



PIPS 'n' PIECES

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Happy New Year! We hope you've had a wonderful start to 2025 and are feeling refreshed and ready for what lies ahead. It's been six months since our last newsletter, and we're thrilled to reconnect with you as we embark on another year of making a difference together.

This year promises to be one filled with new opportunities, exciting events, and continued progress toward our shared mission of reducing melanoma rates and supporting those impacted by it. Whether it's through community education, research support, or providing practical assistance, we couldn't do it without you—our incredible supporters, members, and volunteers.

In this edition, you'll find updates on recent initiatives, upcoming events like the **Out of the Sun Run**, and ways to get involved in 2025. Thank you for being part of our journey. Together, we're lighting the way to a brighter, safer future.

Let's make this year our best yet!

Welcome LAURA, Farewell HANNAH

At the HMF AGM in December, we sadly said goodbye for now to Committee Member Hannah Stanton. Hannah has been an important part of the HMF Committee for the past 5 years and has a very personal connection after losing her Dad to melanoma. Joining the HMF Committee and having an input to the work we do has been the ultimate tribute to her Dad and we are grateful for her contribution. We wish her all the best as she takes some time to focus on her young family and hope to welcome her back again one day in the future.

We also welcomed Laura Dawson to the HMF Committee at the AGM.

Laura Dawson joined the HMF committee inspired by the opportunity to make a difference locally following the melanoma diagnosis of one of her closest friends. Laura is no stranger to HMF, having supported some of the fundraising event's in the past.

Laura is an experienced communications and marketing executive, with experience working across government and non-government sectors, including local and national not for profit agencies. Laura is currently the director of Strategic Communications for Early Childhood Education and Care with the NSW Department of Education.

We look forward to working with Laura as part of the HMF team.



NEWCASTLE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN CARDIO-ONCOLOGY Q&A SESSION

Recently, I had the privilege of meeting **Professor Doan Ngo** from the **Newcastle Centre of Excellence in Cardio-Oncology**. Professor Ngo and her dedicated team are pioneering important work in understanding and addressing cardiovascular disease in cancer patients, a growing concern as cancer survival rates continue to improve.

Professor Ngo is passionate about supporting patients living with, through, and beyond cancer, and she recognizes the need for better awareness and care around cardiovascular complications that may arise from cancer treatments. To this end, she and her colleagues are hosting a **free Q&A session** for melanoma patients and their families.

Survival from cancer is increasing worldwide, and more people can expect to live beyond their cancer treatment. This is thanks to incredible recent advances in early cancer detection, monitoring and highly effective therapeutic options for cancer treatment. While this increase in cancer survivorship represents an outstanding achievement, cancer treatments inadvertently introduce potential threat to the health and quality of life of survivors – cardiovascular disease.

There is increasing evidence worldwide and from Australia, that patients living with, through and beyond cancer are at higher risk of cardiovascular problems than the general population. Cardio-Oncology, a multidisciplinary medical care approach that focuses on the cardiovascular health of patients living with, through and beyond cancer.

The ultimate goals of our healthcare practitioners in this field are to:

- support heart care in patients receiving potential cancer treatments that may have cardiotoxic effects,*
- minimize the possibility of delaying/stopping/reducing/interrupting patients from receiving the best cancer therapeutic options due to any cardiovascular complications,*
- improve both cancer and cardiovascular outcomes, allowing*

Cardio-oncology: care to prevent or treat heart health of people living with and beyond cancer

FREE Cardio-Oncology Q & A Session

with expert cardiologists,
cardiac nurses, medical oncologists,
radiation oncologists and pharmacists



**5:30pm–8:00pm Monday 10 March 2025
at Hunter Medical Research Institute**
Lot 1 Kookaburra Circuit, New Lambton Heights • Catering provided

For people living with, through and beyond cancer, including family and friends. See presentations from members of the Newcastle Centre of Excellence in Cardio-Oncology, a Q&A session with expert clinicians and network with your supportive local community.

**RSVP essential by Friday 7 March 2025 for this FREE event
SCAN NOW for more information and to register your place**



In partnership with our community



for better adherence to optimal cancer treatment, without added cardiovascular impact on patients.

For the first time, one of the largest dedicated Cardio-Oncology programs in Australia, based at the Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI): Newcastle Centre of Excellence in Cardio-Oncology will host a FREE Q&A session for people living in Hunter.

