



## COSA NEWS **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**



*Professor Bruce Mann, President, COSA*

After a brief holiday for some, and a more extended break for others, 2010 has really begun with a bang for COSA. Many projects have gathered momentum, and we are active across a broad range of activities to do with cancer care in some way.

### **Annual Scientific Meeting**

The COSA year builds up to the highlight of the Annual Scientific Meeting, and the 2009 ASM lived up to its promise. With over 1100 registrants, it was the largest stand-alone COSA meeting ever, showing that our strategic decision to choose specific diseases to be the focus of our multidisciplinary meeting was correct. It is also testament to the superb work of the organising committee who put together a varied yet tight program, with excellent multidisciplinary sessions focussing on lung and CNS malignancies, and sessions on our themes of Awareness (epidemiology, prevention and screening), Access (financial cost of cancer, geographical and social isolation and cancer in the elderly), Action (research, new and established therapies and supportive care) to provide something to interest all.

COSA's new "Clinical Professional Day" initiative provided a platform for extending the range of COSA-supported activities, around the ASM. There were workshops on care coordination, geriatric oncology, clinical research, oncology social work and psycho-oncology. Cooperative trials groups involved in clinical research and cancer care also took advantage of our

ASM to hold their annual meetings. We welcome the opportunity to facilitate and provide financial and in-kind support to all our members in their pursuit of ongoing professional development.

The Tom Reeve Oration Award for Outstanding Contributions to Cancer Care went to Professor Patsy Yates for her contribution over many years to cancer nursing and research. This was very warmly received by the audience at the ASM banquet, and graciously accepted by Patsy.

### **ASM 2010**

Plans are well underway for COSA's 2010 ASM, on 9-11 November, to be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. The 2010 ASM will be judged against a very high standard, but I am confident it will be a great success. We are fortunate that Eva Segelov has agreed to be the meeting convenor for one more time. Her knowledge of the COSA meeting and her clear vision of what makes a successful meeting has meant that the program has largely taken shape already, and we are now finalising a very strong and diverse faculty of international visitors.

With our focus on breast, gynaecological cancers, melanoma and urologic oncology, we are delighted that the Australian and New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group will hold its ASM in conjunction with our 2010 meeting. We also welcome the newly formed Breast SurgANZ, the Sixth Sino-Australian Conference on Surgical Oncology and the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer (MASCC) as partners for this year's ASM.

The main theme of the meeting is "Cancer and Beyond" covering the cancer journey from diagnosis through treatment and to the years beyond for both cancer patients and their families and carers. We are also planning a strong Translational Research component of the meeting.

While the ASM is COSA's biggest activity, it is by no means our only one.

## Strategic Plan

Over the last year, and following on from a strategic planning meeting in December 2008, the executive has been working on finalising the strategic plan for 2010-2015. This plan focuses on building our influence in cancer policy, growing our membership and our value to our members, developing mutually beneficial relationships with other organisations and revising our structure as being the priority areas for our organisation.

Margaret and her team have taken this strategic plan and identified a series of tasks that need to be undertaken in order for us to reach our strategic objectives. These should be ratified over coming weeks and will form the basis of our work.

## Company Structure

An important step to secure the long-term future of COSA is to re-organise our company structure. COSA is currently an incorporated association. We have been advised that there would be a number of advantages to COSA if we became a Company Limited by Guarantee. Steve Ackland is Chairing a small working group consisting of Jane Turner, Gabrielle Prest and Tanya Wigg who are looking at our overall structure to see if there are opportunities during this process to improve COSA's governance. Any recommendations will go through consultations prior to being presented at the Annual General Meeting in November.

## Asian Oncology Summit

Involvement in the Asian Oncology Summit is a new initiative for COSA. We are looking forward to the meeting in Bali in early April. COSA has been represented at the previous Asian Oncology Summit in Singapore by Marg McJannett, and contacts made there led to a proposal from the editor of *The Lancet Oncology*, Dr David Collingridge, for COSA to arrange a plenary session to showcase work done by the various Australian Cooperative Clinical Trials Groups.

Following meetings at the 2009 ASM, we were able to come to agreement, and a number of high quality abstracts were submitted. Phyllis Butow, Danny Rischin, Harry Iland, David Goldstein and Bryan Burmeister will be presenting work at what promises to be a high quality plenary that will showcase some of the clinical trial work occurring in Australia.

We are also in process of arranging an informal meeting of representatives of cancer societies from countries throughout the region to discuss areas where our societies can cooperate to our mutual benefit.

## Guidelines

The cancer guidelines effort in Australia is about to enter new territory in July this year when Professor Tom Reeve will retire after many years at the helm of the Australian Cancer Network (ACN). Through the ACN, Tom has been able to bring together a variety of

organisations, recruit committed individuals to lead guideline committees and draw together a wide range of cancer clinicians to form the committees that have put together a series of very high quality guidelines.

That guidelines are important foundations of quality care is widely accepted and the quality of the guidelines produced by the ACN is widely acknowledged. The cost of producing and the difficulty of maintaining currency of the guidelines have grown over recent years, meaning that the approach to guidelines will need to change. The Cancer Council Australia, COSA and the NBOCC have been working to trial the use of Wiki technology to simplify the production and revision of guidelines. This will be a major project over the next year.

COSA has a key role to play in the area of cancer treatment guidelines. COSA is the medical and scientific advisory committee of the Cancer Council Australia, and is the peak non-government organisation representing the broad range of health professionals caring for cancer patients. Once Tom has retired, the ACN will inevitably change, but the need for broad engagement of cancer clinicians to this task will remain and is a task for which COSA is ready.

## Neuroendocrine Tumour (NET) Management Guidelines

Following on from the last report – the management guidelines for NETs have progressed, with the first few sections being placed on a closed wiki platform to open the final edits to the larger consulting group and begin our clinicians introduction to the technology. It is anticipated the complete guideline document will be ready for public viewing in the coming months. For progress reports and/or to nominate your interest in joining the NETs interest group, please contact [tanya.wigg@cancer.org.au](mailto:tanya.wigg@cancer.org.au)

## Enabling Grant/Clinical Trials

COSA was successful in securing an NHMRC "Enabling grant" for clinical trials in 2005, and this has been extremely effective. The Umbrella Clinical Trials Insurance Scheme for participating Cancer Clinical Trial Groups (CCTGs) commenced in June 2009 and the renewal process for Year 2 of this Scheme has just commenced.

A national Clinical Trial Research Agreement (CTRA) for CCTGs template is getting closer to reality. Victoria, NSW and QLD had already mandated the use of this template for trials. There has since been endorsement of it in ACT and WA (albeit a modified version in WA) with "official" endorsement by SA Health pending. The ability to use a standard CTRA template has already been a major step towards streamlining the clinical trial approval process for Cancer Cooperative Group Trials.

