

2018-19

The Abbie Basson
Sarcoma Foundation
(Sock it to Sarcoma!)
Annual Report

PROGRAMS



RESEARCH

EDUCATION

**COMMUNITY
AWARENESS**

**PATIENT
SUPPORT**

ADVOCACY

ANNUAL REPORT

Once again it has been a very busy year in the world of Sock it to Sarcoma! in our core goals of research, education and awareness and patient support.

We are delighted that again we have been able to direct nearly \$150,000 towards sarcoma-related research projects.

Focusing on encouraging early researchers to consider careers in discovering causes and new treatments for the disease, the second Abbie Basson Sarcoma Research Scholarship was awarded to PhD candidate Jun Lu, who will be investigating the mechanisms switching liposarcoma from a benign into a malignant tumour and through our partnership with the Cancer Council WA, we have again awarded two sarcoma focused vacation scholarships. This year both scholarships were undertaken in the psychosocial research being conducted at Curtin University.

Further research is currently being conducted by Associate Professor Evan Ingley at Murdoch University into two of the three new gene variants uncovered by our inaugural PhD candidate, Dr Rachel Jones.

A very exciting new initiative is our partnership with the Telethon Kids Institute in supporting their new paediatric sarcoma research laboratory, headed by Willem 'Joost' Lesterhuis. This is the first paediatric sarcoma research to be conducted here in WA and will be looking at the use of immunotherapy in the treatment of sarcoma.

The importance we place on holistic care for sarcoma patients is demonstrated with the continuation of funded psychosocial research projects, with a paper by Associate Professor Georgia Hackett on delays in sarcoma diagnosis due for publication in the very near future, with further work in the area ongoing.

Our partnership with the Australian Doctors for Africa and the international consortium with The Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Oxford UK has facilitated a training session on sarcoma in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Finally, the second phase personalised medicine clinical trial at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital & Hollywood Private Hospital is continuing, with recruitment to the trial now being offered at the time of diagnosis.

In the awareness and information space, we made the policy call to move West Australian Sarcoma Awareness Week into July to coincide with International Sarcoma Awareness Month and to relocate our annual scientific symposium into April 2020 to spread sarcoma activities across the year. We continue to take the awareness message into the community with visits to schools, business and community groups, in particular using our 'odd socks' identifier to help with promoting the message. We have been delighted to welcome new Ambassador, Perth Scorchers Ashton Turner, to help spread awareness about sarcoma, along with existing Ambassadors, Paralympic Equestrian Sharon Jarvis, and Chris Masten and Dom Sheed of the West Coast Eagles.

Special mention again should be made of our expanding Football and Cricket Awareness Rounds.

The importance of an early diagnosis and referral to a specialist multi-disciplinary team is key to better outcomes with a sarcoma diagnosis. We are delighted that, through the support of the North Metro Football District and West Australian District Cricket, we have again been able to reach into the junior and senior sporting arenas to spread awareness about sarcoma and its symptoms and also to raise funds towards the programs we provide. A massive thank you to all the teams, coaches, players and parents involved in this initiative. In particular, thanks go out to the West Coast Eagles and Ambassadors Chris Masten and Dom Sheed for wearing our odd socks at training during WA Sarcoma Awareness Week to help draw attention to sarcoma.

At the July 2018 Reed GP Conference Event, in partnership with fellow NGO PlusLife, we continued to provide information to GPs on appropriate referral pathways and management of a possible sarcoma diagnosis. SitS! also hosted a session on sarcoma with Professor Richard Carey Smith, lead clinician of the WA State Sarcoma Service, which was received with great interest by the GP delegates.

ANZSA (formerly ASSG) Conference

Our Executive Director was also invited to present at the national Australasian Sarcoma Study Group (now Australia and New Zealand Sarcoma Alliance) in October on the range of activities of the Foundation which was a fantastic opportunity to highlight all the work that is being done in Western Australia to support the sarcoma community.

Our patient support program has been building momentum strongly in all the activities conducted. Along with continuing national peer-to-peer support, both on-line and in person, we have been increasing our local gift and patient funding assistance programs; working closely with our clinical team to provide active and much needed support for people diagnosed with a rare cancers. We are also very pleased to have been invited to be part of the new NGO group at the Perth Children's Hospital.

Given that we receive no government funding, without our events and the generosity of our donors it would not be possible for us to continue all of our programs. Our volunteers have been vital in driving these events and we thank and acknowledge all of their effort, energy and enthusiasm in running so many fantastic and successful events, highlighted by the Ride & Stride for Sarcoma! and our annual Gala Dinner.

