

# **Herald Sun: 5 November, 2016**

## **HERALD SUN (MELBOURNE)**

By Grant McArthur 5 November 2016

### **Linda Defies Odds: Brave cancer survivor is determined to live life to the full**

FEW people would laugh about their superannuation running out while they still have a lot of living left to do.

But for Linda Wilson, the prospect of outliving her nest egg by defying pancreatic cancer is a dream worth celebrating.

Diagnosed with terminal cancer in early 2012, the Somers 59-year-old's prognosis was so bleak she was granted immediate access to her superannuation, though not some of the drugs hoped to prolong or improve her life.

But through surgery, two rounds of chemotherapy and finally an expensive yearlong course of new drug Abraxane, she has so far defied the disease that claims 93 per cent of its sufferers within five years.

Ms Wilson has travelled Australia to go fishing, ticked items off her bucket list and bought a new car while continuing to work as a nurse.

Now she is also hoping to fight for greater attention and research for more than 3100 Australians diagnosed with pancreatic cancer each year.

"In 2013 I was told I had approximately 6-12 months to live when I asked the question, but I didn't really like the answer," Ms Wilson said.

“I am unlucky to get pancreatic cancer, but I tell you, the last 4½ years I have never lived so much.”

In 2014 Abraxane was placed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme of pancreatic cancer as a frontline therapy, but because she had already undergone other chemotherapies the \$1300-a fortnight treatment was not subsidised for her.

Other bone marrowboosting injections were also not provided for Ms Wilson because she was deemed terminal.

Fortunately for Ms Wilson, the charitable John Logan Foundation stepped in to fund her Abraxane treatment through 2015.

As Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month kicks off this week, Ms Wilson is also preparing for a new battle. Recent scans have revealed a 2cm mass on her pancreas indicating the cancer

has returned, and doctors at The Alfred are now trying to determine if surgery to remove the organ could be successful in getting the entire cancer, or whether further chemotherapy is the best course of action.

“That is where we are at the moment. But don’t worry, I don’t give up easily,” Ms Wilson said.