The Combined Clinical Research Professionals Group and the COSA & Cooperative Groups Enabling Project Workshop, held at the 2009 COSA ASM, was well received by the Executive Officers from the CCTGs, clinical trial managers and coordinators as well as

several clinical investigators. The topics covered included an update on RECIST criteria, budgeting for clinical trials, the separation of ethics and research governance and clinical trial research agreements.

Since COSA was unsuccessful in gaining an extension of the NHMRC grant, COSA Executive and Council are now considering the degree to which the organisation is able to continue to support the excellent work of the enabling project. We are very grateful to Steve Ackland for his ongoing commitment to this very valuable project.

Finally, COSA coordinated a joint submission with all 13 National CCTGs and Cancer Council Australia, to the Department of Innovation (DIISR) inquiry into clinical trials. We thank Franca Marine, CCA for her input in crafting the final document. COSA also coordinated response to the International Research request from the House of Representatives. We thank Alison Evans, Zest Health Strategies for her input in crafting the final document. These submissions were put together rapidly with skill and enthusiasm, showing impressive engagement from the CCTG Chairs. I would particularly like to acknowledge the working group Steve Ackland, John Zalberg, David Goldstein and Tanya Wigg COSA Project Coordinator.

### **Tissue Banking**

Our project to facilitate tissue banking (bio-banking) associated with the CCTGs throughout Australia continues. Thanks to Nik Zeps, David Goldstein and Steve Ackland, who have been working with Tanya Wigg to progress this important project.

### **Cancer Care Coordination Interest Group**

Members of the Cancer Care Coordination Interest Group are actively involved in preparing for the Cancer Care Coordination Conference to be held on the Gold Coast on March 25-26th. COSA in collaboration with Queensland Health has put together a program which will provide the latest information and research on best practice along with coalface perspectives on current Cancer Care Coordinator roles and future challenges. The conference will also include a session focussed on identifying strategic priorities for the professional development and advancement of cancer care coordinators. We acknowledge the leadership of Patsy Yates along with her planning committee ably assisted by Kathy Ansell COSA project Coordinator for putting together what I am sure will be an excellent program. As with all COSA activities a report will be forthcoming along with some key recommendations that will be presented to COSA Executive in the near future.

### **AYA Interest Group & Youth Cancer Networks Program (YCNP)**

Over the past two years COSA has been working with CanTeen and Cancer Australia in an effort to improve outcomes for adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with cancer. In 2008 the Australian Government committed \$15 million funding for the Youth Cancer Networks Program (YCNP) to develop services for adolescents and

young adults with cancer. Funding has been allocated for five state-based projects (\$12 million) and eight national projects (\$3 million).

COSA convened a workshop in November 2009 to enable key stakeholders to hear about the progress in the YCNP program, to learn details of other jurisdictional and national projects, and identify opportunities for national collaboration and/or coordination to enhance AYA cancer services across Australia. A report of the workshop, which includes an overview of state/territory projects and the national projects, is on the COSA website under "publications".

COSA has been contracted to manage implementation of three separate but related national YCNP projects, which will draw on the expertise of members of our AYA Cancer Interest Group and broader MD membership. You can read more about this project in this issue however if you are interested in becoming involved please contact Tanya Wigg via [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au)

Finally I wish to acknowledge the work of all of those who contribute to the success and vitality of COSA.

We look forward to many achievements in 2010. There will be numerous opportunities for COSA members to contribute to our great organisation.

**Bruce Mann**  
**President – COSA**  
**March 2010**

## **COSA ASM Guidelines For Abstract Submission**

Go to [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au) click on the ASM button to take you through to the conference website.

### **Abstract Submission Will Open March 19**

Abstract submission is online. You are able to cut and paste your abstract into the online system. The link used for submission will first ask you to load your personal details on your 'dashboard'. This is the same site for registration and accommodation if required and is an enduring page that will last for future meetings. You should keep all emails sent to you from this page. Once submitting, a number of specific background questions will be asked. The reviewers can see your answers to these questions. Once you have made your submission, you can return and edit it until the reviewers commence scoring. It is accessed from your dashboard.

**Abstract Submission Deadline -**  
**Monday 2nd August 2010**

## Before You Start - Have You Read The Guidelines Below

The committee has re-written the guidelines below to assist you prepare your submission and maximise its chances of acceptance.

### Abstract Categories

Abstracts for the 2010 COSA ASM are invited to be submitted under one of the following categories:

- Basic and Translational Research
- Supportive Care
- Clinical Science
- Education and Professional Development
- Epidemiology
- Health Services
- Tumour Stream 1: Breast/Gynae
- Tumour Stream 2: Melanoma
- Tumour Stream 3: Urogenital
- Service Provision

### Notes:

*The tumour streams vary from year to year. The Service Provision Category is for non scientific abstracts. They do not need to follow the normal abstract format and are only considered for poster submission and still eligible for poster awards.*

## Criteria Used By The Reviewers In Assessing Abstracts

The following information is provided to help you prepare a submission which is in line with the reviewer expectations.

Abstracts are to be between 250 and 300 words in length. If they are structured with sub headings, they must be Aims, Methods, Results, Conclusions. The titles are to be concise, with only the first word starting with a capital letter.

1. Reports of completed studies are preferred and will be given preference in selecting oral presentations, especially over abstracts which do not report results but indicate that they will be reported at the meeting or mere descriptions of trial methodology.
2. Abstracts reporting quantitative studies should contain the planned accrual target and the actual number of patients recruited, levels of significance and confidence intervals of results. Abstracts of qualitative research should indicate how they chose their sample size (e.g. data saturation) and the methodology of analysis.
3. This year the abstracts will be "blinded" to the reviewers. They will not be able to see the authoring or organisation information and so submitters must not assume that there will be knowledge of the previous work of a group or strength of a research group or researcher.
4. Images are not accepted in abstracts.

### Good Abstract - Bad Abstract

Please take the time to go to the COSA website [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au) to review examples of a good and bad abstract.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS – THE TOM REEVE ORATION AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO CANCER CARE

The Tom Reeve Award, which is offered by COSA is to formally recognise a national leader resident in Australia who has made a significant contribution over a relatively long period towards cancer care through research, clinical leadership and/or community service.

### I would like to invite you to nominate a candidate for the 2010 Tom Reeve Oration Award for Outstanding Contributions to Cancer Care.

Nominations must be made by a COSA member with support from a Council Chair.

