

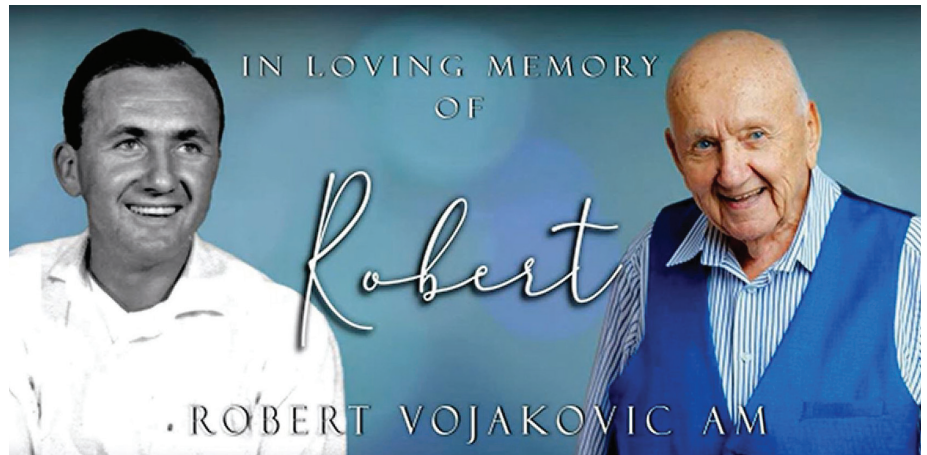
Dear members and friends,

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Mr. Robert Vojakovic AM JP, founder of the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia Inc (ADSA), Robert's enormous heart, fine intellect and unwavering mission to save the lives of workers and the community were instrumental in building and shaping the ADSA along with his wife Rose Marie. The family and staff are deeply grateful for the kind words expressed by many and the honour guard at Robert's funeral.

After 11 years of lobbying Robert's last bill the *Civil Liability (Provisional Damages for Dust Diseases) Bill 2024* passed through State Parliament on 17 September 2024. Thank you to the Attorney General and the parliamentarians who supported the bill through. The victory is bittersweet as Robert is not here to celebrate. The bill is also a compromise only offering half of what Robert wanted and what is available in the other states. Furthermore, it excludes those seeking compensation for their injuries from James Hardie.

On behalf of our President and Committee the ADSA extends our gratitude for the support of our end of financial year campaign. Your donations enable the ADSA to continue to care and support those affected by dust-related diseases. In October we will be setting up additional resources at the ADSA and some much-needed improvements.

Asbestos Awareness Month created by the ADSA, commencing in 1985 is now run throughout Australia. This month is full of activities to remind workers of taking care of their lung health and the public of dangers when renovating. The ADSA's 29th annual Ecumenical Memorial Service will be led by our President Mr Dave Hall who worked beside Robert for 40 years and fought for work safety at ALCOA. This year we will honour and remember Robert's dedication, those who have lost their lives to asbestos diseases, other industrial diseases and work-related hazards.



With 50 years at the helm, Robert has left us a legacy that is best summed up by Professor of Archaeology following a visit to our office. ***"Many thanks for a deeply inspiring tour of your offices and archives yesterday. I have rarely seen a more significant archive in terms of its social implications and its relevance to ongoing governance issues in Western Australia."***

Continuing Robert's legacy is essential to deal with the ongoing governance issues workers & the community are dealing with today. WA is an industry powerhouse and we are keen to develop an ADSA dust diseases research excellence team. To enable the ADSA to access research funding outside of WA.

Dedicated funds for dust diseases medical research in WA are not provided. Hence, regulation and prevention are the only tools at hand to save lives. But as the ADSA history demonstrates, when regulation fails and exposures occur, we need to be able to offer counselling, reliable treatments and a chance to live with quality of life.

Many thanks for your continued support and a special thank you to our members who pop in with lovely treats for our dedicated staff. It's been hard on everyone the last few months. So much appreciated.

Kind regards,

Melita Markey CEO



Asbestos and Dust Diseases Awareness Month

November Events

November Lung Health Check Campaign (Nov 6 - 28)

This November, in conjunction with asbestos and dust diseases awareness, we'll invite workers to schedule a lung health check. Early detection leads to early intervention. Lung cancer, the most common form of asbestos disease today is estimated at 4.2 times the rate of mesothelioma. Stage one lung cancer is treatable.

