

CANTEEN NEWS

January 2022



What's inside

- Meet Abbey, one of our incredible youth ambassadors
- Learn how our Robots Service is supporting young patients to stay connected
- The unbelievable camel trek funded and hosted by a Canteen regular giver



Message from the Chair of the Board



Happy New Year! I'm so proud of the work of Canteen this past year. I want to celebrate all the achievements across the organisation and how we offered the support that young Australians needed as they continued their cancer journeys. A highlight for me was how we were able to shift between online and in person support to ensure our young people who may have been physically isolated, never felt alone.

At Canteen, we are looking forward to 2022 in which we can grow our services, be at the forefront of leading research and, most importantly, be there for any young person needing support when cancer crashes into their lives.

However, this is a journey that we can't go on alone. 72% of our funding comes from the support of generous people like you. It's thanks to the support of our wonderful family of donors that we've been able to continue our work during the tough times of the pandemic and it's through your support that we'll continue to be there for young people in the years ahead.

There's something undeniably special about Canteen and our culture of placing young people at the heart of everything we do. Thank you for supporting us throughout the hard times, even as life became more difficult for all of us, you have my deepest thanks.

Kind regards,

Joey Lynch

Chair of the Board and cancer patient



Message from the CEO

I would like to say a huge thank you for your support as we continue our commitment to being in the corner of every young Australian when cancer crashes into their lives.

This past year, we've been able to reach our young people both digitally through our online service, Canteen Connect, and when safe to do so, in person with face-to-face programs and support. Listening to our young people, we know this hybrid approach works for them and it's an important way to provide the same level of support to every young person no matter where in Australia they live.

In this issue of our newsletter, you'll hear from one of our incredible young people and Canteen youth ambassadors, Abbey, whose story shows just how vital it is for young people to have access to tailored individual support when they need it most.

Technological innovation continues to be a key focus area at Canteen and a way to ensure we can reach and support even more young people impacted by cancer. I'm excited to introduce our Robot Service in this issue. The impact of this life-changing service has already been felt by many young patients across Australia and we look forward to developing this important service further.

I can't thank you enough for your generosity and support. With your help, we can continue to change the lives of young people living with cancer.

Thank you,

Peter Orchard

Canteen CEO

Meet Abbey

Canteen youth ambassador, 18, whose dad passed away from cancer.

I was just 15 when my dad was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Mum and Dad sat us down for a family meeting. The words “I have cancer” came out of Dad’s mouth and in that split second my world fell apart.

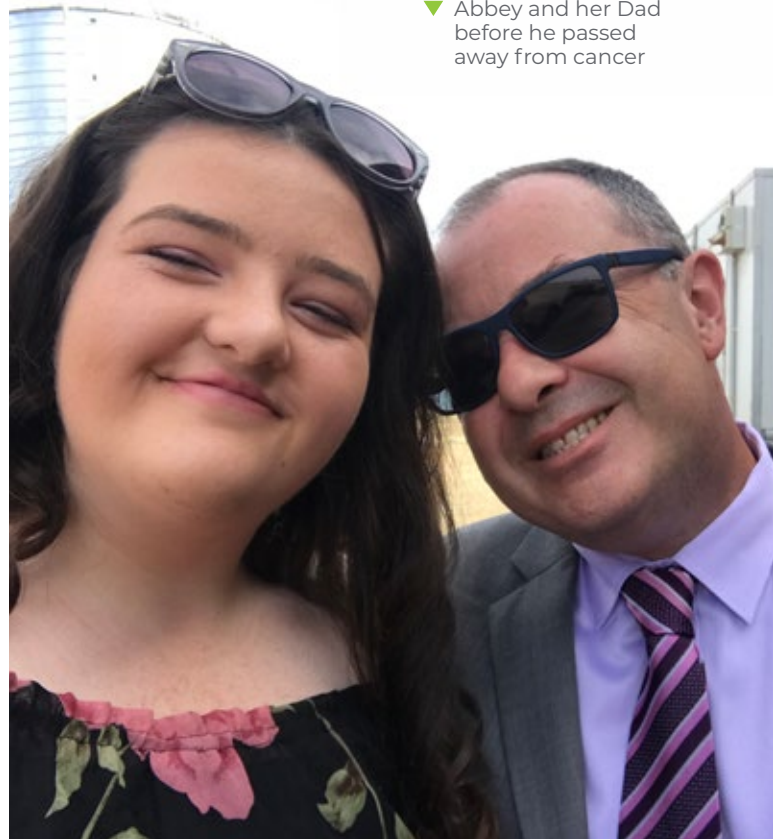
Only five months later, my dad passed away.

