

**ROTARY TASMANIA COMMUNITY CARE
MORNING TEA TO SUPPORT ROTARY TASMANIA
GYNAECOLOGICAL CANCER PROJECT
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2023**

Good morning everyone, I warmly welcome you all to Government House. Thank you for joining us for this very special morning tea in support of women who are living with ovarian or other gynaecological cancers. May I also acknowledge their carers who are with us today.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their continued connection to land, sea, and waters. I acknowledge the impacts of colonisation upon our First People and commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

I would like to acknowledge here among us:

- Bob Calvert, Rotary Tasmania District Governor
- Biddy Fisk, Chair of Rotary Tasmania Community Care

It is estimated that nearly 6,800 women were newly diagnosed with a gynaecological cancer last year. More than 1300 of them were diagnosed with ovarian cancer.¹² It is concerning that these cancers are comparatively under-researched.³

Symptoms of ovarian cancer are not obvious, with most symptoms being either silent or explained by other causes. It is difficult for the disease to be detected early and, therefore, harder to treat. Both the disease and treatment are painful and debilitating.

Despite the difficulties that accompany the disease, women like yourselves in your fight against these cancers show strength, resilience and determination.

¹ <https://www.canceraustralia.gov.au/cancer-types/gynaecological-cancers/statistics>

² <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/types-of-cancer/ovarian-cancer>

³ <https://shegynaetas.org.au/what-we-do/>

May I not overlook the dedicated people who care for and support you. They stay with you on your journey of diagnosis, surgery and treatment, which would be difficult and overwhelming without them. May I acknowledge the critical role carers play in the fight against the disease.

But there is much we can do to make a difference in the lives of those who are affected by the disease. We can raise awareness about its impact on those living with the disease and their carers. We can highlight the need for more research to better understand, detect, and treat the disease.

This month is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. Rotary Tasmania has initiated the Rotary Tasmania Gynaecological Cancer Project, which aims to raise community awareness about the disease, support those living with the disease and to raise funds to support access to clinical trials in Hobart. Through special events such as this morning tea, we can support women around our State who may find it difficult to access trials in Hobart. This is a wonderful and much needed initiative.

This morning tea is just one small way that we can show our support to patients, and appreciation to carers and medical professionals. So, please enjoy the morning tea, and I look forward to meeting you.

Thank you.