

## Cancer Council looks to a healthy future

► Continued from page 2

### DIMINISHING SUFFERING FROM CANCER

#### Patient and family support

In February 1986 the Council established a committee under the late Dr Fred Gunz which was to set the agenda for activities in the previously relatively neglected area of patient and family support. The principal objectives of this initiative were to

- give patients a voice in their care, in the sense of discovering what they saw their needs to be;
- provide information to cancer patients about their condition and its treatment in language virtually everyone could understand; and
- do something to remedy known deficiencies in their care, notably the lack of accommodation near cancer centres for patients forced to travel long distances for daily treatment and an under resourced palliative care system in need of expansion and additional trained staff.

Today, as a result of a partnership between the Council and a major Sydney teaching hospital, one hostel - the 28-bedroom Casuarina Lodge - stands within the grounds of Westmead Hospital. Soon, as the result of another such partnership, a second hostel - the 37-bedroom Blue Gum Lodge - will be built in the grounds of Greenwich Hospital to accommodate patients being treated at nearby Royal North Shore Hospital. The Council has also introduced fellowships to enable doctors and nurses to further their training in palliative care overseas and brings distinguished visitors in palliative care in medicine to Sydney to share knowledge with local colleagues.

The Council provides a number of other services to cancer patients and their families including a telephone counselling service and live-in carer crisis service.

#### FUTURE PLANS

The Council now has regional offices in Lismore, Newcastle and Wollongong and with local community support and participation will be reaching out to more country centres. Much of the impetus came from the Council's merchandise program which, since 1990, has drawn thousands of people into its orbit.

The Council's Act is being updated, the major change being to establish a board with expertise across its program areas rather than statutory representation of specific organisations. Greater use will be made of experts on a needs basis rather than relying on the many standing committees of professionals which presently exist. The board will continue to be composed of nine members (Dr George Rubin is Deputy Chair, having succeeded Dr Sue Morey at the beginning of 1992).

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed at the end of November with the Health Department whereby the Council, with funding from the Department, will undertake a number of programs on its behalf according to agreed performance criteria. The Memorandum will set the pattern of collaboration between the Department and the Council.

*Elaine Henry*  
Executive Director, NSW Cancer Council

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

### MEASLES

Six hundred and seventy-two measles notifications were received for 1992. The notification rate for NSW is 11.3 notifications per 100,000 population. Orana and Far West Region notified 75 cases of measles for a rate of 53.4 notifications per 100,000 population.

Of the 672 cases 87 (12.9 per cent) were less than one year of age and 269 (27.0 per cent) were less than five years of age. All children should be routinely offered measles-mumps-rubella vaccine at 12 months of age.

### RUBELLA

For 1992, 243 notifications have been received for rubella. The notification rate for NSW is 4.1 per 100,000 population. Hunter Area notified 55 cases of rubella for a notification rate of 11.2 notifications per 100,000 population.

Of the 243 cases 4 (1.6 per cent) were less than one year of age and 92 (37.8 per cent) males aged 15 to 24.

### ARBOVIRUS INFECTIONS

The heavy late spring rains and flooding in the Upper Murray have reached the far western area and all backwaters and billabongs are at high levels. As the water levels recede small pools will remain to provide an enormous number of potential breeding sites for the inland vector of arboviral disease *Culex annulirostris*. This could not have occurred at a worse time as the population of this mosquito explodes from late December through to February. With all the additional water to act as breeding sites the potential for very high population densities is likely.

There has also been an increase in the population of birdlife, native and feral animals that may act as the natural host for arboviruses. What this means in practical terms is that this year there may be an increase in Ross River virus infection (one of the arboviruses that can cause infection in human).

Alphavirus (this includes Ross River virus) infections are driven by three climatic factors: high rainfall, flooding and tidal inundation. Large parts of inland NSW have experienced both high rainfall and flooding while on the coast inundation is a regular occurrence. Depending on temperature, mosquito population densities and alphavirus activity, Ross River virus infection rates may be higher than usual.

There are a number of simple steps to take to avoid being bitten by a mosquito:

- wear loose fitting long sleeved shirts and trousers;
- apply insect repellent containing DEET to those parts of the body exposed to biting;
- lightly spray clothing with repellent;
- ensure insect screens are in good condition (don't forget the chimney);
- if there are no strong winds hang mosquito coils; and
- kill mosquitoes by swatting, spraying or using mats impregnated with insecticide.

*Terry Carvan*  
Senior Environmental Health Officer, South West Region.

