

12th March 2009

Response to the Senate Select Committee on the subject of Men's Health

Ian Smith -- Queensland Board Member of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia
Member and Treasurer Qld Chapter Council managing 22 support groups in Queensland .
Volunteer and trained speaker on Prostate Cancer ,Cancer Council Qld and
The prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia .

Subject The urgent need for making men aware of risks of Prostate Cancer .

Facts 2008 was the first year when deaths from PC exceeded deaths from Breast Cancer
Current trends indicate a 100% increase in PC over the next 10 years as the Baby Boomers reach towards 60 years of age and beyond.
This has serious consequences for Men, Families, Business, Income and Australia as more men in their prime are effected.
The "Key" is early detection and "Act Immediately"

Population Changes New 30's are 40 New 40's are 50 New 50's are 60 New 60's are 70.
We must keep an older workforce healthy.

Action My company is planning a major project adjacent to Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital and will include a Men's Health Clinic as part of a Primary Health Care unit incorporating a preventative medicine unit as part of the recommendations of the NHHRC's interim report February 2009.

Problems Many Men simply do not want to know that early detection is the key and they wait until symptoms force them to act. Often that is too late and their future life is compromised.

Awareness and Research Programs .

The programs run by the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia [PCFA] are touching a lot of men but not nearly enough around Australia.
Research into a simple method of detection is essential and progressing but maximum effort and funding for the research institutions must be increased.

Raising funds from the public for PCFA in this current financial environment is likely to be very difficult for the next few years , however it is essential to increase the efforts towards promoting preventative medicine to Men .

PCFA has now over 80 Support Groups around Australia however most men do not access support groups until they find they have Prostate Cancer.

We must find better methods of awareness and early detection . Prevention is not completely possible however studies in the USA indicate what is good for your heart is the best prevention. A family history increases chances of being diagnosed with PC by up to four times.

One program we are looking at is the use of Barber shops and Women's Salons as a point of promotion . This is being used successfully in the USA . Sit in the chair for a hair cut and read health information directly in front of the mirror plus access health information –a captive audience.

Summary More effort in the promotion of awareness and early detection through the Promotion of men's health, in particular Prostate Cancer with strong Government support .

We must incorporate the programs proposed by the NHHRC.

Prevention is better than cure . Early detection for all Cancers is better than dying early .

I am happy to discuss this subject anywhere anytime to help others.

References Professor Colleen Nelson is Chair of Prostate Cancer at the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation [QUT] and Chair Translational Research Institute at Princes Alexandra Hospital Brisbane.

Professor Judith Clements NHMRC Principal Research Fellow , Queensland University of Technology. [Program Leader Hormone Dependant Cancer Program]

Ian Smith