

firstline

Autumn 2013

Positive insights into better healthcare PR
Quarterly news from Palin Communications

Blood test for ovarian cancer on the horizon

Palin teamed up with the Garvan Research Foundation on Wednesday 27th February to brief media on new research into a blood based test for ovarian cancer.

The Ovarian Cancer Research Group at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, led by Dr Goli Samimi, has identified specific biological changes (called methylation) that occur in the DNA of women who have developed ovarian cancer. These changes can be detected in the blood of patients with ovarian cancer, giving rise to the prospect of a blood-based screening test for women at high risk (especially those with a family history of cancer).

The technique being used by Dr Samimi is unique and a "world first" in that it explores whole gene sequencing using methylated DNA derived from the blood.

The announcement was covered on the evening TV news on networks TEN, NINE and SEVEN. Dr Goli Samimi also appeared live on The Project, Sky News and the ABC radio current affairs program "AM".

We sincerely hope this media coverage helps to progress Dr Samimi's research and raises funds for a "forgotten" cancer that causes so much pain and grief for affected women in our community.

Coverage of the Garvan Institute research into a blood based test for ovarian cancer on page 2 of The Daily Telegraph.



Anaphylaxis awareness via Sunrise

The prevalence of anaphylaxis and severe allergies is increasing in Australia, so the need for increased awareness is bigger than ever.

Palin Communications joined forces with Alphapharm (EpiPen) to communicate the importance of "Allergy Plans" as children start kindergarten or head back after the summer break.

We helped execute a targeted media relations program highlighting how parents and schools can prepare ahead of the back-to-school rush. "Blue Wiggle" Anthony Field and his son Antonio helped out as spokespeople. Antonio, who is set to begin kindergarten this year, has had a severe anaphylactic reaction to nuts.

Maria Said, President of Allergy and Anaphylaxis Australia, joined Anthony and Antonio on Sunrise and stressed the importance of allergy management.

Palin Communications secured a Sunrise segment and AAP story which was syndicated to 17 online news outlets.

Palin launches new online course in healthcare PR

A new online course that aims to improve practical skills and raise awareness of key challenges in healthcare PR has been launched by the Palin team.

The course is comprised of 16 modules covering topics like healthcare media relations, medical issues management, stakeholder relations, social media strategy, PR evaluation and health-related opinion leader management.

The course is designed to suit medical marketers looking to improve their PR



Anthony Field, better known as the "Blue Wiggle" talks about EpiPen with the Sunrise Morning Show hosts and Maria Said from Anaphylaxis Australia.

knowledge, PR consultants working in other specialties who want to transition into healthcare, PR interns with an interest in healthcare, public sector health promotion professionals and people currently working in the health sector who want to know more about PR and how it works.

Martin Palin says that a wide range of healthcare staff are now asked to play an active role in PR and social media.

"I think medical practice managers, pharmacy assistants, nurses, nutritionists and allied health professionals who are interested in PR - or perhaps it is becoming part of their role - could all benefit from the course."

"Lots of medical marketers, students and health promotion professionals have asked me about a practical PR course that can help them do their job better or improve their career options. So I decided to put one together." said Palin.

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Where evidence-based PR
drives health-related change



The Certificate in Healthcare PR (CHPR) course has been launched.

The course has been positively reviewed by the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA). Enrolment costs \$420+GST and gives students access to filmed introductory lectures for each module, reading lists, course notes, practical activities, writing tasks and multiple choice assessments for each subject. Successful candidates who satisfy the course requirements are issued with a formal certificate.

For more information about the Certificate in Healthcare PR go to www.CHPR.com.au

Palin team takes shape for 2013

The Palin team has continued to evolve in 2013. We've taken on an American import, turned a contractor into a full time consultant and welcomed a new international student into the fold.