Our team of Cardiologist, Oncologist, Radiation Oncologist, Nurse and Pharmacist will provide some information about cardiovascular complications that may arise from cancer treatments. We will answer questions you may have about

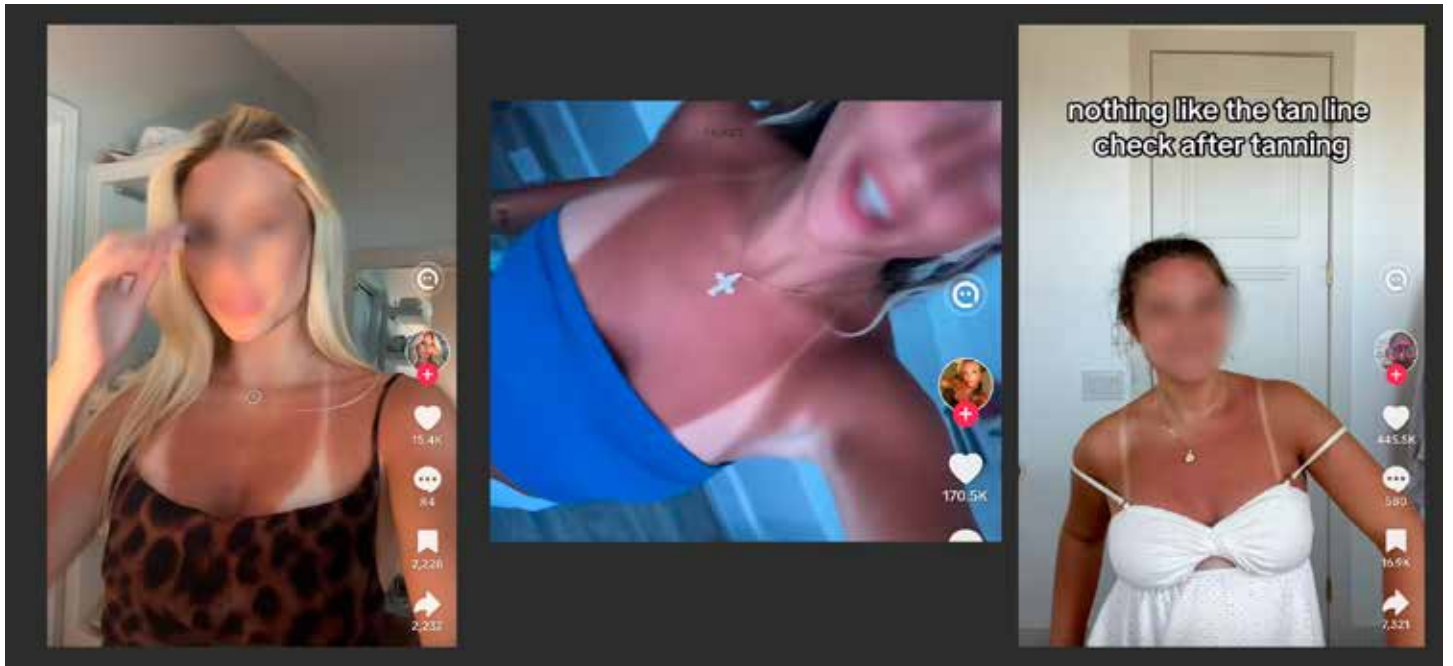
cardiovascular health during and after the cancer journey. We also will seek your input about your own experience with hope to develop better holistic care. Please come and join us for this important information session.

Professor Doan Ngo (B.Pharm, PhD, FESC, FCSANZ)

National Heart Foundation Future Leader Fellow

**Co-Director of the Newcastle Centre of Excellence in Cardio-Oncology
Co-Director, Heart and Stroke program**

**Faculty of Health and Medicine
School of Biomedical Science and Pharmacy**



THE DISTURBING TREND OF TAN LINES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

In recent months, a troubling trend has emerged among young people: intentionally creating tan lines as a fashion statement or a mark of social media aesthetics. Some are actually checking the UV reading and looking for the highest levels so they can expose themselves to tanning. While some see this as harmless fun, the reality is far more concerning. This trend not only normalizes dangerous sun exposure but also significantly increases the risk of skin damage and long-term health issues, including melanoma.