It all happened so quickly, it felt like one minute my dad was there and we were enjoying our lives as a family and the next he was gone. Nothing felt the same.

When Dad passed away, I was struggling. When you haven’t been through something like that before, you don’t know how to deal with your grief and emotions. At school, things were hard as well. Friends don’t understand what you’re going through unless they’ve been through it too.

After losing Dad I knew I needed some extra support, so I reached out to Canteen.

Having somewhere to turn, where people truly understand what I need to get through my grief means everything. I have my key worker, Georgia, and she’s always there when I need her. Georgia is just a text message away and works to make sure I have the support I need.



▼ Abbey and her Dad before he passed away from cancer

I really don’t know where I’d be without the support of Canteen and people like you. Not only did Canteen help me understand my grief, but they also helped me to find purpose.

Through guidance, I’ve realised my passion for helping others. My goal for the future is to give back and help other people like how Canteen has helped me.

Thanks to your amazing generosity, I didn’t have to go through the loss of my dad alone. Thank you.

▼ Abbey (far right) with friends at a Canteen program



Every day 58 young people have a parent diagnosed with cancer. Thank you for being there when they need it most.

The trip of a lifetime

Hosted and funded by a Canteen regular giver

In September last year, seven young people (18-25 years) set off on a totally unique experience. Along with Canteen staff and a medical volunteer, the group spent five days in the Pilbara, WA. Incredibly, this amazing opportunity was created, hosted and completely funded by one of our incredible supporters, Paul Butcher.

The young people described it as a life-changing experience, where they were able to check out from the realities of cancer and immerse themselves in the beautiful Yinhawangka Country.

“Pilbara Camel Trekking and Cultural Tours started eight years ago but trekking the outback with camels had been a lifelong dream of mine. My wife Roma and I decided to combine my passion for camels and adventure, with her passion for culture and connection, to offer the journey of a lifetime through the beautiful Pilbara.

Canteen’s work is so important, and I’ve been a CanDo family member for a number of years, so over the last three years as we trained our camels, we had the idea of a Canteen trek. The thought of offering young people, who have been through so much, this opportunity to experience the Pilbara,

meet traditional owners and have an incredible camel adventure was so exciting.

I found the whole experience completely rewarding. My highlight from the trek was introducing the group to my family and sharing Indigenous culture around the campfire together. From this experience, I came to admire the optimism and zest for life I saw from these incredible young people.”

Paul Butcher, Canteen regular giver and co-founder of Pilbara Camel Trekking & Cultural Tours

Highlights of the trip



Riding and walking alongside camels for the duration of the trip



Experiencing local culture with Yinhawangka people



Sleeping in swags under the Milky Way



A day trip to Karijini including a two hour walk along the gorge

▼ Canteen young people camel trekking through the Pilbara region, WA





Thanks to you, Canteen hopes to offer many more experiences like this in 2022. Every donation, no matter how big or small, contributes to supporting young Australians to cope with the challenges cancer brings.

▲ Canteen young people alongside Yinhawangka man, Scott, who shared his Country and culture



"I enjoyed every part of the trek, one of my highlights was meeting Roma and Paul's family and listening to their stories around the fire. I loved how the local Paraburdoo and local Indigenous community got together to create such an immersive educational experience for us.

I can often feel as though the world is against me and that cancer is something that is holding me back from what I 'could have achieved'. A trip like this reminds me how lucky I am to be where I am, and that cancer can also be turned into a positive through the many opportunities it opens up. It also allowed me to enjoy it with others who are in a similar situation and make new connections."

Baxter, 20, cancer survivor



"It's hard to say what I loved most about the trip because it was so amazing. We loved being so close to the camels and trekking with them throughout the week.

I really enjoyed hiking across the Pilbara region and learning about our First Nations peoples and their land, coming from an elder it was very special.

