

# Breast Beaters Information Sheet – August 2015

## What is Breast Beaters?

- **Breast Beaters** is a new health and music program for women living with breast cancer in the Yarra Ranges.
- It is based around an exercise routine to assist in the prevention and management of lymphoedema, combining music, movement, singing and fun.
- **Breast Beaters** was developed in consultation with lymphoedema therapists and breast care nurses.
- **Breast Beaters** is a project initiated and created by Dandenong Ranges Music Council. Research and development began in September 2014. The project was officially launched in June 2015.

**Breast Beaters** is built around two things:

- 1) a DVD of music, singing and exercises for use by individual women at home
- 2) Group Sessions for small groups of women at community venues, led by community choir leaders

## What is the purpose of Breast Beaters?

- Many women living with breast cancer struggle to find motivation to do the regular upper-body exercises recommended by health professionals. Breast Beaters seeks to address this problem.
- It is widely recognised that music and social activities can help people get motivated to exercise.
- So **Breast Beaters** addresses the motivation issue by adding music to the exercises, providing a handy DVD resource, and offering a social activity in Group Sessions.

## What is on the DVD?

- A 15-minute program of slow, simple upper-body exercises, suitable for women of all ages and fitness levels. Most exercises are done while seated. Exercises can be modified for those with limited mobility.
- The exercises are set to music in a medley of songs. Musician in Residence Jeannie Marsh and guitarist Ken Murray have created a 15-minute Medley of 9 engaging songs (ranging in style from bossa nova to waltz, twist, and Celtic), each song matched to the timing and needs of the exercises. In the Medley you will find deep-breathing exercises, and “singalong” sections for easy singing.
- In addition to the Medley, the DVD includes teaching material, voice-over and subtitle features to help people learn the Medley, and animations (including a dancing gorilla) to give people a laugh.

## What are Breast Beaters Group Sessions?

- It is planned that Group Sessions will be held at community venues at various locations around Yarra Ranges. Sessions will last 90 minutes, and will be suitable for women new to the program, or those familiar with the program. They will be informal, fun, and accessible to all. No previous singing experience is needed. Sessions will include learning and participating in the Medley (lymphoedema exercises set to music), simple group singing activities, a cup of tea and chat, and

information about relevant events or resources. The first Group Session was held at Yarra Glen Living and Learning Centre in July, and more are planned in Term 4 in Upwey, Healesville, Selby and Warburton (subject to securing further funding).

### ***How much does it cost to participate in Breast Beaters?***

- DVDs are provided free of cost to Yarra Ranges women living with breast cancer, and the health professionals who work with them.
- It is anticipated that Group Sessions will be either free of cost, or involve a small admission fee or gold coin donation (depending on each venue).

### ***Who is eligible?***

- The program is for Yarra Ranges women living with breast cancer, the health professionals working with them, and families and friends who are supporting them. It is hoped that the program may expand to other regions in the future.
- The program is suitable for women who have completed their breast cancer treatment (such as surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy).
- It is advised that women consult with their doctor or other health professional before beginning ***Breast Beaters***.
- Women who had breast cancer years ago are encouraged to participate. Lymphoedema can appear years after breast cancer diagnosis and treatment.

### ***Who will be leading Group Sessions?***

- Some sessions will be run by Musician in Residence Jeannie Marsh. Jeannie worked intensively on the research and development of the program. She brings 30 years of experience as a singer, community musician, choir leader, and music teacher.
- Some sessions will be run by Yarra Ranges community choir leaders and teachers who have received training in the ***Breast Beaters*** program.

### ***Who has funded Breast Beaters?***

Stage One of the project (research and development, production of DVD, and initial Group Sessions) was funded by Cancer Australia through a Ralph Lauren Pink Pony Seeding Grant, Yarra Ranges Council, Dandenong Ranges Music Council, and The Andrews Foundation.

### ***Where can I find out more?***

Schedules of up-coming Group Sessions, and additional ***Breast Beaters*** resources and information, will be posted on the DRMC website. Thank you for your patience while this system is being established. DVDs and information can be obtained through:

- Dandenong Ranges Music Council [drmc@drmc.org.au](mailto:drmc@drmc.org.au) 9754 6566 (Tuesdays and Wednesdays)
- Musician in Residence Jeannie Marsh [Jeannie.marsh1@gmail.com](mailto:Jeannie.marsh1@gmail.com) 0432 088 284