Why Is This Trend Harmful?

The deliberate creation of tan lines often involves prolonged sun exposure without adequate protection, such as sunscreen, protective clothing, or shade. This intentional behaviour heightens the risk of:

- **Sunburn:** A single severe sunburn can double the risk of developing melanoma later in life.
- **Premature Aging:** Excessive UV exposure accelerates the breakdown of collagen, leading to wrinkles and sunspots.
- **Skin Cancer:** Melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, is strongly linked to UV exposure.

Social Media and the Influence of Trends

Platforms like Instagram and TikTok have amplified the popularity of tan lines, with influencers and young users showcasing them as part of their “summer look.” Unfortunately, this glamorizes unsafe practices and minimizes the serious consequences of UV exposure.

The Reality of Skin Damage

Tanning of any kind is a sign of skin damage. When skin tans, it’s a biological response to UV radiation, as the skin produces melanin to protect itself from further harm. This “protective” tan, however, is far from harmless. Over time, repeated exposure causes DNA damage, which can lead to skin cancer.

Changing the Conversation

To combat this trend, it’s crucial to shift the narrative around beauty and skin health:

- 1. Promote Sun Safety:** Encourage the use of sunscreen, wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses, and UV-protective clothing.
- 2. Celebrate Natural Skin Tones:** Reinforce the message that all skin tones are beautiful and healthy skin is the most radiant.
- 3. Educate About Risks:** Share stories and facts about the dangers of tanning and the importance of prevention.

A Call to Action

Young people have the power to influence their peers and reshape trends. By promoting sun safety and rejecting harmful beauty standards, they can protect their health and inspire others to do the same.

Let’s work together to make tan lines a thing of the past and celebrate healthy, protected skin. The long-term benefits of prioritizing sun safety far outweigh the fleeting appeal of a “fashionable” tan line.

Your skin is for life—protect it.

PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS OF MELANOMA



Recently, I had the privilege of traveling to Canberra to attend the Parliamentary Friends of Melanoma meeting at Parliament House. This event brought together advocates, policymakers, and melanoma experts with a shared commitment to raising awareness and reducing the impact of melanoma in Australia.

The meeting provided a unique opportunity to discuss the latest initiatives in melanoma prevention, early detection, and treatment with some of our Federal Politicians. It was inspiring to hear from leaders

across various fields, all working toward a common goal: to save lives and improve outcomes for those affected by this deadly disease.

As someone deeply passionate about melanoma awareness, I was honoured to represent our community and share insights into the challenges and opportunities we face. It was a great opportunity to catch up with Newcastle's Federal Member, Sharon Claydon and discuss the efforts we are making in our own back yard. The collaboration and energy at the event were a powerful reminder that,

together, we can make a significant difference.

I left the meeting feeling optimistic about the future and more determined than ever to continue advocating for education, research, and support for melanoma patients and their families. A heartfelt thank you to the organizers for creating this platform and to everyone involved for their dedication to defeating melanoma.

Let's keep the conversation going and the momentum building — because every step we take brings us closer to a melanoma-free future.

Spot Check

As I write this newsletter we are about to head into another weekend of Spot Check clinics. We continue to rate this as our most impactful program when it comes to raising awareness and saving lives. Before heading into the February 2025 clinic our Spot Check tally is:

	1937	369	85
	SKIN CHECKS	SPOTS FOUND	SUSPECTED MELANOMA
RUNNING TALLY			

Fundraising News

WEST WALLSEND HIGH SCHOOL - CANCER SUX



Over a decade ago, the staff and students at West Wallsend High School (fondly known as “Westy”) started the Cancer Sux Walk to support a beloved teacher who was battling breast cancer. What began as a heartfelt gesture has since become an inspiring annual tradition. Each year, students trek from the school to the top of Mount Sugarloaf, enjoy a well-earned BBQ lunch and a rest, before making their way back to school—raising funds and awareness for cancer charities along the way. Through this initiative, the school has raised a total of around \$100,000.

Traditionally, the Cancer Sux Walk raises between \$5,000 and \$12,000 each year thanks to the incredible generosity of the local community. This year, Hunter Melanoma Foundation (HMF) was honoured to be chosen as the recipient charity. The school set a bold target of \$10,000 fully aware of the challenges posed by the current cost of

living crisis on their fundraising efforts.