Each nomination should include:

- An explanation of the nominee's work in the area of cancer control or research
- An evaluation of the accomplishments of the nominee
- Letters of reference from two individuals from outside the nominees' institution (where applicable). These letters should contain a critical appraisal of the nominee's work

The successful nominee will be presented with a Gold Marryalyan at the COSA Annual Scientific Meeting (November) at which he/she will deliver an address highlighting appropriate aspects of their area of professional interest.

Nominations and supporting documentation should be sent by the closing date of Friday 24 September 2010.

*Professor Patsy Yates being awarded the 2009 Gold Marryalyan by Professor Tom Reeve AC CBE*





# "BEST OF THE BEST" AWARDS

\$2000 is awarded to the best oral presentation and poster in each of the "Best of the Best Orals" categories.

2 x \$500 prizes awarded in each category below:

1. Most novel research presented by poster
2. Best communication of results by poster
3. Best poster by a young researcher

We acknowledge **Roche** for their ongoing support in providing an unrestricted grant for the **Best of the Best prizes**.



*Some of the Recipients of the 2009 "Best of the Best" Awards*

## 2009 Best of the Best recipients

### Oral Presentations:

- Ilona Juraskova – Data, Trials and Guidelines
- Jane Young – Current Controversies
- Melanie Price – Supportive Care
- Freddie Sitas – Health Services
- Jordana McLoone – Distance and Isolations
- Penny Schofield – Lung
- Helen Ke – Neuro-oncology
- Joanna Fardell – Clinical Sciences

### Poster Presentations:

- Yan Lou – Clinical Science, Data, Trials, Guidelines
- Dannie Zarate – Education & Professional Development / Health Services
- Philippa Youl – Supportive Care

### Most novel research presented by poster:

- Rama Machiraju
- Teresa Brown

### Best communication of results by poster:

- Barb Donnan
- S. Rowlands

### Best poster by a young researcher:

- Talia Hayman
- Byeongsang Oh

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## Drug Access Survey Update

A pharmacy working committee lead by Dan Mellor, Survey Project Group Chair, Liz Hovey, Medical Oncologist Representative and Christine Carrington, Pharmacist, are attempting to build a case to lobby for cancer patients where there is evidence of a wide variance between cancer patients' access to specific cancer therapies.

Participation has been sought for key hospital pharmacies across Australia and also COSA pharmacy group members. The survey results are hoped to provide valuable information to all oncology pharmacists and medical oncologists on the mechanisms by which patients gain access to non PBS drugs. This will enable us to learn more about any variability in process and help quantify the extent of this question.

We are delighted that over forty pharmacists have completed the survey and our thanks go to those COSA pharmacy group members who have taken part in the project.

This year's COSA ASM Conference Dinner presents:

# COSA'S GOT TALENT

Can you sing/dance/act or  
do stand up comedy or tricks  
with your dog?

**WE NEED YOU!!**

**Acts could include:**

String Orchestra, Choir and Acrobats

**Contact:**

COSA Secretariat for a place in  
"COSA's Got Talent"  
(auditions may apply!)

## ANZCHOG group

### (ANZ Children's Haematology & Oncology Group)

The November COSA conference provided an opportunity for paediatric and adult cancer professionals to come together to continue our work in improving long-term care of childhood cancer survivors. A session entitled "When do you become a survivor? Living and thriving into late adolescence and adulthood" was well attended and highlighted the very significant long term effects experienced by some children and the need for ongoing monitoring and transitional support. Issues relating to the variable outcomes for adolescents and young adults diagnosed with cancer were also presented. This is an important issue for ANZCHOG and we will continue to work collaboratively with the adult sector to strive to improve outcomes for adolescents and young adults.

ANZCHOG continues to work on the development of early phase therapeutic trials through its clinical trial arm, the Australian Children's Cancer Trials (ACCT) group. Development of trial opportunities initiated in 2009 with USA-based early phase consortium, POETIC, is continuing and discussions are underway with leading European consortium, Innovative Therapies for Children with Cancer (ITCC), regarding mutual trial participation opportunities. A pilot program at the RCH Melbourne to streamline the HREC approval process for a large number of paediatric trials is now underway with significant time and resource efficiencies expected.

The ANZCHOG website (Stage 1) is now live and can be found at [www.anzchog.org](http://www.anzchog.org). The second stage of the development will include a link to the Australian Children's Cancer Clinical Trials Register which is also currently under development. Specification for a third stage of development is underway with the inclusion of a member's area and an interactive component to share information.

The first meeting of the Psycho-Oncology group is planned for 5th March in Sydney. The purpose of this workshop is to provide an opportunity for each of the ANZCHOG sites to share their psycho-oncology research activities, their current and projected

capacities to conduct such research and to examine the opportunities for future potential collaborations between sites.

Our ASM will be held in Sydney this year 31st August – 3rd September. For those interested details can be found at the ANZCHOG website [www.anzchog.org](http://www.anzchog.org).

**Peter Downie, Chair**

Email: [peter.downie@rch.org.au](mailto:peter.downie@rch.org.au)

## Breast group

This year provides the exciting innovation of the COSA ASM to be held at the Melbourne Exhibition & Convention Centre - 9 November - 11 November 2010. The ASM will have a breast cancer focus but also will be held in parallel and overlapping with meetings run by the ANZ Breast Cancer Trials Group (ANZBCTG) along with the inaugural BreastSurgANZ Societies scientific meeting. This should see a concentration of breast specialists in Melbourne for an extremely high quality meeting and also a rationalisation of time spent at domestic meetings.

The formation of the BreastSurgANZ Society to represent the interests of Australian and New Zealand breast surgeons is progressing well in its development. It is hoped that invitations/applications for membership will be starting by mid-2010 after the appointment of an Executive Officer.

The RACS Annual Scientific Meeting is in Perth from May 3-7. Visiting breast cancer experts this year include Professor Henry Kuerer and Surgical Oncology Section visitor Professor Laura Esserman. Peter Willsher has organised an excellent program.

**Andrew Spillane, Chair**

Email: [andrew.spillane@smu.org.au](mailto:andrew.spillane@smu.org.au)

## Cancer Nurses Society of Australia

With the New Year well and truly underway, the Cancer Nurses Society of Australia sees a new guard at the helm of the National Executive Committee. Details of all our

new NEC members and existing representatives can be found in the latest edition of our Newsletter, posted on the CNSA website.

I am delighted to be greeting you as Chair of the CNSA and look forward to continuing to foster the productive and dynamic relationship that exists between CNSA and COSA. The new NEC has already settled down to business and at the beginning of February, we spent two busy days at the TCCA/COSA offices in Sydney, sharing our aspirations for CNSA as the peak organisational body for cancer nurses in Australia; learning the ropes from previous NEC members and appreciating the breadth and depth of the activities of CNSA members as state and national stakeholders in the promotion of excellent cancer care for patients, through the professional development of the cancer nursing workforce.

