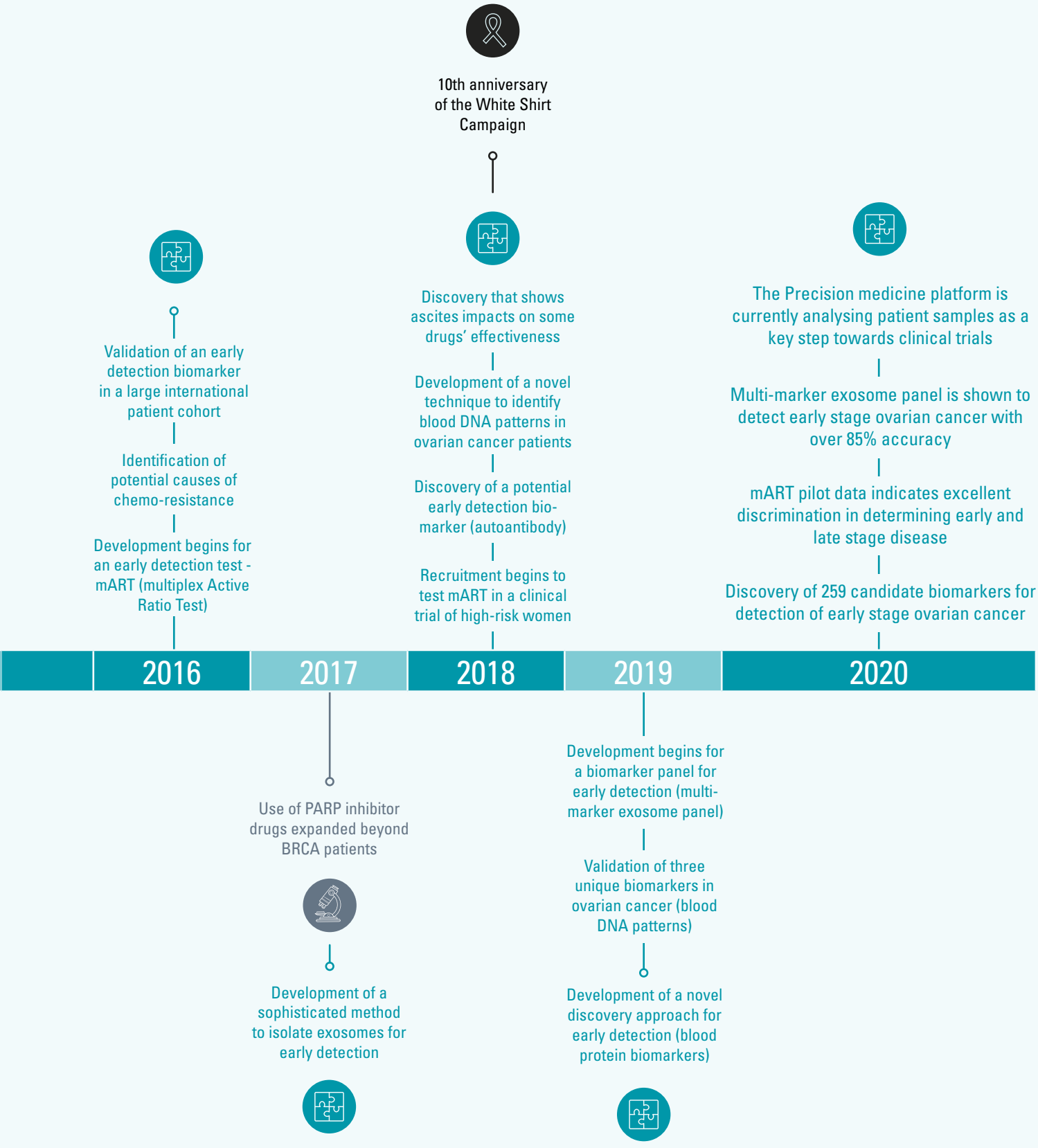
Our Impact to Date

MAJOR EVENTS IN OCRF HISTORY

MAJOR EVENTS IN OvCa RESEARCH

OCRF RESEARCH OUTCOMES




10th anniversary of the White Shirt Campaign
Validation of an early detection biomarker in a large international patient cohort
Identification of potential causes of chemo-resistance
Development begins for an early detection test - mART (multiplex Active Ratio Test)
Discovery that shows ascites impacts on some drugs' effectiveness
Development of a novel technique to identify blood DNA patterns in ovarian cancer patients
Discovery of a potential early detection bio-marker (autoantibody)
Recruitment begins to test mART in a clinical trial of high-risk women
The Precision medicine platform is currently analysing patient samples as a key step towards clinical trials
Multi-marker exosome panel is shown to detect early stage ovarian cancer with over 85% accuracy
mART pilot data indicates excellent discrimination in determining early and late stage disease
Discovery of 259 candidate biomarkers for detection of early stage ovarian cancer
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
Use of PARP inhibitor drugs expanded beyond BRCA patients
Development of a sophisticated method to isolate exosomes for early detection
Development begins for a biomarker panel for early detection (multi-marker exosome panel)
Validation of three unique biomarkers in ovarian cancer (blood DNA patterns)
Development of a novel discovery approach for early detection (blood protein biomarkers)

2019/20 Projects with Latest Progress Updates

Given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on some of our funded researchers, the OCRF provided appropriate support and consideration in terms of flexibility with original timelines and any budgetary implications, as outlined below:

Dr Andrew Stephens, Hudson Institute of Medical Research (Year 1)

The Precision Medicine Program in Ovarian Cancer (PMPOC) - $120,033

This project is focused on developing personalised therapeutic strategies for every ovarian cancer patient by assessing patients' responses to over 2000 different drugs in the lab and predicting the best treatments for improved outcomes. Over time, this information can be used to further refine treatments and predict when treatment should be adapted to continue its effectiveness.

