

Update from the Medical Director



Summer is over, and it is now a year since the initial changes of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the entire world. This has been a tumultuous year for BreastScreen WA (BSWA), and it is timely to reflect on the disruption to the service and admire the resilience of our screening participants, and the amazing BSWA staff. After the precipitous close down on the 30th of March 2020, we rose Phoenix like in April this time last year. We had 11,000 mammograms to try and catch up. Trying to steer the service over the year has been difficult with such strong head winds. The screening catch-up went well, until we ran into the assessment bottle neck, compounded by the very prolonged time it is taking to replace the mammogram machine at Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital. Hopefully after almost 2 years there is now a confirmed timeline to replace the Sir Charles Gairdner machine.

I am inordinately proud of the BSWA nurses, clinical officer, and call centre staff who provided such authentically committed support and care for women waiting for assessment clinic appointments. I am extremely pleased and relieved to say that with the extended Christmas/New Year screening slow down and the support of Fiona Stanley Hospital, and Royal Perth Hospital Assessment clinics, and extra Bunbury clinics the time to assessment is now meeting National Accreditation Standards. As it is becoming increasingly obvious that there will be significant delays in opening the Joondalup screening and assessment service, it is good to see that there are some interim options that should allow us to continue with the COVID screening catch-up without compromising the screening to assessment performance standard.

Again, I would like to thank the whole BSWA, and the assessment service team for their unflinching commitment to provide, genuine care of the highest quality to our screening participants and their families.

Dr Liz Wylie

EveryWoman Expo

Every Woman Expo, held 25-27 March, was another great success, even more so this year, with the introduction of the Boronia mobile unit to the Expo for the first-time ever. Boronia was on-site all weekend, standing proud on the Expo floor, and attracting hundreds of women to BSWA's information booth.



Over twenty BSWA staff assisted at the event over the three days, and were kept busy speaking to over 750 women, booking in hundreds more for appointments at their local clinics, or screening them on the truck that same day. Many women felt the truck's presence at the Expo was a fantastic initiative, with some ladies stating, "I'm here so I might as well get it done".



BSWA has been invited to bring Boronia along to the Expo again next year. With the trial run being such a great success, BSWA can expect to achieve even more at next year's event.



Pictured above some of BreastScreen WA's Expo Staff

Executive Members Easter Visit

We had the pleasure of welcoming Graeme Boardley Director of Midwifery Nursing Services, KEMH and Don Coid, Director Clinical Services, KEMH who visited our head office with some delicious Easter treats.



Graeme Boardley and Don Coid with BSWA call centre staff

IT Update

Throughout March and April our IT team has been deploying a new assessment application to support our assessment centres. The application is extremely simple to use, and presents critical information in an easy to find format to help clinicians deliver a high quality medical service.

To date, the system has been rolled out to RPH, Bunbury and FSH with SCGH later this month. Extensive work has been undertaken by the BSWA IT team to update the PACS platform such that BSWA can expect to have tomosynthesis available for step down assessment at Bunbury and Mandurah in May.

Inaugural mobile visit to the Kimberley



BreastScreen WA's mobile screening unit Desert Rose visits the Kimberley region every two years. Reaching women in remote communities

remains a challenge and this year, for the first time the unit visited an Aboriginal remote community, Bidadanga and Lombadina and later in the year will be in Warmun. Aboriginal Program Officer, Kelly Cameron headed north to work with Aboriginal health workers (AHWs) in the communities and other organisations in the region to assist in rolling out of this new visit. Arriving into Bidadanga on Tuesday after Easter, Kelly met all the staff and worked with them to answer any queries about screening.



The next generation finding out all about breast screening with our radiographer Kath Knight

Desert Rose rolled in on Wednesday and Kelly and Kath, with the help of Ami the AHW set everything up and screened women. 39 women took advantage of the van being right there and the feedback has been positive.

Kelly then drove to Lombadina to work with Karolien the AHW, setting up the processes for the visit the next week. Desert Rose arrived on 12 April and screening started with women being brought from Beagle Bay, a much shorter trip than to Broome and back and One Arm Point women screened as well. Again, the feedback about Desert Rose being in the community was positive and the women looked forward to the next trip in two years' time.

Kath's perspective on the Bidyadanga and Lombadina visits

The following is a direct account from Kath Knight on how BSWA's first visit to the remote communities of Bidyadanga and Lombardina went:

Desert Rose (T3) rolled into Bidyadanga community just after Easter on a clear, hot 37 degree day. And were we the novelty of the day, The "Nguminah Bus" was in town. Dogs, Kids, everyone came for a look.

Bidyadanga is the largest Aboriginal community in Australia with a fluctuating population of 700-2000 people. Normally these ladies would have had to do the 366km round trip to Broome for their mammogram. We were provided with an Aboriginal health worker, Ami, to help bring all the community ladies to the mobile.



Kath and Ami out and about in the bus

Mornings were best, as afternoon time was for playing cards under a tree. We spent 2.5 days screening in Bidyadanga and the staff stayed at the Port Smith Lagoon Caravan Park 60km north of Bidyadanga. The park was a popular fishing location with a lagoon surrounded by mangroves (and at this time of year multiple massive mosquitos!).