Already this year, CNSA representatives have been invited to review important documents such as The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)/ Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Healthcare, draft Australian Infection Control Guidelines: Preventing and Managing Infection in Health Care; to facilitate research activities, and to lend our support to new nursing initiatives such as the Australia Lung Foundation – Lung Cancer Nurses Forum.

Congratulations to Cath Jonhson, who many of you will know as the out-going Treasurer of CNSA, has been appointed to the Board of the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care.

Plans continue for the Winter Congress in Perth in 2010. The theme of this year's conference is "Leadership, Diversity and Innovation. The Global Picture". The local organising committee are to be congratulated on an impressive program that promises another great Winter Congress for CNSA. Full details of the Congress program are posted on the CNSA website.

As we look forward to another busy and successful year for the Society, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the past members of the NEC for all their incredible hard work and achievements during their term(s) of office. They have left CNSA a stronger, more dynamic Society and I know they made a significant contribution to the important relationship we share with COSA members. I would particularly like to thank Gabrielle Prest, past Chair of CNSA, for all the support and encouragement.

With very best wishes to you all for a happy and successful year ahead.

**Mei Krishnasamy, Chair**

Email: [meinir.krishnasamy@petermac.org](mailto:meinir.krishnasamy@petermac.org)

## Cancer Pharmacists group

Welcome to 2010. This is my first Marryalyan report and allows me the opportunity to introduce myself to all CPG members as the new Chair of the Cancer

Pharmacists group. The other members of the CPG Committee are Maria Larizza, Dan McKavanagh, Dan Mellor and Ben Stevenson. I would like to thank outgoing CPG committee member Vicki Wilmott for her efforts over the last few years. Also, a very special thank-you must go to outgoing Chair, Christine Carrington. Her tireless efforts over the years have made the CPG what it is today – thank-you.

Welcome to all our new members and thanks to those ongoing members for your continued support of the CPG and COSA. Our group membership is now at 90 pharmacists (a record high) and clearly demonstrates the benefits people can see in becoming a member. Please continue to encourage other pharmacists to join,

## 23rd Annual Scientific Meeting EACE 2010

**23-25th June**

**Saxion Hogescholen Enschede,  
The Netherlands**

**Closing date for abstracts April 30 2010**

**<http://www.eaceonline.com>**

especially now that membership renewal is due in March. Don't forget to renew. Encourage new pharmacists working in cancer to join COSA, and remind those old pharmacists that haven't yet joined COSA of the benefits membership brings! The benefits of membership are numerous, and membership costs are relatively cheap. The CPG is involved in numerous aspects of COSA, and we are also moving forward with our own standards of practice. Members will be able to assist in developing these standards. Other member benefits include access to the Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology, access to the CPG discussion forum on the website (see below), reduced registration at COSA events (the Annual meeting, CPG seminars), access to Cancer Forum (the official journal of COSA and the Cancer Council Australia), opportunity to join and participate in COSA's multidisciplinary interest groups, and even a 10% discount at Cancer Council stores!

### ASM 2009

The COSA ASM 2009 was held on November 17th - 19th at the Gold Coast Convention Centre, Queensland. The CPG invited Dermot Ball a cancer pharmacist from the UK as our international pharmacy speaker. Dermot spoke at the first plenary session on safety in cancer, and also in the concurrent sessions. Members have been asking for a pharmacy international speaker for many years and it was pleasing to see Dermot's presentations



## COSA Travel Grants

COSA is happy to announce a number of Travel Grants to members to attend the Annual Scientific meeting in Melbourne this November. Also, the trainee travel grants which aim to assist Oncology Trainee's in Medical, Surgical or Radiation to attend the annual meeting will be offered again for this year.

### COSA-Ipsen Travel Award



Ipsen will continue its sponsorship in 2010 for the COSA Ipsen travel grant. The three recipients of the travel grant will have their name and state published in the Marryalyan and also in the Ipsen Affinity newsletter that goes to health care professionals within Australia.

Please refer to the COSA website for further information on all grants & fellowships [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au)

well attended. The feedback was positive not only from pharmacists but many other professions within COSA. Dermot is a Cancer Network Pharmacist for the North London Cancer Network in the UK and is currently also working with the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) as the Chemotherapy Safety Project Pharmacist. He was a member of the expert advisory panel for the NCEPOD (National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death) report on deaths that occurred within 30 days of chemotherapy. Dermot has also been leading the update on the general guidance for oncology drugs within the British National Formulary.

The CPG organised 2 sessions; a therapeutic session which included recent advances in personalising cancer therapy and a safety session called 'protecting yourself, protecting the patient'. Abstracts for presentations are available in the Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology.

### **COSA ASM 2010 - Melbourne November 9th, 10th and 11th**

Planning for the COSA Annual Scientific Meeting in Melbourne is well underway, so start organising your abstracts now. Maria Larizza, Senior Oncology Pharmacist at The Alfred is the CPG representative for the convening committee. Keep an eye out on the COSA web page for further information. We hope to see as many of you in Melbourne for this event.

### **Website**

The COSA website offers discussion forums for members. Please utilise this facility. Not only do members have the opportunity to post questions, but this is where the CPG will post updates and information about areas of interest and current developments. Ensure you are registered to receive email notifications of new postings. To do this, login to the website, go to "Profile Management" and access "Forum Settings" and tick the Cancer Pharmacists box. There are some good discussion threads happening so if you receive an email on a new posting, respond if you can.

### **The CPG course 'Clinical Skills for Cancer Pharmacy Practitioners' Brisbane 2010**

The 2 day course is designed to assist pharmacists in developing their clinical skills in cancer pharmacy practice. The course combines both lectures and interactive workshops to assist practitioners in developing their skills in providing cancer treatment to patients.

Our second course was successfully held on the weekend of 6th and 7th February this year. The course content was updated following feedback from the first course in May 2009. The course was a great success, fully booked with attendees limited to 48 to allow better workshop interaction. Feedback is currently being evaluated and we plan to repeat the course in August of this year. Keep an eye out on the COSA website for dates.

In addition we are looking to develop the idea of an advanced level course to meet the needs of our membership. Further information will be circulated soon.

I would like to thank all the speakers for their hard work over that weekend - Christine Carrington, Lesley Dawson, Jude Lees, Dan McKavanagh, Dan Mellor, Jim Siderov (that's me), and Ben Stevenson. If you or your staff would like to register your interest in attending the next course please email me at the address at the end of this report.

