A Young Battler

Tom Hardyman was diagnosed with osteosarcoma at the age of 16, but for the last two years Tom hasn’t let this rare cancer stop him from living the life he’s always dreamed of.

In November 2016, a fit, bright and full of aspirations teenager was struck with disbelief when his doctor told him he had osteosarcoma in his right leg.

“In a way, I felt denial. I couldn’t believe it was happening to me,” said Tom.

He would go on to receive nine months of intensive chemotherapy followed by a major surgery replacing his knee joint with a metal prosthetic. Tom initially responded well to the chemotherapy and the prognosis was looking positive. However, 12 months on a regular scan showed a spot in his lung. Tom’s cancer had spread.

“We were in a sense getting desperate. I was looking at immunotherapy trials in the United States and was even thinking about getting him treated overseas. Then, almost out of the blue, Tom’s medical oncologist suggested an immunotherapy clinical trial,” said Leanne.

The clinical trial involves the administration of two immunotherapy medications, simultaneously. These drugs are designed to prompt the immune system to fight cancer cells. Tom was told he was a good candidate for the trial, especially as the lesion on his lung was quite small. Currently there are no proven immunotherapy drugs for osteosarcoma, but this trial felt like a positive step forward for the Hardyman family.

“It was at that point Tom and his family began to question what the next steps would look like. His mother, Leanne began her own research and came upon immunotherapy.

“Once again, I felt disbelief, I had a good reaction to the chemo. After going through such intensive treatment the year before, while simultaneously completing year 12 only to be told the cancer was back was a real kick in the guts.”

It’s hard on any family. Rare cancers are often the forgotten ones. I hope there will be more opportunity for there to be more trials in this space.

We are currently recruiting patients for clinical trials into the following cancer types:

- Breast
- Myelodysplastic Syndrome
- Multiple Myeloma
- Ovarian
- Pancreas
- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia
- Urothelial
- Prostate
- Head and Neck Renal Cell
- Lung
- Endometrial
- Gastrointestinal Bladder
- B-Cell Lymphoma
- Graft vs Host Disease
- Melanoma

If you would like to receive a copy of our newsletter via email and help us reduce associated costs, please email foundation@iconcf.org.au with your name and preferred email.
that could hopefully cure me, and others like me in the future,” said Tom.

The trial involves Tom being treated fortnightly with two-hours of post monitoring. It’s less intense and hasn’t come with as many side effects as his past treatment. This has also meant he has been able to spend more time with his friends and concentrate on study.

Through the bad days and the endless hospital walls, Tom still managed to complete grade 12 with flying colours and received an academic scholarship in engineering at QUT. His goal is to graduate university and be an engineer helping to design Formula 1 race cars.

“Having this goal helps me through this experience, I love studying engineering so much that I find it easy to become consumed by it. It helps distract me from anything negative that’s going on.”

Concentrating on study is only part of his support network. Tom ultimately thanks his incredible family for helping him get through it all.

“I’m a pretty positive person, I don’t like to dwell on things. My family is awesome, they’re so supportive and I couldn’t have gone through this without them. If I’m having a particularly bad day I usually like to cry it out with my mum, get it all out at once, then move on.”

When he was first diagnosed, he wasn’t afraid of telling his friends, however this time around he’s decided to keep it to himself, because he’d rather not be labelled the “kid with cancer”.

“I don’t want them to treat me differently, and even if you tell them that, people will still treat you differently. At the moment I’m just loving living life without my friends thinking I’ve got cancer. I just enjoy hanging out and having fun.”

His mum has taken 18 months off work to help support Tom and has often felt overwhelmed, but is constantly in awe of his strength and positivity.

“It’s pretty tough on the whole family. There’s constant uncertainty. Just when you feel it’s going well, something sets you back. Never having the time to recharge your batteries is tough. There are a lot of hurdles along the way but Tom’s attitude has always been to just get on with life. He’s been truly amazing through the whole thing,” said Leanne.

Tom completed the trial earlier this year, but unfortunately his cancer has spread and he is currently undergoing radiation therapy treatment. For Tom and his family, they are still grateful for the ongoing care and the chance to be part of a clinical trial. For Leanne, she just hopes there will one day be a cure.

“It’s hard on any family. Rare cancers are often the forgotten ones. I hope there will be more opportunity for more trials in this space. I would ultimately love for there to be an effective drug targeting cancers like Tom’s. Clinical trials are so important. And I’d say to anyone to give it a go, because you might just be the person it works for.”

Despite everything, Tom continues to live the best possible life he can, surrounded by family and friends and is driven by a clear goal and a motivation to keep going no matter what.

For more information on a list of current active clinical trials please visit our website iconcancerfoundation.org.au

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Flamingo Flies High

On 22 February cancer survivor and hairdresser to the stars, Carole Haddad, and Icon Cancer Foundation CEO Fiona Jonker hosted a cocktail evening at the Flamingo Lounge in Sydney.

The evening was in support of breast cancer awareness and clinical trials. Funds raised were donated to the National Breast Cancer Foundation and Icon Cancer Foundation.