We then moved north to set up the mobile van at the Djarindjin Roadhouse, this location was perfectly situated between the communities of Beagle Bay, Lombadina/Djarindjin and One Arm Point communities on the Dampier Peninsula 207km north of Broome. The road having been totally sealed in 2020.

Most of these ladies would also have had to do over 300km round trip to Broome in the past.

The Roadhouse manager Jeremy is a fantastic host and he was very excited to have us onsite. The fact that the water pump had just broken and the 3 phase power was currently being used for his emergency deep freeze, was not a problem that we could not overcome. He fired up the generator and power we had.



Set up at Djarindjin

Water was fixed by 5pm so we were able to wash off that red dirt and sweat. The roadhouse food consisted of the 24-hour slow-cooked beef brisket, which was fabulous (as long as you're not vegetarian)



Lunch with Beagle Bay Ladies

Over the 3 days we had all the local community ladies attend, they were very appreciative of the service coming closer to their homes, it made it so much easier for them being able to pop in when they had a minute or get a lift in with the local health workers.

All in all it has been a wonderful time chatting to the ladies and hearing their stories, in between squashing their ngumina (Bidyadanga), nyanga (Bardi), and having a laugh.

Big Thank you to Kelly Cameron for her hard work and community liaising, and to Jenna Govan for arranging the site and accommodation for us, she couldn't sleep until she knew we could sleep.

Kath Fiona and Chris



BSWA Community Engagement

8 March is International Women's Day (IWD). The theme for 2021 was "#ChooseToChallenge", putting a spotlight on the inequalities that still exist for women globally. Health Promotion attended two events to Celebrate IWD on Wednesday March 10. In partnership with Westerly Family Centre, BreastScreen WA hosted a Women's Health and Wellbeing morning in Rockingham.



The City of Kwinana also hosted a wonderful event in the Koorliny Arts Centre which featured a beautiful welcoming ceremony involving placing flower petals in a heart shape which symbolised inclusivity and togetherness as women. This event allowed women to connect and listen to everyday women sharing inspirational stories which included a gourmet aboriginal lunch prepared by Mooditj Koort Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre.



Welcoming Ceremony Heart



Diana Ryan - Health Promotion team member at Kwinana



BreastScreen WA banners lined the Terrace of Perth CBD during IWD week; On Friday 12 March the team had a display in Murray St Mall to engage women in Perth City. Mirrabooka Harmony Day event on 19 March provided another opportunity for staff to talk to community women about BSWA's program.

BSWA Staff Update



In February 2021, as part of the Department of Health Aboriginal Cadetship Program, Jessica Jackson-Reid started at BreastScreen WA. The program assists third year university students to complete their studies whilst gaining experience and confidence in a one day a week position at a compatible health unit. Jessica has already attended large and small events and will be working on redeveloping a community working group "Women in Partnership" with other Aboriginal and community based organisations and will be part of BreastScreen WA for 12 months.

"I joined the Department of Health Aboriginal cadetship program because I want to make a difference in the Aboriginal community regarding health outcomes. The Cadetship gives me experience and exposure to Aboriginal health whilst studying, to prepare me for a career in health once I become a qualified Social Worker."



We would like to welcome Carol Pragnell as the new Support Services Coordinator. Carol commenced her role with BSWA in January of this year and prior to this has worked for WA Health at Armadale Hospital, Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospital Group and Royal Perth Hospital. Carol worked with and trained clerical staff in the use of webPAS modules including Medical Records, inpatient and outpatients and PMI and was part of the Health Application Training and Support team training clinicians to use other health applications such as BOSSnet, the new electrical/digital medical record. Carol has a background in call centres, managing call centres across Australia, both regional and metropolitan. Carols' interests include spending time with her family, particularly her three granddaughters, as often as she can and loves to travel somewhere different every year whether it be within the state, another state or overseas.



This year we formally said goodbye to Coby Pearson who has moved over to North Metropolitan Health Service's Communication department as a Co-Ordinator looking after state-wide programs. Coby has been working at BreastScreen WA for just over 10 years and has become the go to person for all the design work, Facebook posts and Website changes. Coby also had an integral role with the website update in 2013 and was the main driver to increase the use of digital communications within BSWA. We wish her well in her new role and look forward to collaborating with Coby on many communications projects in the future.

Thankfully she will not be lost to us but returning to screen in the clinics once her baby is settled. We wish Natasha and her husband well!



Congratulations to Kim Finnegan who recently completed her training as a mammographic technologist. We wish her every success as she transitions from her role as a clinic receptionist to a mammographic technologist.

Albany Clinic Update



Natasha joined BreastScreen in June 2016 and has been an invaluable member of our staff. She has effortlessly worn many hats working in just about every department at EPP and in the clinics, and has done so with a smile. She has taken to every new task with aplomb and good humour. In fact, if she wasn't going on to her next adventure as a mum, she could have considered a career in juggling! Although her gift in multi-tasking will come in handy over the coming months.... Natasha has also completed her course of study and is now a mammographic technologist.



The Albany Clinic is progressing well with a builders completion expected to be sometime in May 2021. We are aiming to have the clinic open and fully operational by June 2021.