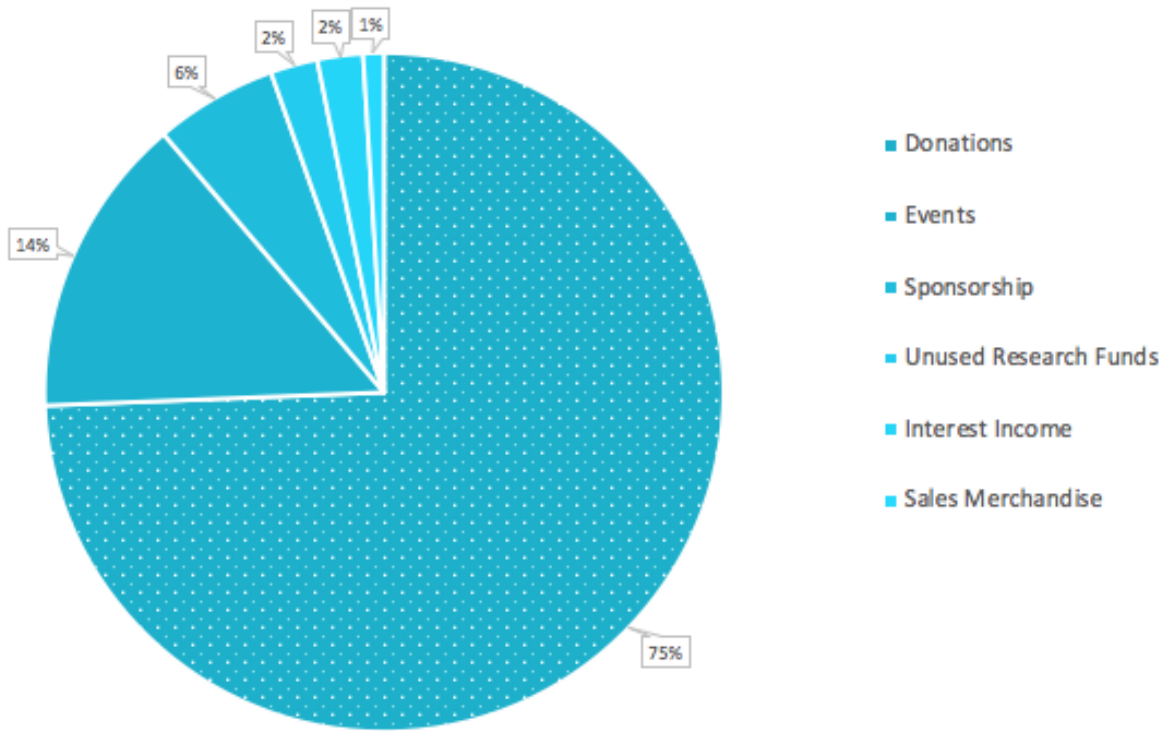
The second Ride & Stride for Sarcoma was held in October raising a fantastic \$50,000 towards Sarcoma research. Spearheaded by Ambassador, Premiership West Coast Eagles player Chris Masten, a bunch of riders and striders created awareness about sarcoma as they cycled and walked around the picturesque Swan River. Many thanks indeed to our generous sponsors; Turpin Holdings, HBF; St George Bank and Healthy Building Systems Australia.

2018 was farewelled with a Winter Wonderland-themed Gala Dinner, where researchers, clinicians and community took time out to celebrate the many activities in which SitS! took part, wowed by living ice statues, a mobile wine statue and raffles, a wine wall and auctions where amongst others a ferocious bidding war took part over a framed signed jersey of the 2018 AFL Premiership team, the West Coast Eagles.

Amongst other entertaining and varied events this year have been the Sock Hop, Truffle auction, team participation with the HBF Run for a Reason and many other individual efforts which together form part of our community drive to generate awareness.

As a result of the ever-growing calls on the Foundation, the year began looking at the future sustainability of the organisation and the decision was taken to employ an Executive Director. Mr Vince Monterosso resigned as a Director towards the end of the year for family reasons and we would like to thank and acknowledge Vince for all he has done over the past few years to help the Foundation. A very sincere thanks to Kensington Finance Group for offering pro bono preparation of our financial statements and advice. We are also actively pursuing our new strategic and organisational plans for the next five years. We would like to extend our very grateful thanks to all of our Board, our Advisory Groups and indeed all of our many volunteers, for their time, knowledge and ongoing support and enthusiasm.

Income 2018-19



Expenses 2018-19

