

The Canberra Times

Index

Good Food	Liftout
Private Capital	11
World	12
Letters	14
Opinion	16
Arts	18
Business	20
TV Guide	34
Puzzles	35
Take 5	36
Weather	37
Classifieds	38
Sport	40

Phone Numbers

General	6280 2122
Home delivery	6280 2222
Classifieds	13 6355

Lotteries

Monday Lotto draw 3646:

20, 3, 31, 36, 6, 18.
Supplementaries: 9, 23.
Dividends: Div 1,
\$1,000,000; Div 2,
\$5,681.30; Div 3, \$805.40;
Div 4, \$48.60; Div 5, \$26;
Div 6, \$22.40.

Lotto Strike draw 4321:

20, 3, 31, 36. Dividends:
Strike 4: Jackpotted; Strike
3: \$1,239; Strike 2: \$90.90;
Strike 1: \$1.

Fridge door

TODAY

Canberra Ainslie Toastmasters: Ainslie Toastmasters provides a public speaking and presentation skills workshop on aspects of effective communication. Free for visitors. 5.30-7pm. Ainslie Football Club, Wakefield Avenue, Ainslie. Ph: 0415 261 310. Email: russell_e00@hotmail.com or see: ainslie.toastmastersclubs.org.

Cota ACT: Would you like to learn something new and then share that information with others in the community? Cota ACT is seeking volunteers aged 50+ to join the community education team. If you are interested, please email: ipepper@cotaact.org.au or ph: 6282 3777.

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Mosul hospital Humanitarian relief

ACT company at forefront of Iraq mercy bid

Michael Gorey

Australian health professionals are on the ground in northern Iraq as part of a global humanitarian relief effort to assist civilians in the war-ravaged region.

Canberra-based Aspen Medical has been engaged to manage and run a 48-bed hospital and is recruiting to employ more than 70 staff.

The latest World Health Organisation report says at least 250,000 people have been displaced from Mosul since October and 2.7 million need health services.

WHO contracted Aspen Medical to run the new facility south of Mosul at the request of the Iraqi government.

Aspen Medical co-executive chairmen Glenn Keys and Dr Andrew Walker said it was well equipped for the challenges following successful missions in the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and West Africa.

Mr Keys said there had been a significant increase in trauma casualties around Mosul, including many civilians.

Dr Walker said the facility would provide trauma care, maternity and paediatric services.

"People are still giving birth," he said.

"It's a city of 1.2 million people and life goes on, despite the horrors unfolding around them.

"Our mission is not just to provide these services but to build capacity.

"Our aim is to get this up and running and slowly give it back to the Iraqi people so they have a facility they can call their own, staff, manage and run.

"We see this not just as a humanitarian project, but as part of rebuilding the health spine in northern Iraq."

A former Australian Army officer, Dr Walker said security was paramount.

"The first thought we had was

that if we can't ensure the security of our personnel, we won't deploy," he said.

"We've taken every step possible to make sure there's personal protection of our staff.

"There are Iraqi forces between us and the front line, which is comforting.

"It's not for the fainthearted, but the people going are well aware of the risks and we'll do everything we can to assure their protection.

"We accept the risk, understand the risk and work to mitigate the risk."

Dr Walker said improvised explosive devices posed one of the biggest threats.

"The facility is completely self-contained and when people arrive they will stay for the duration of their deployment [four-to-six-weeks rotation]," he said.

"We're keeping any movement of vehicles to an absolute minimum to reduce the risk.

"Once they arrive, that's where they stay."

Victorian nurse Vesna Courtot is on her second overseas mission, her first in a war zone. She went to West Africa with Aspen Medical in 2014-15 during the Ebola outbreak.

"When I told my family and friends I was heading to a conflict zone their responses ranged from support to some questioning my sanity," she said.

"The dreadful situation for the people of Mosul has been unfolding before our eyes over the past weeks and as a nurse it is difficult not to want to help no matter what the environment is like," Ms Courtot said.

"I'm expecting to deal with mass casualties including burns, orthopaedic injuries and surgical emergencies.

"I am also expecting an opportunity to learn from Iraqi health-care professionals who have been dealing with this day in day out for years."

Libby Hill was given her breast cancer diagnosis in December. Photo: KARLEEN MINNEY



Telling kids the hardest part of cancer fight

Bree Winchester

It's the conversation you never, ever, want to have. Staring into the anxious faces of your small daughters and telling them you have cancer.

It was a conversation Canberra woman Libby Hill found impossible to have with Lily, 6, and Stella, 3.

"I was really concerned that if I told them I had cancer that someone in the schoolyard would say 'oh my grandma died of cancer' and they'd know what cancer means – that you can die from it," Libby said.

"And I didn't want them knowing that that was what I had, so initially I didn't put a name to why mummy was sick.

"But then I did some research and realised that actually they do need the facts and that children do need to know what's going on –

they only need the facts – so I was careful to give them enough information so that they could understand it."

The reality is ACT women are having this devastating conversation with loved ones more often than their state and territory counterparts.

According to statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, a higher proportion of women die from breast cancer in the ACT than anywhere else in Australia. The statistics, which are adjusted for age and population size, show that 24 out of every 100,000 women will die from breast cancer in the ACT.

Tasmania has the second highest age-standardised rate of breast cancer mortality, with 22 out of every 100,000 women killed by the disease.

A self-described wellness freak – "I quit sugar, I meditate, I buy

'Radical' asthma treatment unveiled in Canberra

Steven Trask

Australian scientists unveiled a "radical" approach that could revolutionise asthma treatment at a research conference in Canberra on Monday.

The research, described as a "world first", used subtle changes in diet to help keep the respiratory disease under control.

It was presented for the first time at the annual meeting of the Thoracic Society for Australia and New Zealand.

"This is the first time anyone has looked at the impact of altering the gut microbiome on asthma control in humans," the society's president Professor Peter Gibson said.

"We're at the tip of a new paradigm for how diet can be used to treat asthma."

Asthma is a chronic lung condition that affects more than 2 million people throughout Australia and at least 300 million across the globe. It is projected that between 2016 and 2019 the treatment of asthma will cost the Australian taxpayer at least \$4 billion.

The study, led by the University of Newcastle's Priority Research Centre for Healthy Lungs, used fibre supplements to change the composition of bacteria in the gut.

These changes were associated with reduced airway inflammation and had a beneficial effect on asthma control.

They were particularly effective in groups of asthmatics who struggled to control the disease, such as those who were over-

'We're at the tip of a new paradigm for how diet can be used to treat asthma.'

Thoracic Society president Professor Peter Gibson

weight or obese.

"For many obese asthmatics, using puffers to control their asthma simply isn't working and it has doctors baffled," Professor Gibson

said. "With almost two out of three adult Australians obese or overweight, this is becoming an increasingly pressing issue.

"These studies, which shed light on how diet can impact asthma by its effect on the gut microbiome and airway inflammation, hold particular significance for this group."

Professor Lisa Wood, the study's lead researcher, said the breakthrough could have a massive impact on the way asthma was treated.

"This ground-breaking research offers hope of a viable, complementary treatment for tens of millions of asthmatics around the world struggling to control their

asthma with existing medications," she said.

Another study that was presented at the conference probed the effect of fatty foods on asthma, showing that meals high in saturated fats could worsen inflammation and bring on symptoms such as coughing and chest tightness.

"These studies show both how diets high in fat can worsen asthma and how, conversely, a diet high in soluble fibre can help manage it," Professor Wood said.

"It illustrates just how vitally important it is that Australians eat healthily and how fundamentally important gut bacteria are to our well being."