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PORT PIRIE PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Mr BROCK (Frome) (15:28): Today I would like to talk about the 10th anniversary of the Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group, which I had the pleasure of attending this week. A public men's health evening was held at the Port Pirie sporting club early in 2003 and among the guest speakers were Dr Landers—a urologist from Adelaide, talking about prostate cancer—a nurse, and a prostate cancer survivor, who spoke about his prostate cancer journey.

At this meeting, Nicola Champion, a palliative care nurse, addressed those present and asked if any of the public would be interested in forming a prostate cancer support group in Port Pirie. Colin Lang, who had just finished treatment for prostate cancer, spoke to Nicola that night and made arrangements to meet later at his home. Nicola Champion and Colin Lang met together and decided to attempt to start a prostate cancer support group in Port Pirie.

Another prostate cancer sufferer, Barry Scarman, indicated he was prepared to take on the role of convenor for the group. Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group was notified and the meeting was advertised in the local newspaper. A grant of \$250 was received from the Cancer Council of South Australia to help establish this group. The first support group meeting was held on 3 March 2003 at the BHAS Bowling Club and was chaired by Barry Scarman, with approximately 12 members from the public attending, along with three Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group members travelling from Adelaide to support the newly-formed group.

Prostate cancer support groups in South Australia at March 2003 were: Adelaide, North East and Barossa-Gawler, and the fourth group to be formed was the Port Pirie group. The Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group was also the 50th support group formed in Australia. At the start of the group, only three members had prostate cancer, with another five men and four women who supported the group. In the early days, there was very little information available about prostate cancer to pass on to any of the newly diagnosed men, and there was also a lack of financial assistance. Over the next few years, the group went from strength to strength and, at one stage, had about 20 members regularly attending meetings.

However, by 2008, with the loss of several group members to prostate cancer and others just feeling they did not need the support of the group any more, membership had declined and at that

particular point the Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group looked very like possibly folding. Colin Lang approached Mr Allan Manfield and asked if he would like to be the new convenor to replace Barry. Allan Manfield has been the convenor since 2008.

Around this point in time Colin and his wife Lorraine and Allan and Joan Manfield travelled to Adelaide for a meeting to form the Central Australia Chapter. This chapter is under the umbrella of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) and was formed to coordinate and support groups in South Australia and the Northern Territory and also to supply groups with current information and resources. Since the formation of the Central Australia Chapter and with the assistance of the PCFA, they are now provided with a lot more information about prostate cancer, financial assistance and equipment, which has greatly helped their support group operate successfully.

Since the support group has been keeping a record of attendances at their meetings, they have recorded an average attendance of 18 in 2009, 22 in 2010 and now up to 35 in 2012. Over the past 10 years, they have had many prostate cancer awareness stalls, assisted at awareness stalls in other towns (including attending the launch of the Be a Man campaign held in Adelaide's Rundle Mall), enjoyed several different social groups, and have had great guest speakers to enlighten them on many topics at their meetings. The group has had many members speak about their prostate cancer journeys and has viewed DVDs on various health issues.

Men diagnosed with prostate cancer, prostate problems, etc., can now use the resource library, which contains many books, booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets and DVDs relating to prostate cancer and its side effects. This has enabled the group to help many men and their partners with their prostate journey. The support group is approached at various times to comment in issues and provide information about prostate cancer for television, radio and newspapers, and also participate in research surveys.

The Port Pirie Prostate Cancer Support Group had their first member, Joan Manfield, appointed for a three-year period to the Central Australia Chapter Council from 1 January 2013. In the first 10 years of this support group, sadly, nine of their members have passed away. The purpose of the group has always been to give support, help and information to any person diagnosed with prostate cancer or prostate problems, and will continue to assist men and their partners into the future. Without the foresight and driving force of Nicola Champion, together with Colin Lang and Barry Scarman, Port Pirie may not have had the prostate cancer support group. Congratulations to all involved.