



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**8 February 2017**

### **Woman living with ovarian cancer ‘bares all’ at Parliament House to raise awareness**

Trudy Crowley, 44, a wife, mother and grandmother diagnosed with Stage 4, Grade 3 incurable and inoperable ovarian cancer in 2016 has today spoken at Parliament House to raise awareness of ovarian cancer.

In recognition of February’s Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, Ms Crowley addressed the Minister for Health, Leader of the Opposition and other Members of Parliament at a special breakfast held this morning. She told of her harrowing ordeal and being given just 12 months to live.

A tireless campaigner, Ms Crowley who, despite her 2016 diagnosis, has made it her full-time job to raise awareness and funds for ovarian cancer, has raised in excess of \$40,000 for Ovarian Cancer Australia through her *Nude Lunch – Ovarian Cancer Exposed* event, which was mostly organised from her hospital bed.

“Cancer is confronting, it’s uncomfortable and it leaves you feeling raw and exposed,” Ms Crowley said. “It strips away your dignity and it breaks the hearts of those you love. I am not here to sugar coat the reality of being diagnosed with ovarian cancer. I am here to give you the naked truth,” she said.

“For me, the naked truth is that my current treatment is not helping and my cancer is still growing. I need treatment every three weeks just to stay alive.”

Every year in Australia, approximately 1,550 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer and more than 1,200 succumb to the disease. Only 43 per cent of women diagnosed will survive five years post diagnosis. This is well below the average for all cancers in Australia.

As is the case for many women presenting with the common signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer, Ms Crowley was initially misdiagnosed.

“I presented to my GP with what was thought to be appendicitis only to be sent home by a surgeon who instructed that he didn’t need to see me,” Ms Crowley said.

A later CT scan revealed three enlarged lymph nodes on the right side of Ms Crowley’s stomach, which was initially thought to be lymphoma, a disease related to the leukaemia Ms Crowley lost her mother to.

Ms Crowley was assured by doctors that ‘they had got it early’, despite not knowing what ‘it’ actually was.

**-MORE-**



“Then came the biggest slap in the face. I was diagnosed with Stage 4, Grade 3 inoperable and incurable ovarian cancer – an aggressive cancer that had been silently working within me for the last six months.

“I may have only 12 months, but for me this is just a number – I have so much more to do and if I am granted one final wish, it is my hope that together we can make a difference for women and their families living with ovarian cancer,” she said.

Earlier this month Ovarian Cancer Australia welcomed the listing of a drug treatment for advanced ovarian cancer, olaparib, on the PBS. Although not a cure for the disease, the listing has been heralded as the most significant development in treating advanced ovarian cancer in 30 years as it delays disease recurrence while preserving a good quality of life for women with advanced ovarian cancer and a BRCA gene mutation.

The CEO of Ovarian Cancer Australia, Jane Hill, urged all Australians to #KnowAskAct, the call to action of this year’s awareness campaign.

“The numbers are telling. Too many women are dying from this devastating disease,” Ms Hill said. “Don’t let another Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month pass without knowing the signs and symptoms, asking your family members about your family history, and taking action to raise funds and awareness.

“Host an Afternoon Teal fundraiser this February and help us reach every Australian with the message to Know, Ask and Act,” she continued.

All Australians can show their support by purchasing and wearing a teal ribbon, particularly on Teal Ribbon Day, Wednesday 22 February, 2017. Teal ribbons are available for \$2 from Chemmart Pharmacies, Terry White Chemists, or Chemplus stores nationally, as well as from [www.ovariancancer.net.au](http://www.ovariancancer.net.au)

Hosts can register their Afternoon Teal by visiting [www.afternoonteal.net.au](http://www.afternoonteal.net.au) or by emailing [afternoonteal@ovariancancer.net.au](mailto:afternoonteal@ovariancancer.net.au)

**The four key symptoms of ovarian cancer are:**

- **Abdominal or pelvic pain;**
- **Increased abdominal size or persistent abdominal bloating;**
- **The need to urinate often or urgently; and**
- **Feeling full after eating a small amount.**

**-ENDS-**

For more information and requests for interviews, please contact:  
Penny Fannin, P: 03 9289 9702 | M: 0417 125 700 | E: penny.fannin@ovariancancer.net.au

Website [www.ovariancancer.net.au](http://www.ovariancancer.net.au)  
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