Silicosis is difficult to detect as can be asymptomatic or manifest in an autoimmune response. Painful joints, fatigue one day and feeling okay the next. Early detection is challenging but ADSA has partnered with lung function testing organisation, Respiratory Testing Services (RTS), to provide testing beyond basic spirometry, at our office and is exploring biomarker research, to detect early disease, with Asbestos and Dust Diseases Research Institute in NSW.

Federal Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency Online campaign November

Look out for a series of helpful guides and videos produced by the National Eradication Agency, we'll make sure they're on our website for those who don't access social media.



ADSA 29th Annual Ecumenical Memorial Service

9.30am -10.30am Friday, 29 November, 2024
Redemptorist Monastery, Vincent St North Perth

Please join us at the 29th Annual Ecumenical Memorial Service to honour and remember those who have lost their lives to asbestos diseases and other work-related hazards. RSVP (08) 9344 4077.

Please send in photos of loved ones for our pictorial remembrance run during the service to ecumenical@asbestosdiseases.org.au

ADSA Annual 4 Ball Ambrose Golf Fundraiser for ADSA Pastoral Care Services

When: Sunday 23 February 2025 at 6:30am

Where: Meadow Springs Golf & Country Club

Cost: \$100 per person (all inclusive)

Now in its 12th year the ADSA Golf day is popular golf competition, so we encourage you to register your teams early and we look forward to seeing you on the green. As always we are in awe of our very generous sponsors and donors who enable the prizes and items for the fundraising auction. Big thank you to Jim from Rockingham RV for the hole in one prize.

For more information contact:

Meadow Springs Golf Club

email: functions@msgcc.com.au or (08) 95816002

Dave Hall - ADSA President

email: hallsafe@westnet.com.au or 0428 817 151

Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia Inc

email: info@asbestosdiseases.org.au or (08) 93444077



Engineered Stone Ban Update

Australia is leading the way with a ban on engineered stone. But there is a lot of education required by industry to understand or implement these as evidenced by this recent picture at a work site in Perth this year.

From July 1, the supply, installation, or processing of engineered stone slabs, panels, and benchtops in WA is banned. However, work carried out between July 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, under a contract entered before December 31, 2023, is exempt from this prohibition. Further regulations for high-risk silica work, including silica risk control plans, training, monitoring, and reporting, will be implemented starting in September 2024 across industry except for mining.



Legal update

It's done the Dust Diseases – Provisional Damages Legislation has passed the final debate and is now heading to the Governor General to become legislation. Eleven years in the making and we are so grateful to the Hon Kate Doust MLC who has never given up on this legislation pictured below with Hon Matt Swinbourn MLC who has also been a great support of the ADSA and this legislation. Whilst we're happy to have this legislation in place despite the many obstacles there are two limitations;

- 1. James Hardie victims will not have access to Provisional damages;**
- 2. The legislation is only half of what was proposed missing the Gratuitous Services" part.**

Thank you to the team at Slater & Gordon and Mr Marcus Cocker for their time, and expertise to assist the ADSA in developing the new legislation. We've got a lot of work to do to get the next half of the legislation through Parliament in the next term of Government and lobbying the James Hardie Trust to open the deed to let Western Australian's access compensation from the fund.

We hope that other organisations benefiting from ADSA's law reform work will consider contributing to the cost of lobbying and law reform. Donations to the ADSA are - tax deductible.



Medical Research Update

The ADSA was privileged to join the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Thoracic Oncology Group of Australasia Ltd (TOGA). The focus on Lung Cancer Screening and Care.

We can report back to members that the meeting was buzzing with information from Clinical Trials, Therapies to assist the body's immune system to "mop up" residual cancer cells unseen after successful surgery to resect tumours and many other emerging ideas and drug therapies.

We were also privileged to hear from a younger cohort of emerging specialists and scientists leading the way in adopting an inclusive model of health care. Removing judgement, advocating for elder Australians and considering cultural and linguistic factors when trying to create accessible treatment to all Australians. Big shout out to the Cancer nurses who also presented on the psycho-social needs of patients.