2019/20 Project Progress:

The PMPOC platform has been developed and validated and is currently running a pilot screening program to assess a small number of individual patients for unique drug sensitivities. Patient tumour samples are taken at primary diagnosis, and a specific cellular model (a patient "avatar") is created that defines their disease at that point in time.

At present, the program has identified two drugs that have the potential to improve chemotherapy outcomes, suggesting a rapid pathway to provide better disease suppression for existing patients.

Analyses of individual patient susceptibilities are ongoing. On conclusion of the pilot phase, the project team expects to proceed to formal clinical trials.

Associate Professor Yong Li, University of New South Wales (Year 1)

A chip-based blood test combining machine learning for early detection of ovarian cancer - $141,809 [1]

This project aims to develop an early detection test that women could either receive at their medical clinic or complete at home, made possible by a combination of new nanotechnology and artificial intelligence. It addresses a common concern in ovarian cancer research—finding reliable 'biomarkers' or indicators of disease—in a new and promising way.

2019/20 Project Progress:

This project has been delayed by 6 months and a full year update will be provided by December 2020.

Dr Maree Bilandzic, Hudson Institute of Medical Research (Year 2)

Therapeutic Targeting of the Leader Cell Population in Ovarian Cancer - $261,540

This project is investigating ways to destroy ovarian cancer leader cells, which are the cells responsible for leading the cancer attack on healthy tissue and chemoresistance. The project involves screening thousands of Food and Drug Administration-approved drugs not currently used to treat ovarian cancer to determine those that specifically target leader cells. This approach will ensure a rapid translation from research laboratory to treating specialists.

2019/20 Project Progress:

This year the project team has been able to define the "signature" of deadly ovarian cancer leader cells. By identifying this signature, they have been able to develop a leader cell specific panel. This panel provides a way to monitor patient response to chemotherapy, and disease resistance and relapse. They have screened a number of drugs on the pharmacy shelf to identify 26 drugs which are specific to leader cells. The project is on the way to providing evidence that these leader cell targeting drugs work to bolster current ovarian cancer treatments and the team hope then to move to clinical trials.

Associate Professor Pradeep Tanwar, University of Newcastle (Year 2)

Defining the roles of hormones in the pathogenesis of ovarian cancer - $188,759

This project will define the role of hormones in the initiation, progression and spread of ovarian cancer, and determine the effectiveness of drugs that mimic the anti-cancer activity of formulations contained in oral contraceptives. The aim is to develop an ovarian cancer prevention pill but differentiate it from birth control.

2019/20 Project Progress:

The project team developed a novel model which provided them with the power to mutate ovarian cancer originating cells and trace their fate. The results from this study will help the team to understand the development of this deadly disease. So far, they have tested the ability of the cells to clone and their hormone responsiveness. Further experiments to quantify the changes and the potential of cells to form metastatic cancer is underway.

Associate Professor Jason Lee, QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute (Year 2)

Targeting G9a methyltransferase to block metastasis and overcoming chemotherapy resistance - $97,940

This project is seeking to develop a new drug which can cause cell death in chemotherapy-resistant ovarian cancers, and additionally sensitise tumours to chemotherapy. The project will also develop technology to enable earlier detection of ovarian cancer recurrence using less-invasive monitoring by identifying molecular markers associated with treatment-resistant cancer that can be detected using a liquid biopsy.

2019/20 Project Progress:

The project team has been assessing a set of genes as novel biomarkers that has the potential to be used for the detection of ovarian cancer recurrence. In addition, they have made great progress toward testing a new drug that can stop the growth and spread of ovarian cancer cells using clinically relevant model systems. Currently, they are focusing their research in validating these results using patient samples to move the research findings closer to the clinic.

Dr Kristina Warton, University of New South Wales (Year 2)

Detection of ovarian tumour-specific DNA methylation in blood for the early diagnosis of ovarian cancer - $146,721

The project is using recent advances in molecular biology which have increased the sensitivity of DNA detection. The team has compared blood samples from women with and without ovarian cancer and identified a set of potential DNA changes that indicate the presence of an ovarian tumour. In this project, they will develop sensitive assays to detect these changes, and test them in a cohort of ovarian cancer patients and healthy controls. Changes that correctly identify which women have ovarian cancer will be incorporated into a blood test for ovarian cancer diagnosis.