Ishtar Schneider is our American import eager to sink her teeth in the Sydney PR scene. She has a media relations and not-for-profit background and is a graduate from the University of San Francisco. Ishtar brings a passion for social media and blogging to the Palin



Anthony, Anna and Ishtar (L-R) have come on board to help get the Palin team off to a flying start in 2013.

team. She has already delivered great results for clients as a Senior Account Executive at Palin, managing the media relations for medical conferences and co-ordinating health-related social media content.

Anna Greenhalgh joined the Palin team as an intern in mid-2012 and became a contractor later that year. We liked her work so much we offered her a full-time job. Now Anna is using her PR/Comms and Business degree as an Account Executive at Palin Communications. Interested and keen to learn, Anna loves seeing the integration of different tactics come together into an overall medical PR strategy. Originally from Tumbarumba in Southern NSW, Anna is now a fully transformed city girl.

Anthony Atienza is our latest international intern from Hanze University in the Netherlands. He's helping out on a range of projects and doing a major project on the evaluation of the new Palin course in healthcare PR. Anthony says: "It's great to see how I can work with the team to help develop an idea and then watch it turn into a full blown campaign. I'm keen to implement what I've learned at Uni and at previous jobs to assist the Palin team."

Shepherd Centre gets children ready for school

First day at school can be stressful enough. But imagine what it's like for children with a hearing impairment – heading off to a big school with all their new hearing classmates.

Palin Communications worked with The Shepherd Centre to showcase the graduation of children from early intervention programs at Shepherd into their first day at a "real" school.

'Big school' a bigger step for Murphy

By Estelle Grieplink

With schoolbooks to cover, lunchboxes to pack and uniforms to iron, the weekend before term one starts is sometimes more stressful for the parents than the students. For the parents of a child who is deaf or hearing impaired, the anxiety might be expected to be more intense. But this is not the case for Bianca Brownlow and her five-year-old son Murphy.

Murphy is a sociable, talkative boy who loves singing and dancing to songs from the Muppets and playing with his friends.

At first, it is hard to recognise he has profound hearing loss in his left ear, which is so severe that a hearing aid cannot help him.

Thanks to an ACT and NSW-based charity that helps hearing-impaired children to develop spoken-language skills, Murphy will be entering the mainstream schooling system on Monday.

"Everyone says, 'Oh, we don't notice he's got a hearing loss, because he's quite verbal and has a great vocabulary,'" Ms Brownlow said. But she said this is a result of the therapy offered through the Shepherd Centre and its early-intervention programs.

Visiting the centre once a month, Murphy went through auditory-verbal therapy. He was taught the importance of listening skills and how to pay attention.

Murphy knows to seek clarification if he has not understood a direction – a great skill for the classroom.

The biggest thing to come out of it for us was that Murphy knows how to advocate on behalf of his own hearing. He knows how to manage it himself," Ms Brownlow said.

If Murphy had not undergone therapy, he might not have had the skills to tune in to what he needed to in a noisy environment.

The chief executive Shepherd Centre, Jim I said he is proud of Murphy the centre's graduates for "big school". "We think wonderful affirmation of work of the kids, the parents, the therapists that these kids mainstream schooling," "They could have an incredible time at school, so to learn like any other normally child means that they're these opportunities that gets."

As for Murphy, he is smiling forward to starting at Blue Community School. "I'm to do maths, and learn to government schools on Monday. Continuing students will school on Tuesday."



TSC graduate Murphy Brownlow in his feature for The Canberra Times.

The aim of the PR activity was to demonstrate the effectiveness of The Shepherd Centre programs and the role The Shepherd Centre plays in preparing hearing impaired children for mainstream school.

The Shepherd Centre children were featured in stories in The Canberra Times (plus smh.com.au), The Hills Shire Times and Manly Daily. In addition, a segment on the local WIN news in Wollongong showcased a hearing impaired child attending mainstream school with his hearing twin sister.

Showcasing the success of these programs via the media will hopefully underpin longer term funding support for The Shepherd Centre in NSW.

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For more information visit www.palin.com.au or call Martin Palin on 02 9412 2255 or email to martin@palin.com.au or follow us at www.twitter.com/palincomm