### **Cancer Learning**

Have you visited the Cancer Learning website (<http://www.cancerlearning.gov.au>)? The Cancer Learning online hub is an initiative of Cancer Australia and aims to: consolidate the enormous variety of evidence-based learning activities, resources and information in cancer care available across Australia and overseas; provide a first port of call for health professionals, organisations and cancer networks who wish to undertake, build or plan professional development programs and activities in cancer care; enable resources and information to be shared by cancer care providers across Australia. You can register for updates. The most recent update in January includes information for Pharmacists.

### **Etoposide**

The study to support the standardisation of the prescribing, dispensing and labelling of etoposide formulations has been completed. The report was presented at the COSA ASM last year. The report is being finalised for presentation to COSA and ultimately publication. It will contain multi-disciplinary recommendation on the prescribing, supply and labelling of etoposide.

### **COSA Projects**

The CPG are involved in many projects with COSA. If you are interested in participating in any of the projects listed or require further information please email me and I can direct you to the appropriate liaison. Also, if you are involved in any COSA related projects or interest groups not listed can you please let me know details to allow me to maintain a database.



- Guidelines for the Prescribing, Dispensing & Administration of Chemotherapy

These guidelines were completed in late 2008 - a copy of the guidelines is available on the COSA website. Planning is currently underway to review and update these guidelines, and to develop an assessment tool for compliance to the guidelines.

- The Intravenous Chemotherapy Supply program (ICSP) and new PBS rules

COSA and the CPG continue to consult with the DoHA to discuss the new arrangements. As you will know the planned implementation date has been delayed. The government is currently in the process of discussing with the Pharmacy Guild, in the context of the 5th agreement, the alternative proposal put to them last year. Outcomes of discussions with the Guild will be passed on to these groups in the next few weeks. COSA and the CPG will continue to keep you informed of where this is heading and the final arrangements.

- Drug access project

The CPG are involved in a COSA project to review patient access to pharmaceuticals used to treat cancers or cancer-related conditions. This is in response to healthcare professional and consumer group concerns regarding equity of access to expensive pharmaceuticals. The CPG is one of the key groups involved, with Dan Mellor and Christine Carrington representing the CPG. I will keep members informed.

- Neutropenic Fever Guidelines Working Party

Several members of CPG are involved in various aspects of the neutropenic fever guidelines working parties. It is hoped the consensus guidelines will be available soon.

- CPG Working parties

At the 2009 CPG AGM held at the COSA ASM we discussed various projects which the CPG would undertake in 2010. Aside from the project to update and assess the "Guidelines for the Safe Prescribing, Dispensing and Administration of Cancer Chemotherapy" (mentioned above) two other projects were considered important:

- To develop competencies and/or accreditation of pharmacists working in cancer
- Guidelines for the pharmaceutical care of cancer patients - Working party

If you are interested in assisting on any of these projects please reply to me via email. I am especially keen for someone to take the lead on these projects as soon as possible.

That's about it for now.

**Jim Siderov, Chair**

Email: [jim.siderov@austin.org.au](mailto:jim.siderov@austin.org.au)

## Cancer Research group

The 'Research Group' has continued its activity in the arena of biobanking from clinical trials and held a workshop at the ASM in November which reviewed a discussion paper regarding possible strategies to support such activity in Australia. The meeting was attended by CCTG chairs, biobank managers, pathologists, surgeons and oncologists, many of whom are also active COSA members.

A report outlining potential actions arising from the meeting has been drafted and should be released in the next few weeks. In summary, attendees were happy for COSA to maintain leadership of this initiative and to convene small working groups aimed at identifying solutions to potential roadblocks to biobanking and translational research projects. Areas that will be covered include ethics, protocol development and access management as well as consideration around networking existing collections for broader availability. It is anticipated that these groups will convene under COSA leadership in the next 6 months and that a comprehensive strategic plan will be developed including identification of potential resource needs and proposals of how to fund these.

Consideration of a possible name change and revised role within COSA was discussed at the November Council meeting. There was general agreement that it was timely to re-badge the group to make it more specifically about laboratory based molecular and cellular research. As described in the previous report, 'Research' is done by many COSA groups and there is little relevance to having such a group under its current name within COSA. Options presented have been "Biological Research group", "Translational Biology group" and "Cancer Biology group". Regardless of the name we will be aiming to raise our profile within COSA and in particular through the inclusion of a specific biological research stream within the ASM. I welcome any COSA members with an interest in the biology of cancer to contact me and give feedback on how we may be able to make the group more relevant to you.

**Nik Zeps, Chair**

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## Clinical Research Professionals group

Welcome to the New Year! At the CRPG AGM the new executive committee was elected. There have been a number of changes within the executive committee and is as follows:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
<b>Sandie Grierson</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
<b>Annette Cubitt</b>	<b>Deputy Chairperson</b>
<b>Chris Hodgkins</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Cate O'Kane</b>	<b>Member (2010 ASM CRPG convenor)</b>
<b>Christie Norris</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>Deborah Howell</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>Dianne Lindsay</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>Janey Stone</b>	<b>Member</b>

Prior to reporting on the first committee meeting held on 11 February, we would all like to extend a big thank you to Cate O'Kane and Kathy Hall for their hard work for the last 2 years.

### **COSA ASM**

We had another successful combined workshop between the CRPG and the Enabling Project at the COSA ASM 2009. The workshop title, "Regulatory Affairs Relating to Clinical Trials in Australia" sounded as if things could be a little dreary but the calibre of the presenters and their presentations ensured we had an interesting, informative, motivating and even humorous day. The topics were varied and included; Influencing Skills & Conflict Management, Budgeting, Governance and Clinical Trial Agreements. This successful joint initiative was made possible by the considerable time and effort by all involved in the organisation of the workshop and of course the participants.

In 2010 the COSA ASM is being held in conjunction with the ANZBCTG ASM, we are fortunate to have Dianne Lindsay and Cate O'Kane involved in the organising committees. ANZBCTG normally has a workshop, dedicated to trials coordination, on the day before the conference proper, as does CRPG. Cate and Dianne will investigate the possibility of a combined workshop in collaboration with the COSA Enabling Project. It is the recommendation of the Royal College of Nursing, Australia every Nurse/Midwife in Australia should have at least 30 CNE points per year. We will investigate the possibility of obtaining CNE points for both the workshop, and COSA ASM.

### **Projects 2010**

Although we have 195 members, there were very few at the last AGM. We plan to identify and target practicing members to assist with increasing the membership and increased attendees at the AGM. We will also undertake an update to our web page on the COSA website and a needs analysis of members.

## **Professional Development**

TROG Annual Scientific Meeting MAR 24 – 27 2010  
Clinical Trial Management Workshop – MAR 24  
Rydges Lakeland Resort, Queenstown, NZ

Trial Coordinators, Data Managers, Research Nurses, Clinicians and all those involved in the conduct of TROG Clinical Trials are invited to attend this one day workshop prior to the TROG Annual Scientific Meeting.

