

Friday 3 October 2025

**OCTOBER IS LIVER CANCER AWARENESS MONTH –
A NEW SUPPORT LINE OFFERS HOPE**

Each year, over 3000 Australians are diagnosed with primary liver cancer, with only one in five people surviving beyond five years. The most common form of liver cancer – hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) **is now one of the fastest-growing causes of cancer-related deaths in the country.** “Left undiagnosed or untreated, liver conditions both common and rare can progress to liver cirrhosis, which significantly increases the risk of HCC – the most common form of primary liver cancer,” says Prof. Simone Strasser, Senior Staff Specialist in hepatology. “Given that 80-90% of patients with primary liver cancer already have pre-existing liver conditions – awareness of liver disease, and support for patients has never been more important.”

Until now, people facing this devastating disease have been left without support. Liver Foundation has launched a nurse led support line, offering a kind ear and expertise they can trust for patients with primary liver cancer and their loved ones. The nurse-led support line provides free access to expert and compassionate care and serves as an additional team member during a critical and overwhelming time.

For patients like Tony, 71, and his wife Kay, the support line would have been a gamechanger when he was first diagnosed with a potentially terminal liver cancer in 2022. “Having that support and guidance during the period of unknowns between tests, treatments, and appointments would have been so helpful,” he says. “It would have made such a difference for me and my family, especially in those darker moments where you feel quite alone and confused about what’s happened, and what’s still to come.”

While a diagnosis of liver cancer is complex and confronting, early detection and timely management is the key to increasing survival rates. “This is why raising awareness, improving diagnosis, and providing support for all forms of liver disease as well as liver cancer is critical,” says Prof. Strasser.

The support line provides an incredibly important service to patients and their loved ones, as people with liver cancer are usually treated outside of traditional cancer centres and so miss out on the extra support that people with other forms of cancer receive. This is particularly true for people in regional or remote communities, people with limited understanding of English, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Staffed by friendly nurses who are experts in primary liver cancer and underlying liver diseases, the line provides the opportunity to voice fears, ask pressing questions, and talk

without judgement. “You still see your doctor but if you have access to the nurse support line, you can get immediate answers to things you might have been stressing about for weeks,” says Tony. “Our hope is that we can help spread the word about the support line and take away some of the anxiety, trauma, and stress of liver cancer for other patients – there’s just such a need for this service.”

Liver Foundation is Australia’s peak body representing all people affected by liver disease and liver cancer. This support line was established with funding from the Department of Health & Aged Care under the Australian Cancer Nursing and Navigation Program. It reflects the federal government’s historic investment in increasing quality and equity in cancer care through the Australian Cancer Plan.

The FREE nurse-led support line is now available from 8:00am-6:00pm (AEST). Call **1800 841 118** and speak to a specialist liver nurse, today. Our nurses are happy to work through translators, TIS National or Auslan.

Media Enquiries:

Prof. Simone Strasser is one of Australia’s leading liver specialists. She is Head of Department and Senior Staff Specialist in the AW Morrow Gastroenterology and Liver Centre, and the Australian National Liver Transplant Unit at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and the University of Sydney. She is a Director of Liver Foundation and is a passionate advocate for her patients with liver cancer. Simone is available for interview or comment on behalf of Liver Foundation.

Tony is a commercial fisherman based near Forster on the NSW Mid North Coast. He and his wife, Kay, are available for interview or comment.

For more information or high-res images, please contact Liver Foundation CEO, Sally Castle sally@liver.org.au or 0414 099 534 or visit liver.org.au.

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