2019/20 Project Progress:

The project team has been working to use cancer DNA that circulates in patient blood as a screening test for ovarian cancer. They started with a set of DNA regions that are potentially different in the blood of women with and without ovarian cancer, and filtered them through the first stage of test development to select those that have a DNA sequence compatible with creating a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test to detect them. PCR is a method widely used to rapidly make millions to billions of copies of a specific DNA sequence, allowing scientists to take a very small sample of DNA and amplify it to a large enough amount to study in detail. The team then used DNA modified to resemble cancer DNA to check whether the PCR reactions work in the lab, and how sensitive they are. Those PCR reactions that worked, and that were sensitive, are now being tested in patient samples.

Request for Consideration – the OCRF has consented to an extension in time (October 2020) for completion of the project.

Dr Carlos Salomon, University of Queensland (Year 3)

Validation of a Novel Exosomal Biomarker Panel for the Detection of Ovarian Cancer - Liquid Biopsies to Monitor the Oncogenic Transformation of The Ovary - $155,128

The aim of this study is to improve the diagnosis and in particular, early diagnosis of ovarian cancer and its treatment. The project aims to evaluate the use of circulating exosomes as an early biomarker of ovarian cancer and identify novel therapeutical targets to inhibit tumour growth.

2019/20 Project Progress:

Dr. Salomon's research targets this unmet need for an early diagnostic test, by investigating small vesicles produced by cells, which are known as exosomes. These exosomes can be likened to "bubbles" and have the extraordinary ability to capture a snapshot of what is going on inside the tumour cells. They can be tracked in the blood, and thus easily isolated. With the support of the OCRF, Dr. Salomon´s team has developed a test based on exosomes that can detect early stages of ovarian cancer with over 85% accuracy. That means that they can identify 8/10 women with early stage ovarian cancer. Currently, Dr Salomon´s project is in the phase of validating the test in a larger cohort of women, to determine the performance of the test.

Dr Sherry Wu, University of Queensland (Year 3)

Re-activating anti-tumour immunity by targeting N-MYC-Let7 axis in ovarian cancer - $83,704

The goal of this research is to investigate ways to enhance the activity of immune cells in our body such that they can start attacking ovarian tumour cells. This can ultimately lead to decreased recurrence rate and improve the efficacy of immune therapy to levels observed in other cancer types.

2019/20 Project Progress:

Effective immune therapy can significantly decrease recurrence rate and disease progression in ovarian cancer. Unfortunately, ovarian tumour cells produce a lot of factors that stop immune cells from working properly. Over the last funding period, the project team has developed a strategy to effectively inhibit these factors such that the body's "good" immune cells can work more effectively against ovarian cancer cells. They found that this treatment strategy significantly enhances the ability of "good" immune cells to interact with ovarian tumour cells. In addition, the treatment decreased the level of other cell types that typically inhibit effective immune response. This combined effect eventually led to significant decreases in tumour burden in two independent models of ovarian cancer. The team is very excited about these results and are currently investigating strategies to further enhance immune response against ovarian cancer. They hope that by figuring out how the therapy works, they will be able to predict which patient population is most likely to respond to this therapy. Ultimately, this research could significantly reduce recurrence rates in ovarian cancer and improve the responsiveness of ovarian tumours to immune therapy.

Request for Consideration – the OCRF has consented to an extension in time (February 2021) for completion of the project.

Dr Andrew N Stephens, Hudson Institute of Medical Research (Year 3)

Multiplex Active Ratio Test for the Detection of Early Stage Ovarian Cancer - $285, 341

This project continues the development of the "Active Ratio Test" (ART), a potential new approach to early stage ovarian cancer detection. ART measures cancer-specific modifications to a protein called CXCL10, as well as several other biomarkers, to identify the presence of cancers. Using ART together with samples obtained by cervicovaginal swab (CVS) – a procedure like the Pap smear – the project team have shown that ART provides excellent discrimination between patients with ovarian cancer versus those with benign disease.

2019/20 Project Progress:

Pilot data has demonstrated excellent discriminatory power for the ART in identifying patients with both early and late-stage disease against a confounding group of other (non-malignant) gynaecological conditions.

Moreover, initial analyses in a group of "high-risk" patients (women with hereditary genetic mutations in BRCA1/2 or HNPCC genes) have suggested that ART has good potential for use as a screening approach.

Studies are ongoing to analyse existing data, and to determine the most robust set of biomarkers required for the accurate identification of early stage malignancies in patients without symptoms. This will pave the way for progression to larger-scale, population-based trials.

Associate Professor Michelle Hill, QIMR Berghofer Institute of Medical Research (Year 3)

Discovery of new blood protein biomarkers for early detection of ovarian cancer - $129,981

The aim of this project is to discover and verify a shortlist of the biomarkers that successfully diagnose early stage ovarian cancer, so the team can design and promote a trustworthy early screening blood test and make it available to the public.

2019/20 Project Progress:

The project team has completed the biomarker discovery phase and discovered 259 candidate biomarkers that distinguishes ovarian cancer from either healthy or benign tissue. Many of the discovered candidate proteins have not been previously reported in ovarian cancer and are promising blood markers for early ovarian cancer. The next step is to verify the candidate biomarkers in an independent sample cohort.