Eight celebrities and various designers generously donated their time to design bras that were auctioned off on the night. The highlight of the night was when Kerri-Anne Kennerley took to the stage to model her bra designed by former RM Williams designer Jonathan Ward. Our ambassador, Chelsea Stutchbury also launched her new single ‘Heartstrings’, a touching song in memory of her Grandfather who passed away from cancer. You can purchase Chelsea’s album at an Icon Cancer Care Day Hospital, or on iTunes. Proceeds go to Icon Cancer Foundation. We’d like to thank all the sponsors, celebrities and those who attended on the night for your contribution in making this such a fantastic and successful event! You can view more pictures of the event on our Facebook page.
Describe your time on Survivor in 3 words: Challenging, awesome, enlightening

What motivates you? My main motivation is love and to share it abundantly.

Why did you decide to go on the Cambodia Cycle, and what do you hope to achieve? Amazing challenge and a chance to gain further enlightenment.

What will people expect from you on the cycle? Hoping that they will expect me to inspire them.

Why are you supporting clinical trials? In support of my brother’s cancer journey and a great opportunity to help inspire other people.

What is your advice to families going through a cancer diagnosis? Embrace the time with loved ones and seek the best advice and embrace life as best you can... and look for the miracles wherever you can.

You can join Mark ‘Tarzan’ Herlaar for a trip of a lifetime this July. Explore the beauty of Cambodia while raising funds and going on an inspirational journey with like-minded people with a singular goal to improve the future of cancer care.

Details
Dates: 13–24 July 2018
Price: $5,800pp (including international flights)
$4,800* [excluding international flights]
Minimum fundraising: $2,500
For more information, or to register please visit: iconcancerfoundation.org.au/events/cambodiacycle2018
* Accommodation and flight upgrades are available.

Walking to support cancer patients

Leonna Sellens is an Icon patient who is passionate about making a difference. She shares why she’ll be walking over 770kms in the name of research, this May.

LEONNA on why she is walking from Brisbane to Newcastle: It is about the people! The family and friends who have passed, those who are presently suffering and those who are yet to be diagnosed and commence treatment.

It’s about the other patients that I have met through my cancer journey. The friendships made during treatment create a bond like no other - one forged through mutual understanding and compassion, and through much laughter and copious tears. It’s a bond that strengthens as we encourage one another to continue the fight through some of the darkest of days.

It’s about the families and friends of cancer patients who have to watch their loved ones suffer or die from a cruel disease that has no prejudice. It’s for the children struggling to cope with the possibility of losing a parent and vice-versa. It’s about the doctors and nurses who work tirelessly to help make patient’s lives a little easier throughout treatment and those behind the scene searching for a cure.

It’s about the support I was given at Icon and all my medical teams. It’s about finding a cure! or at the very least better treatment plans with less gruelling side effects.

Why a walk? Because I can! Because I’m one of the lucky ones that is currently in remission, because remission is not a cure! Everyone knows somebody who knows of someone that has cancer. Everyone in their lifetime will be affected in some way by Cancer. I’m hoping that my small part will potentially make a difference to the lives of many. By raising much needed funds for research. I’m doing this for those that have sadly left us and for all that remain hopeful.

For more information and to support Leonna visit her Facebook page, search ‘Leonna’s Iconic Cancer Walk’
Remembering a loved one

With the loss of a loved one some families find comfort in asking for charitable donations in lieu of flowers or gifts. Icon Cancer Foundation graciously accepts gifts in memoriam to support cancer research and patient support services.

Please email foundation@iconcf.org.au or phone 07 3737 4500 to discuss further.

Any messages received with donations will be presented to the family in a card approximately six weeks from the first donation.

Help support cancer patients this Autumn and donate to Icon Cancer Foundation

At Icon Cancer Foundation, 100% of donated funds go directly to supporting research initiated by our clinicians and patient support services.

Name

Address       Suburb     Postcode

Phone    Mobile     Email

I wish to contribute a:  ☐ one-off donation  ☐ regular contribution of:  ☐ $10  ☐ $20  ☐ $30  ☐ $50  ☐ $100

Other: $  ☐ Monthly  ☐ Yearly  [please supply credit card details below]

☐ MasterCard    ☐ Visa    Name [as it appears on card]

Credit Card Number  Expiry Date

Signature

As a Registered Charity (CH1854) your donations of over $2 are tax deductible.

A receipt will be posted to the above address for donations of more than $2.

For enquiries, please phone 07 3737 4500. Icon Cancer Foundation | PO Box 3787 South Brisbane QLD 4101

Fundraise for ICF

Did you know, you can support Icon Cancer Foundation at any Major Community Event listed on the Everyday Hero website? We are a registered charity in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

When you sign up to an Everyday Hero major community fundraising event you can opt to raise funds for us! Simply signup to Everyday Hero and then check out all the community events on offer in your town. If you participate in any of these events and would like to support Icon Cancer Foundation, please ensure you select us as your chosen charity by searching HOCA Research Centre. All your money raised will go directly to us and will help us continue to raise much need funds for cancer research.

For more information visit the Everyday Hero website by scanning the QR code or visiting www.everydayhero.com/au/fundraising-events-to-participate-in