If you have any suggestions or comments you would like addressed by the group please contact us. We are also happy to receive any items of interest for dissemination to the group.

**Sandie Grierson, Chair**

Email: [sandie.grierson@melanoma.org.au](mailto:sandie.grierson@melanoma.org.au)

## **2010 Call for Applications**

### **Clinical Professional Day for COSA members**

Following the success of the five inaugural grants in 2009, COSA invites applications from its constituent professional groups to apply for funding this year. The grants are up to \$7000 (+GST) to conduct "professional day" meetings or educational sessions.

The aim is to hold the professional day immediately before or after COSA's Annual Scientific Meeting, when many members will be in the same location. However, depending on the circumstances, grants may also be allocated to support professional days at other times/places in the year. Please refer to the website for further information and application forms [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au).

Closing date Friday April 30, 2010.

## **Cancer Voices Australia**

### **COSA ASM Consumer Forum**

The Forum theme was "It's Not Just About The Cancer" and in deciding on the program content, the committee kept within the framework of the conference theme "Awareness, Access, Action". The program content included both clinical and non-clinical aspects of the cancer journey and was generally non-specific in relation to cancer types but rather highlighted issues encountered regardless of cancer type. Where possible, however, reference was made to lung and brain cancers in keeping with the conference objectives.

Favourable feedback was received both from consumers and health professionals who attended. The panel discussion in particular was highly regarded. In planning this session, the committee wanted to

include both the health professional and patient/carer perspectives. This formula encouraged interaction from the audience and provided them with an opportunity to have their voices heard.

The Forum ran 30 minutes overtime with many attendees still wanting to have their say. The panel discussion addressed some interesting issues dealing with 'Sex and Sexuality' and the organisers were delighted with the audience involvement. Issues pertinent to all cancers and gender were openly canvassed and addressed. Some 90 people attended with participants coming from as far away as Victoria and South Australia – a truly national consumer forum!

This forum showed that a balance between information presented by health professional experts and consumer perspectives and stories is a successful combination.

We thank COSA for continuing to provide the funding and opportunity to hold this Forum each year.

### **Clinical Trials Action Group**

John Stubbs, CVA's Executive Officer recently chaired the Patient Participation Committee of this important Enquiry. With input from clinicians, researchers, and health professionals from the private and public sectors there was general consensus that we need to establish a national framework in which all parties, including consumers can all work together to improve the outcomes of people affected by cancer.

The full report is due to be delivered to Government by the end of April 2010.

### **Gene Patenting**

Cancer Voices Australia is considering whether it might play a role in the proposed legal challenge to the BRCA1 gene mutation patent, as part of a consortium to argue against the patent 686004 currently held by Myriad in the United States of America. The issue for cancer patients and it will be argued that genes, isolated from the human body, are not inventions per se.

We have held a number of preliminary meetings with the 'legal team'.

The matter raises important legal and ethical issues that may impact upon future research and treatment options if not addressed. The matter was also raised in the recent Senate Hearing into gene patenting so CVA's continued input is important for all cancer sufferers.

### **Conferences/Seminars**

During the period CVA representatives attended the following:

#### **COSA ASM Gold Coast November 2009**

E-Health – Sydney and Canberra

#### **Rural and Regional Cancer Centres – Canberra**

January 2010

#### **Cancer Australia – Launch of Cancer Initiatives**

**World Cancer Day** – February 2010

**TGA Meeting** – Canberra February 2010

**AHEC Meeting** – Canberra February 2010

**RORIC** – Sydney February 2010

**National Pain Summit** – Canberra March 2010

**Integrated Cancer Centres Conference** – Melbourne  
December 2010

### **Acknowledgements**

Cancer Voices Australia acknowledges the support and assistance of COSA in carrying out its important advocacy work.

#### **John Stubbs, Executive Officer**

Email: [john.stubbs@cancer.org.au](mailto:john.stubbs@cancer.org.au)

### **Familial Cancer group**

The Familial Cancer Clinic's Professional Development day, will again be held prior to the yearly meeting of kConFab, the Australian Breast Cancer Family Study, the Australasian Colorectal Cancer Family Study and the Australian Ovarian Cancer Study. Familial Aspects of Cancer: Research and Practice will run from 16th to 20th August at the Mantra, Salt Beach, Queensland. Themes to be covered in the Family Cancer Clinic's meeting on 16th August include familial prostate cancer, its association to BRCA mutations and management of men at risk and familial pancreatic cancer, a fascinating and rapidly developing area. In the breast cancer area discussions will include the role of common low penetrance variants and CHEK2 variants in testing and counselling and the use of chemoprevention strategies in persons with BRCA mutations. A final session will cover the area of counselling and risk prediction in colorectal cancer families without discernable mutations in known cancer genes. The joint scientific and clinic meeting will then address topics including the application of next generation sequencing to cancer, epidemiology of cancer, classifying variants in cancer predisposition genes, pathology of familial aspects of cancer, MRI, breast density & genetic profiles and Psychosocial research updates. A satellite meeting will be held on the 16th -17th August with a focus on mammographic density & MRI. International speakers presently confirmed include Randall Burt, Huntsman Cancer Institute, USA, Susan Domchek; University of Pennsylvania, USA, Jane Green, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Newfoundland, David Huntsman, University of British Columbia, Canada, Alvaro N. Monteiro, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute, USA and Jorge Reis-Filho, Institute of Cancer Research, UK. Information regarding all meetings can be found at <http://www.kconfab.org>.

#### **Lara Lipton, Chair**

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## Summary Of Familial Cancer Group Professional Day

The Familial Cancer Clinics' Professional Development day, "Familial Cancer: Research & Practice 2009" meeting was held at a new venue this year, Mantra on Salt Beach, Kingscliff on the 11th August. Although many missed the more isolated feel of Couran Cove, there was fairly unanimous support for the ease of access to Kingscliff! Attendance included geneticists, counsellors, scientists, oncologists, urologists, gynaecologists and breast surgeons and this allowed us to comprehensively discuss emerging issues in the management of high risk patients. New data was reviewed regarding the screening of men with BRCA 1 and 2 for prostate cancer and the IMPACT study continues to recruit such men in clinics around Australia, testing the hypothesis that early and intensive screening will reduce prostate cancer mortality. The role of PARP inhibitors in the management of BRCA1 and 2 carriers was discussed and data presented. It is acknowledged that the advent of PARP inhibitors is likely to increase demand for BRCA1 and 2 testing in women with metastatic disease who may be considered for such therapy and who may not otherwise have undergone testing. Genetic counsellors Janet Tyler and Jess Koehler presented their experience of counselling patients who were considering entering a trial of a PARPi and were having genetic testing partly or largely to facilitate this. The day was rounded off with sessions on Von Hippel Lindau syndrome and familial hyperparathyroidism.