This trip was an amazing experience, it was my first Canteen program which made it special, and definitely helped me escape before I needed to go back to have my tests done.

To Paul, Roma and Canteen's generous donors, thank you for supporting us, your donations are what makes these things possible."

Amy, 25, cancer patient

We wanted to say a huge thank you to Paul and Roma for making this trip of a lifetime possible. We have been truly overwhelmed by your generosity and support to young Australians impacted by cancer and know it meant the world to them.

Mental health and wellbeing at Canteen

Young people can be significantly impacted by their own or a family member's cancer diagnosis, which can lead to heightened levels of distress, and the need for professional help to cope with difficult feelings. Young people are also more likely to be at risk of mental health issues than their friends, who aren't experiencing cancer in the family.

Connection remains a vital touchpoint that has the potential to create lasting positive impacts on young people who need support.

Canteen recently ran two of its therapeutic programs online to facilitate vital peer connection and provide support

- **Places You'll Go** – which brings together young cancer survivors aged 12-17 so they can learn strategies for coping with life after a cancer diagnosis.
- **SPACE** – for young people aged 12-25 in active treatment to learn how to strengthen their coping skills and help manage the impact of their cancer experience.

“When our young people speak, we listen. We have counsellors listening to them every single day and we have young people who listen to each other on platforms like Canteen Connect.

Young people are going through a tough time right now, and their mental health is being impacted. It's our job to listen and then amplify these voices so we give them the support they need, at exactly the right time.”

Jennifer Cohen,
Evaluation Manager at Canteen

Canteen can only continue to provide vital support to young Australians living with cancer, thanks to generous people like you.



After just six months of support from Canteen, almost two thirds of young people impacted by cancer report improvements in their mental health and overall wellbeing.