Latest Research Trials

The ADSA is liaising to bring some of the newest research trials and their Doctors to join the ADSA information sessions run by our Pastoral Care Group. Please email info@asbestosdiseases.org.au if you would like to be on our mail list for updates.

New Research from ACT University - says higher risk of mesothelioma and other cancers from contaminated homes

Recent research by ACT University found that people living in asbestos-contaminated homes had a 172% increased risk of mesothelioma and excess risk for lung and colorectal cancer when compared to the general



population. (see memorial to the Mr Fluffy home insulation mesothelioma victims on the back page).

For more details, see the ACT Asbestos Health Study II Final Report.

Asbestos Review Program Update

The ADSA has scheduled a meeting in November to review the program with NCARD and the University of WA regarding feedback from patients confused about whether the program is suitable for reviewing all their asbestos diseases concerns. Especially those at higher risk of contracting mesothelioma through potential genetic factors for example, they have lost parents, siblings to mesothelioma.

The asbestos review program is designed to monitor the development

of lung nodules in those exposed to asbestos which in turn could lead to asbestos related lung cancer. They also look for cancer bio marker indicators in the blood samples. It is important work as we know there are higher rates of lung cancer in this cohort of patients. However, the radiological guidelines for mesothelioma and interstitial lung disease recommend CT scans must be taken in two positions for best opportunity to identify any changes/signs of disease. The review program only takes one view which is the recommendation for lung cancer guidelines. We will keep you posted on the outcome. In the meantime, please keep sharing your results with the ADSA and based on your situation, our GP can review for additional scan if required.

Memorial Petition Update - **We are not giving up!**

We have sad news to report after almost a year of waiting the State Government has rejected our petition of over 7,000 signatures for a lasting memorial for the ongoing Wittenoom tragedy. ADSA remains committed to find a solution. We'll be travelling to Canberra to view the memorial for the Mr. Fluffy asbestos insulation victims and meet with local ACT politicians to understand why they felt it was important enough to approve and fund for their voters.

It's disappointing that the value to mental health and healing was not a consideration in the decision for the thousands of family members affected by the loss of loved ones. However, there was one useful piece of feedback raising a concern to make sure that if we had a memorial we needed to have a process to check everyone's names were recorded and listed correctly. To assist us with this process can you please send in names of loved ones you've lost so we can match these against our register to: info@asbestosdiseases.org.au. The sad irony is we would be adding names to the memorial regularly if we had one. We can think of three former Wittenoom residents and now patients, diagnosed in the last few months who will not see the end of this year.

Real Memorials don't have to be expensive. When the Jewish people first created the holocaust memorials around the world, they asked for unused, old sites that needed remediation and planted trees and looked after them. As discussed in this newsletter many times, memorials are important not only for the families and friends of those lost to this disaster, but also as an important reminder of poor corporate and regulatory behaviour at a point in time. In this case when the desire for state development over regulation and put profit before lives.

It's been suggested by the Shire of Ashburton (Wittenoom) we should make a digital memorial at over \$250,000k - we note the Shire didn't offer up any cash. They're obviously so disinterested they hadn't noticed there is a digital history/ memorial available, made from ADSA resources, known as *Australia's Secret Chernobyl* with over a million views on YouTube - google it. It's had great attention internationally with travel agents using snippets warning their customers not to travel to Wittenoom when in WA/Australia.

The Canberra memorial for victims of the Mr Fluffy asbestos home insulation contamination is real, stunning, peaceful and situated in the National Arboretum. The Arboretum is described as a mosaic of living forests and gardens with breathtaking views. They've carved out a beautiful place of reflection for families and friends of those lost to mesothelioma.



World Trade Centre Memorial in New York with every name.



Canberra Arboretum Mr Fluffy Memorial.

When you consider the Wittenoom death toll is the second highest in the world for an industrial disaster and still on going, greater than the world trade centre, greater than the Bali bombing, we need to ask why? Please write to your local MP's perhaps quoting another well-known politician.

PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Book a Health Check

To schedule a health check with our caring medical team, please call (08) 9344 4077. Working with RTS enables our lung function testing to go beyond standard spirometry testing. Identifying several respiratory conditions, including asthma, COPD, fibrosis, bronchiectasis and pulmonary hypertension amongst others. These are often associated with early-stage dust diseases.