Request for Consideration – the OCRF has consented to an extension in time (June 2021) and an additional funding injection of $9,100 for completion of the project.

Professor Martin K Oehler, University of Adelaide (Year 3)

Autoantibody biomarkers for ovarian cancer detection - $129,080

This project is investigating the presence of autoantibodies in ovarian cancer patients and their potential for use as diagnostic markers. Using latest laboratory technology which analyses the proteins and peptides in the human blood, the team has identified three autoantibody candidates with high accuracy in detecting early stage ovarian cancer. They are now in the process of developing a robust detecting test with auto-antibody biomarkers with the aim to use it for ovarian cancer population screening.

2019/20 Project Progress:

The team assessed the levels of specific autoantibodies in stage I ovarian cancer patients and healthy controls using a luminex assay. However, no significant differences in autoantibody levels were identified with this method, despite trying recombinant proteins from a second source.

By employing a commercially available ELISA assay they were then able to identify significant lower anti-ANXA1 levels in stage I serous ovarian cancers versus healthy controls. The results from the ELISA assay showed that combined anti-ANXA1 and CA125 improves the sensitivity to detect stage I serous ovarian cancer compared to CA125 alone.

Future directions of this project will be to optimise the assay in a cohort of Stage 1 ovarian cancer samples and healthy controls with the aim to develop a robust early detection test.

Interview with a Researcher

– blog excerpts from the Ovarian Cancer Research Month presentation series.

1. What made you want to research ovarian cancer?

The survival rate of an advanced stage ovarian cancer patient is really low. Women will have a better survival rate and outcome when they are diagnosed at an early stage of the disease. Therefore, the ultimate goal of my research is working towards an early detection test for ovarian cancer which is something that every woman deserves.

- Dr Noor Lokman, University of Adelaide

2. What is your career highlight to date?

Presenting my research at two prestigious meetings on separate sides of the world within the same week; one at the American Society of Immunology conference in Austin, USA, and winning the President's Prize for Basic Science at TSANZ in Melbourne.

- Dr Andrew Wilkinson, University of Queensland

3. What keeps you motivated on a hard day?

My little girl and my crazy boy make my day and keep me motivated to do my work as best as I can.

- Dr Katherin Romero, University of Queensland

Ovarian cancer patients' stories that they share about their challenges and struggles to combat this disease.

- Dr Noor Lokman, University of Adelaide

4. What is your vision for the future of ovarian cancer treatment?

I envision ovarian cancer treatment as a largely personalised process, whereby women are screened to find their optimal treatment regime to both eliminate ovarian tumours and also prevent disease recurrence

- Dr Amy Wilson, Hudson Institute

Highly Influential

Persuasive advocates for the ovarian cancer cause

State of the Nation in Ovarian Cancer: Research Audit

During this year, we commissioned Insight Economics to develop an independent State of the Nation in Ovarian Cancer: Research Audit to understand where research funding currently goes and where the funding gaps are, so that we could develop a roadmap for improving the stagnated survival rates for women with ovarian cancer. Each year, more than 1,800 Australian women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer. More than 1,100 of those women will die as a result. Over the next decade, more than 2.2 million women will die from ovarian cancer globally. We want to change that. The report sought input and data from every major Australian research institute and university as well as the views of ovarian cancer researchers, clinicians, and consumers. The information was then used to develop ambitious but achievable goals to shift current survivability rates as well as the identification of urgent research priorities and the quantum of investment needed to make these goals a reality.

The State of the Nation findings were very clear: We need an early detection test. We need increased funding for a national approach to treatment and research. And we need to act now.

STATE OF THE NATION 2020

Our vision is to improve survival for women with ovarian cancer

Based on what the State of the Nation report found, we have set out a vision for a future where women live without fear of ovarian cancer. We propose improvements in survival outcomes over the short, medium and longer terms:

- We want to improve survival rates to 50 per cent for women today by rapidly implementing recent advances in knowledge in clinical practice nationally.
- We want to improve 5-year survival rates beyond 50 per cent for the next generation of women. We do this through development, testing, and increased access to new and innovative personalised treatments.
- We want to improve 5-year survival rates towards 90 per cent through the development of new methods for early detection and diagnosis.

These are ambitious but achievable goals. To reach them, we need funding for a strategic, high impact program of research, supported by collaboration between governments, researchers, and the wider community. We want to build on and extend the important and welcome first steps made by the Federal government to improve survival rates through its recent Medical Research Future Fund commitments. Most importantly, we need funding for a new, nationally collaborative approach to solving the challenges of ovarian cancer.

Funding needs to go towards finding an early detection method and personalised treatment options. Ensuring equitable access to clinical best practice, access to individualised treatment approaches and establishing a National Centre of Excellence for Early Detection will help us reach our goals faster.

What we will achieve

When we achieve the goals set out by this report, we will see the lives of women in Australia and around the world extended and saved.

Achieving a 50 per cent 5-year survival rate by 2025 will save 680 women between now and 2035

Between now and 2035, nearly 14,000 Australian women are expected to die from ovarian cancer. Finding better and more personalised treatments and establishing a national approach to clinical best practice could save more than 680 of those women.

