



MEDIA RELEASE

27/11/09

Be a man. Ask the van.

Men have a reputation for being reluctant to take or seek advice on their health or act early on any symptoms, but it is hoped a new partnership between Cancer Council Tasmania (CCT) and Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia (PCFA) will help to turn this around.

The Men's Health and Cancers Project, officially launched at Bunnings Moonah in the State's South today, calls on the joint resources of CCT and PCFA to promote men's health and raise awareness of cancer in Tasmania. The project will have a specific focus on prostate cancer, the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Tasmanian men.

CCT Acting CEO Deb Church said the project had three initiatives.

"We hope to raise community awareness of men's health issues, support men living with prostate cancer and their families and secure further funds to support this work," Ms Church said.

"With 1 in 2 men to be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85, Tasmanian men need to take their health seriously.

"If we can educate men about the symptoms of prostate cancer, for example, it can often be treated and cured when caught early."

In 2006, 487 Tasmanian men were diagnosed with prostate cancer, and it was the second most common cause of cancer-related death in Tasmanian men, after lung cancer, with 73 dying following a prostate cancer diagnosis.

Part of the awareness raising initiative is the ManVan, which is available to attend community and sporting events, workplaces, retail outlets, service clubs and educational institutions. Staff and volunteers trained in delivering men's health and cancer presentations, and in providing information and handouts, accompany the ManVan on all outings.

"Men traditionally don't visit their medical practitioner, so we hope to communicate health messages by taking the information to them," PCFA National Chairman Graeme Johnson said.

"We're asking them to step up and to 'Be a Man. Ask the Van'."

Bunnings Moonah Manager David Cook said it was important men took an interest in their health and that employers could help this happen.

“We will certainly be encouraging our staff to check out the ManVan during its visit to our store,” Mr Cook said.

Formed in 1996, PCFA is the national body for prostate cancer in Australia and together with CCT will work to lessen the impact of prostate cancer on Tasmanian men, their partners, families and community. Both organisations share a commitment to men’s health and funding research into the cause, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of prostate cancer, as well as raising awareness, providing support, information and advocacy on prostate cancer, other cancers and men’s health in general.

Those interested in a visit from the ManVan can contact the project team on 6233 2030 or email manvan@cancertas.org.au

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For more information contact Eliza Grey, Cancer Council Tasmania on 6233 4754 or 0411 444 55.