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MPN Matters Issue 12 - December 2019



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**Let's support ground breaking MPN research by
award winning researchers at the University of
Western Australia!**



Professor Wendy Erber and her colleagues, Dr Kathryn Fuller and Dr Henry Hui at the University of Western Australia (pictured above), are undertaking research on a new technique to see if they can detect which MPN patients may be at risk of progressing to leukaemia or marrow fibrosis. It is hoped this may ultimately provide an alternative to the current method of utilising bone marrow biopsies for the purpose of detecting the first signs of disease escape or progression. Although only a minority of MPN patients are affected, it is not currently known who this might affect or when this will occur. By the time symptoms appear, it is generally difficult to cure. Hence a predictor of progression may assist in providing treatment earlier and possibly providing cures.

We all have small numbers of circulating stem cells (CD34+). In MPNs, the numbers are higher than those who do not have an MPN. They further increase in number with progression to leukaemia and marrow fibrosis. The team is about to commence looking at a new approach using these CD34+ cells in the blood to see if they have changes in the chromosomes that may predict progression or change in status of the MPN. They have some support from a University grant to get this started, and have formed a collaboration with MPN haematologists and scientists in Belfast to include samples from their patients.

The method the team will use is their own invention, and the one that won a Eureka Award (affectionately known as the “Oscars of Science”!) in 2018 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AvLxCLkAJc>). As you will see from the Youtube video it is a flow cytometry method that enables the study thousands of cells to see if the cell-of-interest has the chromosome change that may predict progression.

We are exceedingly fortunate to have researchers of such high calibre working on

MPNs in Australia. Let's get behind them!

Please support this ground-breaking MPN research in Australia this Christmas, and donate via the link below.

Support MPN AA - Make a Tax Deductible Donation

Better accessibility to MPN AA website information for non-English speakers

MPN Alliance Australia is pleased to advise that we have taken initiatives to improve accessibility to information on our website for patients and families in languages other than English.

We now offer treatment information on Hydroxyurea, Interferon, Anagrelide and Ruxolitinib in Arabic via our website. We are extremely fortunate to have been donated the services of an accredited Arabic translator.

Due to the substantial cost involved of translations, Arabic is the only language so far that we are able to provide. We hope in the future to have others but need to rely on the generosity of appropriately accredited translators.

We have also uploaded a Google translate button onto the website which provides our information in all the world's main languages. The translate button appears at the top left-hand corner of each MPN AA website page. This service is used by other respected organisations such as the Leukaemia Foundation and the Therapeutic Goods Authority.

As with the English language information on the website, translated information is general in nature, and it is the responsibility of all patients to ensure that they seek appropriate medical advice in the light of their own particular circumstances in relation to diagnosis and treatment of their MPN. It is not intended that patients rely solely on anything they may read on this website.

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