



The Alfred Lung Transplant Service

Christmas Newsletter 2011



Above: Professor Greg Snell (right) with his father, receiving his Order of Australia Medal, in recognition of his work in the field of respiratory medicine.

A message from Professor Greg Snell

A good Christmas to everyone and hope for a great 2012 for all patients, staff and their families. 2011 has been a big year with more transplants than ever before: 73 as of today and still counting. Indeed, this success has created its own problems, hopefully to be solved with additional staff appointments and consolidating our focused team in their new 5th Floor home, see the box below. All credit to the nursing and medical teams for holding things together in the meantime- thank you everyone for your patience. We really hope to see ward and clinic processes and appointments more streamlined following these changes.

Please note - Professor Snell will be on Sabbatical from March to October 2012.

News from the Lung Transplant Service – Our New Home Base on Level 5

2011 has been a very busy and productive year within the Lung Transplant Service. The Clinic underwent some changes, moving permanently to level 5 and becoming independent of the former '3F' combined heart-lung unit. Part of this change has brought new staff to our clinic and we would like to take this chance to introduce to you our new contact system and Clinic Team.

There will soon be a dedicated Lung Transplant Service HQ, based in an office on level 5 near the clinic. This will be the home base now for Rani Martin, Emilie Beattie (Clinic Nurses); Bronwyn Levvey (newly appointed Clinical Team Leader); Lauren Mitchell, Yvonne Cristiano (Research Nurses) and Sheridan Misso (newly appointed Administrative Assistant). There will be an additional nurse joining the Team in the New Year also. Our Lung Transplant Social Worker, Jane Harris, is now based on Level 5 as well, and appointments are available at your request.

We also have a dedicated phone line for all lung transplant enquiries (nursing/appointments, etc...), which is 9076 2867.

You can now also contact us via email at lungtransplant@alfred.org.au

We look forward to working together in our new dedicated space to offer you the best in service and care.

Statistics for 2011

This year saw a notable increase in the number of lung transplants undertaken at The Alfred. This was due to a combination of increased donation rates, and technological advances.

At the time of printing, we had done 73 lung transplants for 2011, compared to 62 in total at the end of 2010.

New Specialist Services in Clinic

This year we welcomed Dr Kath Hackman (Endocrinologist) to our Clinic, making it easier for us to monitor patients who are Diabetic or needing Endocrine review. We will also have a Rheumatologist, Dr Michael Gingold, visiting once a month. If you wish to see either Specialist, you can discuss this at your next Clinic visit to arrange a referral.

Farewell from Dr Judy Morton

Sadly at the end of 2011 we will be saying farewell to one of our Consultants, Dr Judy Morton, who is going to be based at the Monash Adult CF Centre. If you had been seeing Judy as your regular Doctor, please phone us in the Clinic to discuss your ongoing care.

Welcome to our new Consultant, Dr Miranda Paraskeva

You may have already met our new Consultant, Dr Miranda Paraskeva, as she has been with us as a Registrar over the past two years. She is a welcome addition to our team, and will be consulting on various days during the week seeing both newly transplanted and our longer term patients.

Looking after yourself over the Holidays

While we hope you have a relaxing Festive Season, we ask that you remember the 'little things' that can go a long way to protecting your health. Keeping hydrated as the weather warms up will protect your kidneys and general wellbeing. Skincare and sun protection are also vital, so remember to slip slop slap! as some medications can increase your sensitivity to the sun. (See below)

A note from Steve - our Transplant Pharmacist

Commonly used immunosuppressants such as Tacrolimus, Azathioprine, Mycophenolate and Cyclosporin can all cause photosensitivity to varying degrees. This can have an additive effect when combined with antifungals (Voriconazole) or commonly used antibiotics such as Bactrim and Ciprofloxacin. So please be mindful if you are taking these drugs as the effects of the sun will be greater than you would normally expect.



Above: Rani, Em and Sheridan in Clinic with Lauren Ball (age 6), our youngest ever Australian lung recipient. There were four children (at press) who had received a lung transplant at The Alfred in 2011.

Paediatric Lung Transplant Service

The Alfred Paediatric Lung Transplant Service, headed by Dr Glen Westall and Rani Martin, were honoured to be formally recognised by the Department of Health as the only site in Australia for paediatric lung and heart-lung transplantation. Glen and Rani have worked tirelessly developing this program, and we congratulate them on the recognition of their work and the service becoming an NFC (Nationally Funded Centre).

Congratulations

To our patients who became parents this year - we wish you a fantastic first Christmas with the special new additions in your life!

Email contact list for Transplant Patients

As mentioned on the front of the Newsletter, we now have a dedicated Lung Transplant Service email address. We encourage you to email us with your name and email contact information if you would like to join our mailing group. We hope to use the email address to send out updates and information, and of course to have an additional means of contact between the Staff and Patients which may be of assistance particularly if you are traveling and have an enquiry or would like information sent to you online.

Best wishes from the Transplant Team

We wanted to take this opportunity to wish you and your families all the very best for a happy and safe festive season, and a wonderful 2012. It is a great feeling to have seen so many people receive the gift of a transplant and a new lease on life in 2011, and we wish you all good health for the future. Thank you for working with us as a team to help you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us here in the Lung Transplant Service.