

Media Release – 6 January 2019

PNDU celebrates 10 years of support for the HPN community ‘down under’

When someone has a rare condition, in this case Intestinal Failure leading to life on the highly complex therapy, Home Parenteral Nutrition (HPN), they can feel very isolated. Life has changed and no-one else they know is travelling the same journey. Connecting with members of an HPN support group can fill that void – a group of people living with the same problems and issues, who understand this new and challenging life of ‘living with a drip’. For those living on HPN throughout New Zealand and Australia, this support group is PNDU (Parenteral Nutrition Down Under).

PNDU began on 6th January, 2009 with 5 members. It now has over 140 members representing over 80 current HPNers (those on HPN) ‘down under’. In 2019, PNDU is recognised and respected nationally and internationally for its support for HPN families; resources; opportunities and activities; awareness raising; research support; representation of the consumer perspective of this small patient group, and more. PNDU’s Management Committee (MC) decided this 10th Birthday is a great opportunity to consider how far PNDU has come, give thanks for the support and efforts of many along the way, and celebrate 10 years of pursuing PNDU’s mission to *‘support, research and inform consumers, carers and providers of Parenteral Nutrition for Intestinal Failure’*.

So PNDU did just that at a slightly early Birthday party last month in Sydney. Over 30 people (all HPN families, plus Gil) shared in the special day, including two PNDU members who won PNDU travel sponsorships to attend. Members travelled from Western Australia, Auckland and throughout NSW to be there. The MC went all out, with balloons galore; special giveaways and lucky draw prizes of PNDU’s lovable mascot, Pendoo; party hats and bubble blowers for the little ones; display tables of PNDU resources and merchandise; and a specially made and decorated cake in the shape of PNDU’s logo – a purple drip with the Southern Cross on it (made by an HPN member).

During the formalities, PNDU’s President spoke of its development through the years, paying special tribute to *“those who had the vision and get-up and go to begin PNDU – a group specifically for down under HPNers and carers”*, as well as expressing gratitude for the efforts of volunteers and the ever-growing support of clinicians, clinical groups, industry and friends. A treasured PNDU trait, as the President noted, is its culture: PNDU *“began with a very caring and supportive culture for all HPN families ‘down under’, and this is something we’ve worked hard to continue”*, while also ensuring medical advice is left to HPN clinicians. Founding member reflections from Tina and Andy, Jacqueline and Gil were shared; and travel sponsorship winners, Jodie and Trevor, spoke of what PNDU means to them.

Happy Birthday was sung, party poppers popped, the cake cut and sparkling wine poured. A rolling slideshow highlighted 10 PNDU milestones, as well as special 10th Birthday messages from various organisations. These, together with a photo gallery from the party, are now on a dedicated 10th Birthday page on PNDU’s website – <https://pndu.org/resources/pndu-turns-10/>.



Photos left to right: PNDU’s President (Karen), one of PNDU’s founders (Gil), and oldest and youngest HPNers present (Fay and Milla), cutting the cake; all 12 HPNers at the Birthday party; lots of chatting about lifewith a drip!

Today, PNDU’s actual 10th Birthday, PNDU continues the celebrations with fun awareness-raising giveaways sent to all members; gratitude for the wonderful support of HPN families, friends, clinicians, clinical groups, and industry; and enthusiasm and anticipation for the future as PNDU continues to support the HPN community ‘down under’.

To find out more about PNDU, become a PNDU member, or simply join PNDU’s mailing list, visit the website <https://pndu.org/>.