**TABLE 1**

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFICATIONS BY HEALTH AREA AND REGION CUMULATIVE 1992**

Condition	CSA	SSA	ESA	SWS	WSAWEN	NSA	CCA	ILL	HUN	NCR	NER	OFR	CWR	SWR	SER	OTH	U/K	TOTAL
Adverse event after immunisation	3	3	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	1	5	7	1	1	2	5	-	205
AIDS	43	6	25	5	21	8	34	10	6	14	15	6	1	3	5	3	-	205
Arboviral infection	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	5
Ross River fever	2	2	-	-	6	6	6	5	8	24	112	32	60	10	25	1	-	299
Other arboviruses	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	3	-	-	8
Brucellosis	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Foodborne illness (NOS)	8	4	33	10	65	21	-	30	10	7	5	5	36	1	1	2	-	238
Gastroenteritis (instit.)	57	6	9	28	10	1	1	-	1	94	2	96	16	-	-	97	-	418
Gonorrhoea infection	71	29	165	25	26	1	25	9	3	14	23	13	19	15	8	9	-	455
H influenzae epiglottitis	-	5	1	3	7	3	4	-	3	7	6	6	-	-	1	4	-	50
H influenzae meningitis	5	6	4	6	6	8	18	4	8	10	6	5	2	4	5	7	-	104
H influenzae septicaemia	-	2	2	5	2	-	3	-	-	5	1	-	-	2	1	1	-	24
H influenzae infection (NOS)3	3	2	2	1	2	-	2	6	3	2	-	3	1	2	2	5	-	36
Hepatitis A – acute viral	95	48	119	37	51	12	91	8	32	30	134	127	92	13	12	11	1	913
Hepatitis B – acute viral	5	4	30	6	5	5	4	3	6	1	9	5	21	2	3	2	-	111
Hepatitis B – unspecified	429	435	21	756	422	34	338	37	29	128	64	48	31	25	14	29	2	2842
Hepatitis C – acute viral	1	1	4	1	10	1	3	1	3	-	8	6	4	3	-	2	-	48
Hepatitis C – unspecified	584	212	425	247	348	76	274	370	86	448	573	73	12	60	25	41	1	3855
Hepatitis D – unspecified	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Hepatitis, acute viral (NOS)	-	-	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	2	1	-	-	17
HIV infection*	69	24	221	16	30	8	37	8	3	26	16	-	3	3	3	6	195	688
Hydatid disease	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	5
Legionnaires' Disease	6	2	2	36	17	2	4	8	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	84
Leprosy	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	5
Leptospirosis	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6	2	-	5	1	-	-	-	16
Listeriosis	-	2	-	2	-	2	5	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	15
Malaria	10	7	8	4	15	-	23	2	8	4	8	7	1	1	5	3	-	106
Measles	54	82	9	127	57	31	29	11	13	100	30	32	75	7	4	11	-	672
Meningococcal meningitis	6	7	-	6	7	5	1	6	6	9	9	5	2	10	-	4	-	83
Meningococcal septicaemia	2	1	2	3	-	2	-	3	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	17
Meningococcal infection (NOS)	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	4	3	2	-	-	-	14
Mumps	-	-	4	2	3	-	1	-	2	4	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	20
Mycobacterial atypical	56	30	42	20	29	5	36	1	13	23	5	3	2	-	3	2	-	270
Mycobacterial tuberculosis	53	47	27	69	55	6	53	17	14	6	12	6	1	5	8	6	1	386
Mycobacterial infection (NOS)	13	3	4	1	5	3	7	-	5	6	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	49
Pertussis	7	11	7	11	18	14	27	10	5	14	29	3	-	1	1	7	-	165
Q Fever	-	-	-	-	9	5	-	1	1	8	75	32	37	10	4	2	-	184
Rubella	5	8	18	7	30	9	31	13	3	55	15	25	3	2	3	16	-	243
Salmonella bovis morbificans	1	3	1	-	2	1	2	-	-	3	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	16
Salmonella typhimurium	10	25	2	25	31	19	23	10	10	21	2	3	6	-	7	-	-	194
Salmonella (NOS)	24	38	40	48	38	29	85	17	9	32	52	30	24	23	14	17	-	520
Syphilis infection	134	45	130	58	38	10	43	2	8	17	108	48	120	17	13	2	1	794
Tetanus	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Typhoid and paratyphoid	4	2	6	1	3	-	5	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	24

**TABLE 2**

**VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASE NOTIFICATIONS BY HEALTH AREA AND REGION CUMULATIVE 1992**

Condition	CSA	SSA	ESA	SWS	WSAWEN	NSA	CCA	ILL	HUN	NCR	NER	OFR	CWR	SWR	SER	OTH	TOTAL	
Measles	54	82	9	127	57	31	29	11	13	100	30	32	75	7	4	11	-	672
Mumps	-	-	4	2	3	-	1	-	2	4	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	20
Pertussis	7	11	7	11	18	14	27	10	5	14	29	3	-	1	1	7	-	165
Rubella	5	8	18	7	30	9	31	13	3	55	15	25	3	2	3	16	-	243
Tetanus	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2