The biennial International Society for Gastrointestinal Hereditary Tumours (InSIGHT) meeting in Dusseldorf this year in June was enjoyable and informative with some very high impact presentations. Further analysis of the CAPP 2 study which randomised persons with HNPCC to use aspirin or resistant starch for polyp prevention has revealed an advantage to aspirin in this setting and this will be followed up in the CAPP 3 study. Australian investigators contributed significant numbers to this international effort. The finding of mutations in the EPCAM gene causing HNPCC with loss of MSH2 in tumours will hopefully allow us to make a genetic diagnosis in a number of families in whom mutation detection has so far failed. The next InSIGHT meeting will occur in 2011 in San Antonio and is highly recommended for those interested in hereditary GI syndromes, polyposis and screening of high risk populations.

### Medical Oncology group

The Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA) has a number of major projects planned for 2010 ranging across all our operations and these are progressing well.

In the education arena plans are well advanced for our Trainees' programs including the National Communications Skills Training Program with this

year's subject being **Transition to Palliative Care** and the introduction of a very well crafted Trainees package containing a range of invaluable resources and texts to assist new trainees entering advanced training in medical oncology. On March 27-28 MOGA will present the second **Basic Sciences of Oncology Program** at the Four Points Sheraton, Sydney, NSW, Australia to provide trainees with a comprehensive introduction to the scientific basis of cellular mechanisms and treatments used in medical oncology in order to enable advanced trainees to develop a strong knowledgebase for use in practice and clinical trials. MOGA is pleased to have been able to facilitate the participation of NZ medical oncology trainees and a number of Australian trainees from other oncology disciplines in this special training program.

MOGA's advocacy and lobbying activities continue to focus on oncology drugs. Most recently, the PBAC requested advice from MOGA regarding the use of carboplatin plus premetrexed versus cisplatin plus premetrexed in NSCLC and a submission was developed based on members input that is going forward at the PBAC's 10 March meeting.

**The Australian Medical Oncologist Workforce Study 2009** will be available from 15 March and we thank our membership for their support and assistance throughout the development of this important Study, above all the directors of medical oncologist units and departments as well as lead and solo clinicians, State and Territory champions who assisted with the Study. I would also like to acknowledge the Study's working group led by Associate Professor Bogda Koczwara with Professor Michael Barton, Associate Professor Euan Walpole, Dr Prunella Blinman and Dr Peter Grimison and Ms Sally Crossing for affording a consumer perspective.

The Association undertook **The Australian Medical Oncologist Workforce Study 2009** to develop a sound workforce data set that could be used to develop national benchmarks and future strategies to address workforce shortages at the national level.

The authors of the Study recommend the following range of strategies to address the workforce shortages and other related national medical oncology workforce issues including; increase the supply of Australian medical oncologists through a range of strategies such as the Establishment of a Medical Oncology Workforce Advisory Group to develop a detailed National Workforce Plan 2010-15 addressing issues of supply and distribution of medical oncology services to be implemented in collaboration with relevant national and state agencies.

I look forward to updating you of our plans in the next edition.

**Michael Michael, Chair**

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## Neuro-Oncology group

The last quarter of 2009 was a time of major activity and achievements for the COSA Neuro-Oncology group.

After a few years of hard work the glioma guidelines were finally published and launched. "Clinical Practice Guidelines for the management of adult gliomas: astrocytomas and oligodendrogliomas" were published by the Australian Cancer Network (with the endorsement and imprimatur of Cancer Council Australia and COSA) in August 2009 with the public launch in November 2009 at the COSA ASM. The COSA neuro-oncology membership has provided significant expertise in terms of the development and review process. Professor Michael Barton was the Chair of this guideline process, Emeritus Professor Tom Reeve from the Australian Cancer Network was the Convenor (having supervised the development of the vast majority of all Cancer Guidelines in Australia), and Dr Elizabeth Hovey was the Project Officer along with a productive working party, many of whom were chapter leaders. A special thanks to Steve Newton who donated money for the guideline process in memory of his wife Valerie; and to the staff at Australia Cancer Network, particularly Christine Vuletich. The guidelines have been very well received so far and there are a number of further related launch activities in 2010 planned including dissemination to all new medical oncology, radiation oncology and neurosurgical trainees. Professor Ian Olver (CCA) and Professor Michael Barton are exploring funding options for the guidelines to be placed on a WIKI (on the internet, in a format able to be edited by its readers, under supervision of an editorial committee in terms of which amendments are then subsequently kept in the manuscript). The other plan (pending funding) is to develop a companion set of Consumer Guidelines on the management of adult gliomas.

The 2009 highlight undoubtedly was the COSA ASM in November on the Gold Coast. Neuro-Oncology was one of the two tumours highlighted and there was a comprehensive programme which extended throughout the meeting. There was a high calibre international panel, including the world-famous medical oncologist Professor Roger Stupp from Lausanne, Switzerland after whom the "Stupp protocol" for glioblastoma multiforme is named. Our other neuro-oncology international guests included Professor Normand Laperriere, an eminent radiation oncologist from Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto, Canada; Dr Renato LaRocca a medical oncologist from Louisville, Kentucky, USA; and Professor Jacques Grill a paediatric neuro-oncologist from France. Dr Elizabeth Hovey convened the neuro-oncology programme along with the Programme committee which included Dr Eng-Siew Koh, Dr Lawrence Cher, Dr Kate Drummond, Ann Ratcliffe (Executive officer of COGNO) and her predecessor Kathleen Scott, and input from Lauren Martin (AGOG). This same group curated the programme for the satellite COGNO meeting.

The neuro-oncology component of the programme addressed far more than primary brain tumours and had many general oncology components. On the first day of the programme, there was an epidemiological session addressing the evidence (or lack thereof) for an association between mobile phones and brain tumours (Prof Bruce Armstrong); and a multidisciplinary session (chaired by Dr Eng-Siew Koh, including speakers Dr Meera Agar and Diane Whiting) about cognitive and behavioural impairment in cancer patients. On the second day of the programme there were numerous sessions. The day began with a special session on "Common uncommon brain tumours" highlighting medulloblastoma, chordoma, and ependymoma (speakers included Prof Laperriere, Prof Jacques Grill, Prof David Ashley; chaired by Dr Peter Downie) - a session that appealed to paediatric as well as adult neuro-oncologists.