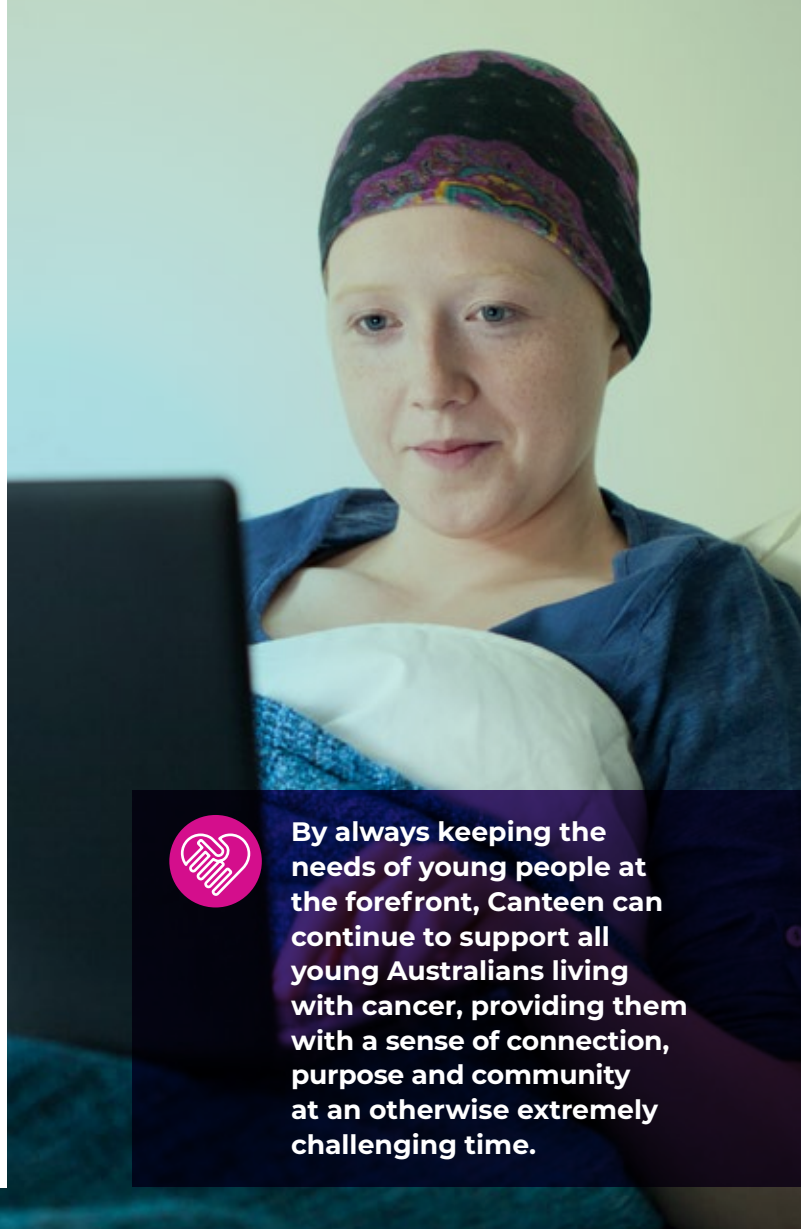
Canteen's Robots Service

An innovative service connecting young cancer patients with their school community.

A diagnosis of cancer during adolescence can have significant impacts on a young person's education. In response, we have been developing our very own Robots Service. This innovative service provides young cancer patients (aged 12–18) an opportunity to connect with their school community through telepresence robots.

Young cancer patients can experience extended school absences because of long and difficult treatment periods, leading to feelings of isolation and disconnection. This service facilitates a unique way for patients to meaningfully stay connected with their education and with their peers by controlling the robot remotely from hospital or home.

These robots can sit in class or even roll around the young person's school, enabling them to attend classes and stay connected.

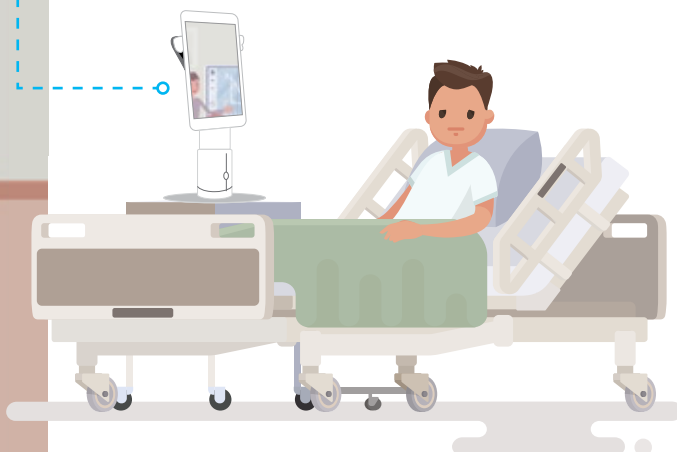


By always keeping the needs of young people at the forefront, Canteen can continue to support all young Australians living with cancer, providing them with a sense of connection, purpose and community at an otherwise extremely challenging time.



Benefits of Canteen's Robot Service:

- **Maintaining connection** – whilst young cancer patients are unable to be physically at school they can connect with their peers and school community.
- **Sense of agency** – giving young patients the choice to take part in the normal day-to-day activities of attending class or talking to their friends.
- **Improved wellbeing** – young patients have reported the positive impact on their wellbeing from feeling connected to their school community.



Thank you

We wanted to say thank you for your incredible support of young Australians impacted by cancer. Because of you, these young people know they will never have to face the challenges of cancer alone. Thank you!



"Your support has provided me with the tools and opportunity to process my feelings and know there is more to life than just cancer."

Cassie, 25,
whose mum was diagnosed with cancer



"I've done so many things I never would have thought I could do because of Canteen. I've met an amazingly supportive group of other young people who have been impacted by cancer and made friends I will have for life."

Adelena, 24,
whose brother was diagnosed with cancer



"Canteen provides the opportunity for young people like me experiencing cancer to feel like they have a place they belong and are understood both during, and after their cancer experience."

Lucas, 25,
cancer survivor



"Through Canteen, I found friends who understood cancer, loss and grief during a time in my life I felt isolated and lost. Your impact means so much more than just a donation, it is changing lives for the better."

Jemille, 24,
who lost her sister to cancer

If you know a young person who has a family member with cancer, has lost a loved one to cancer or has cancer themselves, please let them know Canteen is here for them. They can visit canteen.org.au/getsupport to learn more.

Thank you for changing the lives of young people living with cancer!



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