By doubling the current survival rate for the next generation of women, we will save 8000 women over a decade

Developing an early detection test for the next generation of women has the potential to double the current survival rate and save the lives of more than 8,000 Australian women over a decade. Globally, an early detection test could save the lives of more than 1.3 million women. The establishment of an Australian Centre of Excellence in Early Detection will accelerate our ability to find that crucial early detection method.

Snapshot of Awareness Raising Activities

White Shirt Campaign

High profile Ambassadors helped create a wave of momentum with unprecedented social media coverage

Frocktober

Grass roots participation continues to grow with a 41% increase in participation

Record total raised (> $520,000)

Media and communication reach

Our campaigns reached 11.9 million people via outdoor advertising and radio

Social media reach grew by 65% (644,000 people saw or interacted with the OCRF via social media)

Working with Government

Attendance at the MRFF Ovarian Cancer Research Grant Opportunities round table (to shape priorities for the federal government's 20 million investment)

Attendance at Roundtable on Patient Research and Treatment hosted by Centre for Consumer Driven Research

Contribution to the Victorian Cancer Council's submission to the Victorian Cancer Plan 2020-2024

Personal briefings to key Ministers and MPs in Federal Parliament

Research Collaboration with University of Melbourne

During the financial year, the OCRF partnered with the University of Melbourne to test community misconceptions about ovarian cancer that could pose a risk to Australian women. The research was based on an online survey among a nationally representative sample of 494 women aged 18 years or older.

Too many Australian women mistakenly believe that ovarian cancer can be prevented through vaccination or detected during routine health checks. Ovarian cancer is diagnosed in almost 2,000 Australian women every year and is the most lethal gynaecological cancer in Australia today. Its vague symptoms mean that the majority of cases are only diagnosed when the cancer is at an advanced stage – when prospects for recovery and long-term survival are lowest. As a result, misconceptions regarding vaccination or early detection are especially dangerous.

Research conducted by the University of Melbourne and the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation found that:

- 68% of Australian women believe that a cervical test can detect ovarian cancer – it cannot
- 65% of Australian women believe that there is an early detection test for ovarian cancer – there is not
- 64% of Australian women believe that a PAP test can detect ovarian cancer – it cannot
- 50% of Australian women believe that the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine protects against ovarian cancer – it does not

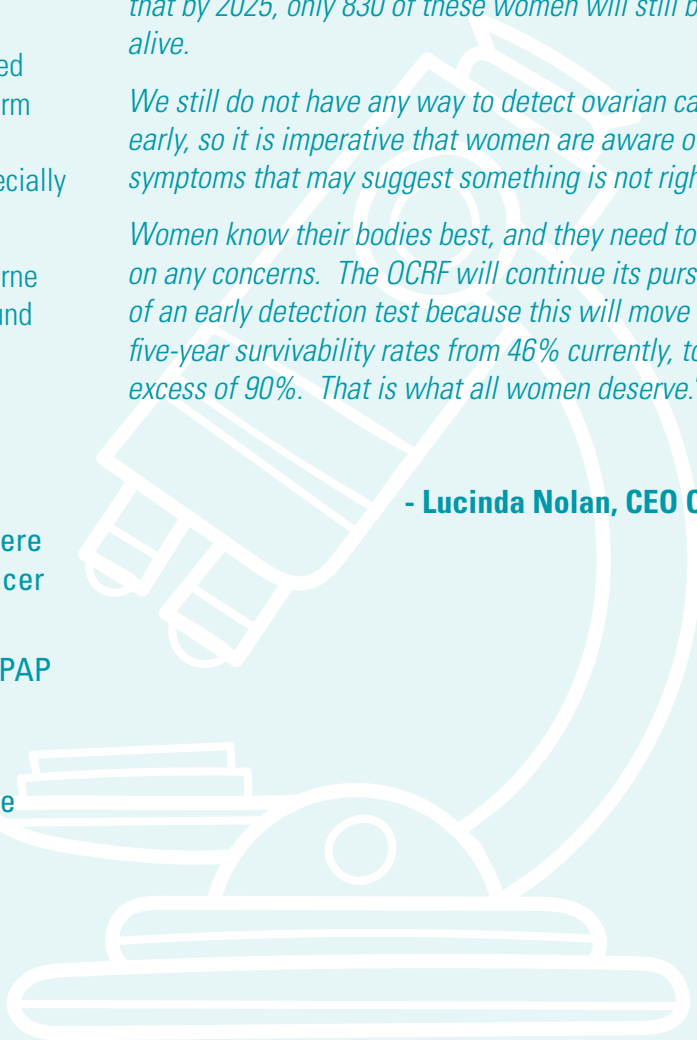
It is essential that more women of all ages understand that currently there is no prevention or early detection of ovarian cancer.

"We know that this year, more than 1800 Australian women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and that by 2025, only 830 of these women will still be alive.

We still do not have any way to detect ovarian cancer early, so it is imperative that women are aware of any symptoms that may suggest something is not right.