**TABLE 3**

**RARELY NOTIFIED INFECTIOUS DISEASES BY HEALTH AREA AND REGION CUMULATIVE 1992**

Condition	CSA	SSA	ESA	SWS	WSAWEN	NSA	CCA	ILL	HUN	NCR	NER	OFR	CWR	SWR	SER	OTH	TOTAL	
Brucellosis	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Hydatid Disease	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	5
Leprosy	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	5
Leptospirosis	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6	2	-	5	1	-	-	-	16
Listeriosis	-	2	-	2	-	2	5	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	15

**TABLE 4**

**SUMMARY OF NSW INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFICATIONS DECEMBER 1992**

Condition	Period		Number of cases notified	
	December 1991	December 1992	December 1991	Cumulative December 1992
Adverse reaction	4	-	4	31
AIDS	31	6	368	205
Arboviral infection	3	1	476	312
Brucellosis	-	-	2	1
Cholera	-	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-
Foodborne illness (NOS)	105	7	2861	238
Gastroenteritis (instit.)	58	1	138	418
Gonorrhoea	27	5	415	455
H influenzae epiglottitis	4	4	25	50
H influenzae B - meningitis	5	4	64	104
H influenzae B - septicaemia	2	1	12	24
H influenzae infection (NOS)	6	-	125	36
Hepatitis A	81	7	1100	913
Hepatitis B	127	23	1385	2953
Hepatitis C	161	44	800	3903
Hepatitis D	N/A	-	N/A	7
HIV infection*	69	60	774	668
Hydatid disease	-	-	7	5
Legionnaires' Disease	3	-	29	84
Leprosy	-	-	-	5
Leptospirosis	1	1	32	16
Listeriosis	N/A	1	N/A	15
Malaria	17	1	202	106
Measles	72	35	432	672
Meningococcal meningitis	8	4	56	83
Meningococcal septicaemia	4	-	19	17
Meningococcal infection (NOS)	3	1	42	14
Mumps	N/A	-	N/A	20
Mycobacterial tuberculosis	36	4	352	386
Mycobacterial - atypical	10	2	114	270
Mycobacterial infection (NOS)	5	1	163	49
Pertussis	4	4	48	165
Plague	-	-	-	-
Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-
Q Fever	13	1	185	184
Rubella	5	8	61	243
Salmonella infection (NOS)	95	13	1274	730
Syphilis	61	7	622	794
Tetanus	1	-	6	2
Typhoid and paratyphoid	1	-	61	24
Typhus	-	-	-	-
Viral haemorrhagic fevers	-	-	-	-
Yellow fever	-	-	-	-

\*Data to November only

**TABLE 5**

**NOTIFICATIONS OF NON-NOTIFIABLE SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS FROM SEXUAL HEALTH CLINICS JANUARY-DECEMBER 1992**

AHS Infection	CSA	SSA <sup>1</sup>	ESA <sup>2</sup>	SWS	WSA <sup>3</sup>	+WEN	NSA <sup>4</sup>	CCA <sup>5</sup>	ILL <sup>6</sup>	HUN <sup>7</sup>	NCR <sup>8</sup>	NER <sup>9</sup>	OFR <sup>10</sup>	CWR <sup>11</sup>	SWR <sup>12</sup>	SER <sup>13</sup>
<i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i>	-	8	157	-	44	5	3	15	40	2	6	7	-	-	-	-
Donovanosis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Genital herpes	-	12	406	-	53	18	6	29	50	1	9	14	-	-	-	-
Genital warts	-	105	907	-	260	56	8	191	159	18	21	10	-	-	-	-
Non-specific urethritis	-	9	577	-	274	26	1	70	68	5	8	5	-	-	-	-
Lymphogranuloma	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

<sup>1</sup> 1/192-31/8/92

<sup>2</sup> 1/1/92-31/8/92

<sup>3</sup> 1/1/92-30/9/92

<sup>4</sup> 1/3/92-31/11/92

<sup>5</sup> 1/5/92-30/11/92

<sup>6</sup> 1/1/92-30/8/92

<sup>7</sup> 1/3/92-30/9/92

<sup>8</sup> 1/7/92-30/11/92

<sup>9</sup> 14/5/92-30/11/92

<sup>10</sup> 1/7/92-30/11/92

<sup>11</sup> No SHC in the Region

<sup>12</sup> No SHC in the Region

<sup>13</sup> No SHC in the Region

TABLE 6

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE  
NOTIFICATIONS BY  
MONTH OF ONSET**

