



MEDIA RELEASE

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100th Hunter Woman Joins Life-Saving Breast Cancer Prevention Study

IBIS-II, a major international breast cancer prevention study, has reached an important milestone with 100 women from the Hunter region volunteering to take part. However, many more volunteers are needed to help reach the international goal of 10,000 women.

IBIS-II is being conducted in Australia and New Zealand by the Australian New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group (ANZ BCTG) and is coordinated internationally by Cancer Research UK. It is the second prevention study undertaken by the ANZ BCTG and follows the landmark IBIS-I study, which showed that the drug tamoxifen could prevent breast cancer in some women at increased risk.

The new, unique and vitally important IBIS-II study is supported in Australia and New Zealand by the National Health and Medical Research Council. It is the only clinical trial worldwide to investigate whether the drug anastrozole can prevent breast cancer in postmenopausal women who are at increased risk of the disease.

Previous research using anastrozole as a treatment for early breast cancer suggests that it could prevent up to 70 percent of new tumours occurring, or 300,000 breast cancers per year, worldwide. To confirm its role in preventing the disease in women at increased risk, a large comparative outcomes study must be conducted. More women are encouraged to participate so that the results are obtained as soon as possible.

Elizabeth Doyle from Cardiff, NSW was recently the 100th woman to join IBIS-II through Calvary Mater Newcastle. She is taking part in the study to help change the lives of women in the future. "My mother died of breast cancer at age 78, when I was 37," Elizabeth said. "We had a wonderful relationship, she was my best friend, and I feel I have missed out on what could have been quite a few more years of having her in my life."

"The IBIS-II study may or may not necessarily help me but if I can help other women to perhaps have their mothers, daughters, sisters or nieces in their lives longer, then to me that would be so wonderful. If any other women are considering joining the study I encourage them to do it because it is so important that we do everything we can to fight, and win, against this disease."

Professor John Forbes, ANZ BCTG Director of Research, Professor of Surgical Oncology at the University of Newcastle and International IBIS-II Study Co-Chairman said it was very gratifying that so many women had come forward to take part in the IBIS-II study.

"The findings from this research could provide a valuable approach to prevent breast cancer, not only for women today but also for their daughters and granddaughters in the future."

"This study represents a remarkable collaboration by the researchers of the ANZ BCTG with their international colleagues and highlights the important contribution being made by women in Australia and New Zealand that may ultimately provide benefit globally for millions of women."

Hunter women can find out more about whether they are eligible to take part in the study by calling **1800 640 709**. More information is also available on the ANZ BCTG website: www.anzbctg.org.

To interview Professor Forbes or a woman taking part in the study, please contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About IBIS-II (International Breast cancer Intervention Study II)

IBIS-II is being coordinated in Australia and New Zealand by the Australian New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group and globally by Cancer Research UK. The trial is taking place in 21 countries including Australia, New Zealand, India, Chile, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. Over 5,300 women have joined worldwide – more than half of the international goal of 10,000 women.

IBIS-II was launched in Australia and New Zealand in 2005 and now involves 34 institutions and more than 630 women contributing an important 12% of the global recruitment total so far.

More than 2,500 women in New Zealand and 12,000 women in Australia are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. Mortality has fallen due to improvements in the treatment of breast cancer, and more cancers are being diagnosed early through national screening programmes when the chance of cure is highest. However, there are many important research questions yet to be answered, and learning more about how breast cancer can be prevented is one of these.

- The IBIS-II Prevention part of the study aims to recruit 6,000 postmenopausal women who are at increased risk of developing breast cancer. A number of factors for increased risk can make a woman eligible to enter the study and these are set according to the different age groups. Women can take part in the trial if they are aged between 40 and 70 years and are not on HRT.
- IBIS-II DCIS aims to recruit 4,000 postmenopausal women who have been diagnosed with, and had surgery to remove, Ductal Carcinoma in Situ (DCIS). This part of the trial is designed to determine which of the two drugs, anastrozole or tamoxifen, can best prevent new cancers, both in the breast affected by DCIS and in the opposite breast. Women who have had a mastectomy to remove their DCIS cannot join this arm of the trial but they can be part of IBIS-II Prevention.
- Further information on IBIS-II is available at www.anzbctg.org.
- In Australia women can obtain more information on IBIS-II by telephoning 1800 640 709. New Zealand women can call 0800 888 656.

About the Australian New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group

The Australian New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group (ANZ BCTG) is Australia's only collaborative, independent breast cancer clinical trials research group. It is dedicated to the cure and prevention of breast cancer through the conduct of multi-institution and international clinical trials. Working in collaboration with 500 researchers in more than 80 of the leading medical institutions in Australia and New Zealand, and with similar research groups internationally, ensures Australia and New Zealand are at the forefront of breast cancer research progress and this delivers benefits to women immediately. Additional information can be found at www.anzbctg.org.



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