Women know their bodies best, and they need to act on any concerns. The OCRF will continue its pursuit of an early detection test because this will move five-year survivability rates from 46% currently, to in excess of 90%. That is what all women deserve."

- Lucinda Nolan, CEO OCRF



Striving to be the best

Innovative and never satisfied with the status quo

Yearly Highlights

The OCRF continued the comprehensive digital transformation of its marketing and fundraising systems throughout the financial year. The new digital systems have improved business processes to better capture supporter data and enabled more detailed analysis and reporting. The use of Salesforce and Autopilot continued to drive targeted and automated communication to the OCRF database, contributing to increased fundraising outcomes. The following digital projects were commenced and completed in FY19-20:

1. **Building data quality** – enrichment of existing records
2. **Marketing automation** – website, email and database system connections completed to allow data to flow smoothly between each tool and enable marketing automation
3. **Strategy and reporting** – development of comprehensive data-led strategy, including the development of a Regular Giving strategy, supported by robust Salesforce reporting

Consumer Centric Practice

Ongoing consumer collaboration in research and decision-making

The OCRF is committed to ensuring that women with a lived experience of ovarian cancer remain at the heart of everything we do and to that end, we include our consumers in key decision-making efforts such as prioritising research areas and awarding grants. Research for our consumers is vital in not only gains made to date, but to change the future for generations to come – and they clearly want to be part of the solution. For them, greater funding support is a must.

Our work in achieving this support is significantly enhanced by the generous contribution of our community Ambassadors, who provide such unique and personal perspectives that give a clearer understanding of the impact of ovarian cancer and the damning survival statistics. We know that statistics alone will not influence current support levels, but awareness and understanding of the damage that ovarian cancer causes to women, their families, friends, and community, does create a compelling cause.

We also focus on raising awareness and understanding of the disease by providing a clear narrative from women with ovarian cancer in a variety of ways, whether by way of regular blogs; features on individual women and their families; or creative timelines mapping experiences across diagnosis and treatments.

We focus solely on the need to raise the voice of these women so that they are able to be heard across all mediums and in varied forms. That remains the true nature of our work.

"If you've been on this earth long enough, you've probably imagined at some point about having cancer...I had run the Hollywood reel in my head numerous times, but it didn't prepare me for the reality of an actual diagnosis and the very real prospect of my own death."

- Sarah Tidey, Sunny with a Touch of Cancer

Other quotes from members of the OCRF community and consumer panels

"I have a 14-year old daughter Mollie. I want her and her friends to be able to grow up and have a test for ovarian cancer as part of their regular health check."

- Kel Pittman

"My mother said "You're not going anywhere where I haven't been." I'm still here and my mother's still here too."

- Lindy Spicer

"I feel so fortunate that I'm still here and able to raise awareness and to tell my story and hopefully change other people's lives."

- Vali Creus

"My doctor was confident that it was a germ cell tumour. She explained this was good news. Like I'd "won the cancer lottery". Which was confusing – how could anyone with cancer consider themselves lucky."

- Monika Tasic

"My team told me that post-surgery, I would immediately be in a "surgically induced menopause". This basically means that because both of my ovaries were being removed by surgery, my body will immediately go into menopause, rather than occurring over the process of a few years."

- Rebecca Hurst

Read our community supporters blog series reflecting their unique perspectives on living with ovarian cancer:

- Sunny with a touch of cancer
- A cup of ice please: Menopause at 25
- 5 common misconceptions about cancer
- How having friends with cancer has kept me strong
- The great debulking: One year on

Mand's Timeline - by Georgie Herbert

Whilst every woman's ovarian cancer diagnosis and experience will differ, all come with themes of devastation countered by hope, treatments and trials with varying degrees of success. Ultimately, the real sense is that time is of the essence in both tackling the disease and living life to the full as it becomes painfully evident it's likely to be cut far too short.

In drawing together a timeline of my mum, Mandy's ovarian cancer experience and mirroring it with my own reflections of the years she spent 'battling the beast', I hope that it will bring some comfort to women diagnosed with the disease and their families and friends - that although the prognosis may seem grim, you'll find many a moment of joy and create a lifetime of memories to cherish. I hope that it shows that clinical trials and progressive treatments can give the incredible gifts of both time and improved quality of life with an otherwise nasty disease.

I hope that the interactive nature of the timeline, including the pop-up explainers provide an easy way to understand and digest some of the complex medical jargon and experiences that come hand-in-hand with ovarian cancer. And, I hope that it supports the work that the OCRF undertakes in seeking funds for the research that underpins such trials and treatments, because this is what will make the most difference for women facing an ovarian cancer diagnosis.

An early detection test wasn't available when mum was diagnosed in 2006, and that remains the case in 2020. Ultimately, I hope that sharing our story helps bring the world closer to the day that research unlocks this mystery and every ovarian cancer diagnosis is made early enough to send survival rates skyrocketing.