Condition	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Adverse reaction	4	8	3	1	6	2	-	4	2	-	1	-	31
AIDS	25	14	17	17	24	18	21	20	12	13	18	6	205
Arboviral infection	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	5
Ross River fever	14	40	85	77	39	10	11	7	5	6	4	1	299
Other arboviruses	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	3	-	8
Brucellosis	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Foodborne illness (NOS)	55	28	27	20	15	7	13	18	20	13	15	7	238
Gastroenteritis (instit.)	88	7	17	9	36	22	41	161	9	23	4	1	418
Gonorrhoea infection	31	22	49	38	49	31	56	42	52	40	40	5	455
H influenzae epiglottitis	4	1	3	2	4	10	4	4	4	5	5	4	50
H influenzae meningitis	5	9	10	5	11	13	9	13	9	11	5	4	104
H influenzae septicaemia	1	1	3	3	3	2	5	-	3	1	1	1	24
H influenzae infection (NOS)	5	2	1	2	2	4	5	6	1	3	5	-	36
Hepatitis A – acute viral	114	98	121	98	90	83	66	66	53	78	39	7	913
Hepatitis B – acute viral	10	12	18	21	18	9	5	5	10	3	-	-	111
Hepatitis B – unspecified	280	179	274	253	247	321	291	286	253	253	182	23	2842
Hepatitis C – acute viral	14	7	3	5	6	2	4	1	4	2	-	-	48
Hepatitis C – unspecified	235	256	316	254	450	400	432	417	339	412	300	44	3855
Hepatitis D – unspecified	1	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	7
Hepatitis, acute viral (NOS)	-	3	1	4	2	1	1	-	1	2	2	-	17
HIV infection*	95	74	72	60	72	52	56	45	37	45	58	N/A	668
Hydatid disease	2	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Legionnaires' Disease	1	9	3	42	8	5	8	3	1	2	2	-	84
Leprosy	1	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	5
Leptospirosis	3	2	-	1	4	1	2	1	1	-	-	1	16
Listeriosis	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	-	3	2	-	1	15
Malaria	12	5	16	9	14	17	13	8	7	3	1	1	106
Measles	48	31	34	22	41	31	22	26	61	109	212	35	672
Meningococcal meningitis	-	3	2	8	2	6	16	13	9	14	6	4	83
Meningococcal septicaemia	1	-	-	-	-	2	2	3	3	1	5	-	17
Meningococcal infection (NOS)	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	1	2	1	14
Mumps	3	5	2	-	3	2	1	1	2	-	1	-	20
Mycobacterial atypical	33	32	48	25	31	31	23	17	22	3	3	2	270
Mycobacterial tuberculosis	77	33	36	38	30	40	21	32	29	22	24	4	386
Mycobacterial infection (NOS)	7	5	7	2	3	6	-	2	3	6	7	1	49
Pertussis	5	15	25	7	6	9	13	10	18	22	31	4	165
Q Fever	13	12	11	13	9	22	21	28	20	22	12	1	184
Rubella	6	7	7	4	1	1	5	14	35	72	83	8	243
Salmonella bovis moribificans	1	1	1	2	3	1	-	2	1	1	3	-	16
Salmonella typhimurium	20	21	51	23	23	7	9	10	10	15	5	-	194
Salmonella (NOS)	99	59	57	52	41	33	37	42	24	32	31	13	520
Syphilis infection	54	85	70	83	88	95	89	77	51	53	42	7	794
Tetanus	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Typhoid and paratyphoid	6	4	2	-	3	2	3	2	1	-	1	-	24

\*Data to November only

TABLE 7

**VACCINE PREVENTABLE  
DISEASE NOTIFICATIONS BY  
MONTH OF ONSET**

Condition	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Measles	48	31	34	22	41	31	22	26	61	109	212	35	672
Mumps	3	5	2	-	3	2	1	1	2	-	1	-	20
Pertussis	5	15	25	7	6	9	13	10	18	22	31	4	165
Rubella	6	7	7	4	1	1	5	14	35	72	83	8	243
Tetanus	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2

**Abbreviations used in this Bulletin:**

CSA Central Sydney Health Area, SSA Southern Sydney Health Area, ESA Eastern Sydney Health Area, WSA Western Sydney Health Area, WEN Wentworth Health Area, NSA Northern Sydney Health Area, CCA Central Coast Health Area, ILL Illawarra Health Area, HUN Hunter Health Area, NCR North Coast Health Region, NER New England Health Region, OFR Orana & Far West Health Region, CWR Central West Health Region, SWR South West Health Region, SER South East Health Region, OTH Interstate/Overseas, U/K Unknown, NOS Not Otherwise Stated.

Please note that the data contained in this Bulletin are provisional and subject to change because of late reports or changes in case classification. Data are tabulated where possible by area of residence and by the disease onset date and not simply the date of notification or receipt of such notification.