Adding to the excitement, one of the teachers, Mrs. McKenzie, made a bold promise: if the \$10,000 target was reached, she would shave her head. As it turns out, Westy didn’t just meet their goal—they smashed it. In a phone call to HMF, Acting Principal Michael Chandler expressed his pride and gratitude as he shared the amazing news: the school had raised just over \$20,000!

West Wallsend High School may be small, but their impact on the community is profound. Their dedication, enthusiasm, and generosity demonstrate the power of coming together for a cause.

From all of us at HMF, a heartfelt thank you to the staff, students, and local community of Westy for your incredible support. Together, you’ve shown that cancer sux, but kindness and determination can make a world of difference.

Upcoming Events

The HMF Race Day has been a cornerstone of our fundraising efforts for an incredible 28 years. This year, we proudly celebrate the 29th anniversary of this fun-filled and much loved event, and we're excited to welcome a naming rights sponsor for the very first time.

In 2025, the Hunter Melanoma Foundation Race Day will be supported by Farrelly Construction Services. Darren Farrelly founded Farrelly Construction Services in 2009 as a result of identifying a need in the mining and construction industries for a company to supply reliable, high quality labour, Plant & Equipment, Project Management and Supervision services undertaking works including electrical Installations, Civil & Earthworks and structural, Mechanical, Piping Installations and Workshop Fabrication. HMF is close to the hearts of the Farrelly Team as their founder Darren, lost



his battle with melanoma in 2023. We welcome the FCS team to the HMF Race Day family with open arms and look forward to a long-lasting relationship.

This year our Race Day is on Saturday 24th May – tickets on sale for the trackside Marquee in mid February.

INTRODUCING MELODIES FOR MELANOMA!



Get ready for an unforgettable evening of entertainment with Melodies for Melanoma, a unique and highly entertaining fundraising event! Watch as local celebrities take to the stage, living out their childhood dreams of becoming rockstars, all while supporting an incredible cause.

It's a night of music, laughter, and community spirit that you won't want to miss. Stay tuned for more details and join us as we rock out for melanoma awareness and support!

The event will be held at Flamingos Live (previously Lizottes) on Friday night the 4th April from 6pm for dinner and show, or 7.30pm for show only. Tickets will be available through the venue. Watch our social media pages closely over the next two months as we introduce you to our sensational star-studded line up.

Tickets available at www.flamingos.live



OUT OF THE SUN RUN!

The out of the sun run was so much fun last year and we look forward to another event this year on Friday 14th March. As a part of the Lake Macquarie Triathlon Festival, join us for a walk, run or roll along the picturesque Lake Macquarie Foreshore at Speers Point Park. This year we have introduced a second option for the more seasoned runners who want to really challenge themselves. You can enter either the 5km or 10km event but remember it's all about being bright at night! So dig out your fluoro gear and register today!



AN IMPACTFUL EVENING: SCREENING

In early December, we were delighted to welcome some of our supporters and members to the Newcastle screening of the powerful documentary, Conquering Skin Cancer. This thought-provoking film offers a sobering yet hopeful exploration of the world's most common—and preventable—cancer.

With skin cancer affecting 2 in 3 Australians at some point in their lives, the film underscores the urgency of raising awareness and prioritizing prevention. It highlights the global effort to tackle this disease while also showcasing stories of resilience, innovation, and community action.

The evening was a poignant reminder of the critical role we all play in preventing skin cancer through education, early detection, and sun-safe practices. We thank everyone who joined us for this meaningful event and encourage those who couldn't attend to seek out opportunities to watch this impactful film.

Together, we can conquer skin cancer—one conversation, one action, and one step at a time.

MEMBERSHIP DUE ANNUALLY

Yes, I would like to become a member of the Hunter Melanoma Foundation

Membership Renewal New Member Donation

I, _____ (full name of applicant)

Of _____ (address - your receipt will be posted here)

hereby apply to become a members of the abovenamed incorporated association. In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the rules of the Association for the time being in force.

Signature _____ Date _____

Phone (H) _____ (M) _____

Email address _____

Occupation _____ Date of Birth _____

Membership fees are \$11.00 per year (including GST) payable on the membership anniversary date.