Building Great Networks: *Ovarian cancer partners of choice*

Our Research Collaborations

The OCRF continues to partner with other cancer organisations to leverage additional funding for ovarian cancer research. Over the financial year, OCRF announced new projects and continued to partner with existing projects:

MRFF Ovarian Cancer Grant Opportunity – OCRF commitment: $285,000 over five years. Announced May 2020

On Friday 8th May 2020, the Federal Government announced a $16.2 million investment in ovarian cancer research, prioritising early detection and prevention. There were eight successful grant recipients, including three projects supported and/or co-funded by the OCRF. These were:

- Dr Simon Chu, Hudson Institute of Medical Research (Monash University): Towards a new era in granulosa cell tumour research: patient driven outcomes, genomics, diagnostics, and therapeutics.
- Dr Carlos Salomon, University of Queensland - Ovarian cancer early detection, monitoring and therapeutic intervention using extracellular vesicles
- Professor John Hooper, University of Queensland - A new radio-imaging agent to guide targeted therapy for epithelial ovarian cancer

Australian Cancer Research Foundation Facility for Innovative Cancer Drug Discovery at the Bio21 Institute, University of Melbourne – OCRF Financial Year commitment $111,198. Commenced in 2018 for three years.

The Facility uses structural biology approaches to discover new cancer drugs. More than half of the portfolio of new cancer projects in this facility involve developing new ovarian cancer treatments. The OCRF funding has been used exclusively to fund specialist skilled operators focused on ovarian cancer projects.

Australian Cancer Research Foundation Program for Resolving Cancer Complexity and Therapeutic Resistance – OCRF Financial Year commitment $116,500. Commenced in 2019 for three years.

Similarly, OCRF is providing co-funding to the ACRF program for resolving cancer complexity and therapeutic resistance at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research ($3.5M provided by ACRF in 2019; $349,500 provided by OCRF over 3 years). OCRF will support the work of a bioinformatician working on ovarian cancer. Due to a delay in the delivery and installation of the equipment due to Covid-19, this work will commence in 2021.

National Breast Cancer Foundation Collaborative Grant – OCRF commitment $265,590 over three years - commenced June 2020

The project will investigate a new combination therapy that has shown promise for both serous-type ovarian cancer and triple negative breast cancer (TNBC).

Cancer Council Victoria Grant-in-Aid - Identifying new treatment options for the rare and aggressive ovarian carcinosarcoma – OCRF Commitment $150,000 over three years - start delayed till July 2020

Ovarian carcinosarcoma (OCS) is an aggressive cancer with few treatment options. As ovarian carcinosarcoma is a rare cancer which sees low survivorship, the team at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research aim to further understand why OCS is so much more aggressive than other subtypes of ovarian cancer, which may then lead to new treatment options.

Collaboration impact

The impact of the OCRF's wide collaborations with peer funding bodies, Government and our growing financial partnerships with corporate supporters has seen close to $8 million more in direct funding delivered to ovarian cancer researchers.

Safe and Sustainable

Introduction of an internal audit regime

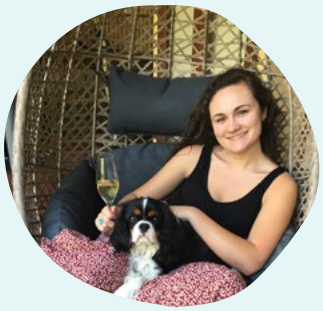
– in collaboration with NAB advisory team

New specialist skills

– fulltime Community Fundraising Coordinator, Hannah Carr

Professional development

– focusing on key need and risk: strategic planning and assessment; project management; cyber security



Feature: Jordan Turner bio

New community ambassador Jordan Turner conveys her ovarian cancer story and why she has chosen to advocate on behalf of the OCRF

I'd had shingles in September, and all of the painkillers and medications I was on had left me bloated. After two months, the bloating hadn't gotten any better, and I was starting to lose a lot of weight because I felt full all the time so my Doctor sent me in for a CT scan. They found a 16cm tumour on my left ovary, and once my specialist Dr Peter Grant had looked at the scans and my blood tests, he diagnosed me with dysgerminoma. He estimated the tumour to weigh about 2kg.

I was diagnosed the day before my 28th birthday, December 5, and my surgery was scheduled in for December 11. I had two weeks to recover from the surgery, and then chemotherapy commenced on December 30. While the prognosis for me is good, it requires 12 weeks of intensive chemotherapy to knock it out. I am five weeks in now, and cannot wait for it to be finished by mid-March.

I decided to fundraise for the OCRF because I had been given so many beautiful gifts and flowers before and after my surgery, and knew that there would be people who'd want to do something for me during my treatment. So, I set up the fundraising page with the view that if somebody wanted to drop in a bunch of flowers for me, they could contribute to cancer research funding instead. I never imagined I'd raise so much money so quickly.

From diagnosis to fundraising:

Jordan created a fundraising page on the OCRF website within weeks of her diagnosis, and within days, she had smashed her $2,000 fundraising goal. Through her local Heidelberg Golf Club – a club where she previously worked and through which her parents met – Jordan held a fundraiser in conjunction with their annual Pro Am event.

The fundraiser included silent auction and live auction items, as well as a charity hole, resulting in just under $10,000 raised on the day. Cumulatively, her fundraising page raised over $27,000 for the OCRF, and Jordan also agreed to become an OCRF Ambassador.

Then to now:

Jordan has since been given the all clear after completing her chemotherapy treatment. She was also one of the key OCRF Ambassadors involved in the State of the Nation launch, including a feature story in the Herald Sun, and she continues to assist with media enquiries and participate in OCRF fundraising activities such as Frocktober.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Corporate Partners

Thank you once again to the OCRF's Premier Partner Witchery for their ongoing support via the 12th White Shirt Campaign.

WITCHERY

Thank you also to Georg Jensen, Simson Cards, oOh Media, Nova Entertainment (SmoothFM) and Frankie Magazine for their continued support.

BY APPOINTMENT TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF DENMARK
GEORG JENSEN
ESTABLISHED 1904

SIMSON
GREETING CARDS

frankie magazine

smoothfm
your easy place to relax

oOh!

The OCRF is only able to grow its impact and reach due to the contributions of the many generous donors and committed supporters who give tirelessly throughout the year. We would like to particularly thank the following supporters for their contributions:

Trusts & Foundations

Quinn Femelle Private Ancillary Fund

Bourne Foundation

The Wales Family Foundation

JB Were Charitable Endowment Fund

Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

Humanity Foundation

Community Supporters

Digga Australia

Macquarie Bank

Silver Lining Ride

The King's Men Ride Different

The Nude Lunch (Trudy Crowley Foundation)

Cabal Club

Classic Ladies Foundation

Helen's Hope Foundation

Letitia Linke Memorial Fund and Silver Style Adelaide

Wonder Women Walkers

Krinkewood Vineyard

If you are considering joining this group of wonderful people to help the OCRF achieve its mission, we would welcome a conversation with you. Please call us on 1300 682 742 to speak to our Philanthropy Manager.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2020

INCOME	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Corporate Sponsorship	609,528	1,457,302	1,710,312
Individual & Community Donations	1,623,396	1,234,679	1,078,043
Philanthropic Giving	758,782	687,712	408,006
Other Income	111,555	151,494	119,927
Government Subsidies (Covid-19)	$80,000	-	-
Total Income for the year	**3,183,261**	**3,531,187**	**3,316,288**
EXPENDITURE			
Administration	217,513	158,520	233,180
Research Report	100,750	-	-
Technology Upgrade Expense	171,086	74,777	-
Employee Expenses	818,408	759,008	662,748
Awareness & Fundraising Campaigns	747,047	667,421	604,545
Total Expenditure	**2,054,804**	**1,659,726**	**1,500,473**
Surplus before grant payments	**1,128,457**	**1,871,460**	**1,815,816**
GRANT PAYMENTS			
Grants paid during the year	2,108,864	1,474,654	1,404,170
Total Grants Payments	**2,108,864**	**1,474,654**	**1,404,170**
Total Comprehensive Income (Loss)	**(980,407)**	**396,807**	**411,646**
PRO-BONO SUPPORT			
Pro-bono products & services (received at zero cost)	4,666,115	6,864,866	10,073,666

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ended 30 June 2020

ASSETS	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Current Assets	6,180,323	6,912,813	6,426,661
Non-Current Assets	15,407	17,374	19,930
Total Assets	**6,195,730**	**6,930,187**	**6,446,591**
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities	420,858	181,465	95,320
Non-Current Liabilities	7,934	1,376	732
Total Liabilities	**428,792**	**182,841**	**96,052**
Net Assets	**5,766,938**	**6,747,346**	**6,350,539**

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 30 June 2020

CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Receipts from Corporate Sponsorship	574,410	1,446,692	1,705,201
Receipts from Donations & Fundraising Activities	2,450,121	1,899,938	1,485,645
Receipts from Government (Covid-19)	80,000		
Interest Received	111,555	125,406	119,927
Payments to Suppliers & Employees	(1,144,190)	(1,207,581)	(2,153,705)
Payments of Research Grants	(1,929,417)	(1,474,654)	(1,404,170)
Total Cash provided by/ (used in) Operating Activities	**142,479**	**789,801**	**(247,102)**
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Transfer of cash to term deposit	(197,214)	(353,940)	(315,127)
Payments for plant and equipment	(4,005)	(5,752)	(2,777)
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment	-	-	-
Total Cash (used in) Investing Activities	**(201,219)**	**(359,692)**	**(317,904)**
Net (Decrease)/Increase in Cash	(58,740)	430,169	(565,006)
Cash Balance at the Beginning of the Year	594,306	164,197	729,203
Cash Balance at the End of the Year	535,566	594,306	164,197

HOW TO SUPPORT US

Support our campaigns

WHITE SHIRT CAMPAIGN

FROCKTOBER

SILVER LINING RIDE

Fundraise for the OCRF

DIGGA AUSTRALIA GOLF DAY

Contact us

The Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation Inc.

PO Box 428
Ashburton Victoria 3147
1300 OVARIAN (1300 682 742)

Email: community@ocrf.com.au
Website: https://ocrf.com.au
Facebook: @OCRFaustralia
Instagram: @ocrf
Twitter: @ocrfaustralia
LinkedIn: https://au.linkedin.com/company/ovarian-cancer-research-foundation-inc

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