There was a plenary session on "Brain and Cancer", chaired by Prof Michael Barton - which covered some novel ground including new data about the effects of radiation (Prof Laperriere) and chemotherapy (for all cancers) on the brain including the controversial topic of "chemo-fog" (Dr Jeanette Vardy). Another international guest from the USA, social worker Caroline Messner, spoke about the psychosocial support services for people living with brain impairment and for their caregivers. Another international guest, French geriatric oncologist Catherine Terret spoke about treating patients with underlying cognitive impairment. In the afternoon there was a joint session with the lung cancer group on "Cerebral metastases from lung cancer and other cancers" chaired by Dr Michael Boyer, with surgical, radiation and palliative care challenges highlighted as well as an introductory talk about the issues of cerebral metastases in the era of targeted agents (USA medical oncologist Natasha Leighl). Also, there was a session on long term follow up of childhood medulloblastoma survivors (Prof Grill) in the paediatric/AYA session. In the afternoon there was a multidisciplinary session on the management of spinal cord compression in the post-Patchell era including surgical (Dr Richard Bittar), radiation (Prof Laperriere) and nursing (Irene Kemp & Lesley Stevens) perspectives on the challenges of managing these patients.

The third and final day of the programme was the day focussing on primary brain tumours. The day began with a fascinating "Meet the Professor" breakfast with Professor Stupp. This was followed by a plenary session on "Primary Brain Tumours - State of the Art" emphasizing the management of high-grade gliomas (speakers Dr Kate Drummond, Prof Normand Laperriere, Prof Roger Stupp and Prof Michael Barton; chaired by Dr Elizabeth Hovey) which included the launch of the Australian Glioma Guidelines by Emeritus Professor Tom Reeve. Then we had 6 local neuro-oncology abstracts presented as part of the "Best of The Best Neuro-Oncology Abstracts", chaired by Dr Lawrence Cher, with 2 international discussants (Professor Stupp and Dr LaRocca). The best abstract was awarded to an enthusiastic medical student Helen Ke for her abstract on cognitive assessment tools: "Is the

Montreal Cognitive Assessment a more sensitive tool than the Mini-Mental State Examination?" (based on work she completed at Liverpool Hospital with Dr Eng-Siew Koh, Grahame Simpson and Diane Whiting). The day ended with a neuro-oncology satellite symposium, chaired by Dr Helen Wheeler highlighting new surgical and imaging techniques in neuro-oncology including Dr LaRocca's presentation on the combination of carmustine wafers with the Stupp protocol, speaking alongside local surgeons Dr Kate Drummond and Dr Charles Teo and an update on AGOG activities (Lauren Martin and Kerrie McDonald). We would like to extend a thankyou to our sponsors. COSA assisted with the sponsorship of Professor Normand Laperriere. The COSA Neuro-Oncology group would like to thank COSA and the Convening Committee for their unwavering support in developing and facilitating the neuro-oncology programme, particularly Margaret McJannett.

Many of the COSA neuro-oncology members then stayed on for the 2nd COGNO ASM which was on the following day (Chair: Prof Mark Rosenthal; Convenor: Dr Elizabeth Hovey). The COGNO programme included our international panel reviewing new protocol concepts in an interactive session, and updates of existing trials and upcoming trials. There was also a session (Professor John Simes) on how to optimise the collaborative relationship between clinical researchers and basic scientists; a session on the new challenges we are facing with radiological trial endpoints in the era of angiogenesis inhibitors (Prof Laperriere) and a session on prognostic biomarkers and molecular endpoints (Prof Stupp). We worked our international panel hard with Professor Laperriere giving 8 talks all up (between COSA and COGNO) and Professor Stupp giving 6 talks!

Upcoming activities in 2010 include working with the Australasian College of Pathologists to develop a synoptic protocol for the reporting of primary brain tumours. Dr Michael Rodriguez is chairing this panel.

#### **Liz Hovey, Chair**

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## **Nutrition group**

The Nutrition group is growing steadily with over 60 multidisciplinary members. At the group's annual meeting at the ASM in November 2009, a subcommittee was formed to progress our work. Members of the subcommittee and their allocated areas are:

**Assoc Prof Judy Bauer** – Chairperson, Project Supervisor  
Head and Neck Grant

**Merran Findlay** – Project Supervisor Head and Neck Grant

**Nicole Kiss** – ASM 2010 Scientific Committee Member

**Wendy Davidson and Kathy Chapman** – Website  
Development (education material)

**Teresa Brown** – Head and Neck Grant Project Officer

**Dr Liz Isenring** – Research Development

The Head and Neck Project, Development of evidence based guidelines for the nutritional management of head and neck cancer is progressing well thanks to the hard work of Teresa Brown who has provided an update on the work to date below. Nicole Kiss is the group's representative on the scientific committee of the 2010 ASM and it is envisaged that there will be an exciting program that includes a nutrition focus. The group's website now includes links to peer reviewed education material available from Nutrition Education Material Online (NEMO) developed by QLD Health and it is envisaged that the page will be further enhanced in the coming months to include relevant information from the Cancer Council. Initial discussions have taken place regarding possible research projects for the group.

#### **Judy Bauer, Chair**

## **Project Update: Development of evidence based guidelines for the nutritional management of head and neck cancer**

Phase 1 of the project – Defining the scope of the project - has been completed. The multidisciplinary steering committee met via teleconference in November 2009 and provided input into the project plan and clinical questions to be addressed in the guidelines. The project plan has formally been signed off by the project supervisors (Judy Bauer and Merran Findlay), project facilitators (COSA) and project sponsors (Cancer Institute NSWOG (Head and Neck)).

Work has also been progressing on the evaluation phase of the project. It is planned that an electronic survey will be distributed to the senior dietitian at all cancer centres nationally to determine current practices in nutrition management of head and neck cancer and staffing levels and structure of resources. This will then be repeated post implementation of the guidelines to assess the impact on change in practice and resources.

The project has now entered phase 2 - literature searching, retrieval and critical appraisal. The project dietitian has had several meetings with a librarian to ensure optimal search techniques are used to retrieve high quality papers. The project dietitian and the dietitian subcommittee will be reviewing these papers over the next 4 months for quality, according to standard criteria and each study will then be summarised with a brief critical appraisal addressing the strength of evidence, size and relevance of effect, and given a level of evidence as per the NHMRC guidelines.

An abstract was submitted to the COSA ASM last year on this project, and it was a winner in the category "Most Novel Research Presented by Poster"

#### **Teresa Brown APD, Project Dietitian Judith Bauer, Chair**

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## Palliative Care group

COSA and the Palliative Care group had opportunity to comment on the draft National Pain Strategy (<http://www.painsummit.org.au/>), highlighting the issues important to the multidisciplinary cancer professional community in the management, policies and problems faced when managing cancer pain or pain related to cancer treatment. COSA will be represented at the National Pain Summit in March 2010, which will bring together Australia's leading authorities in pain medicine, other health professionals and consumer groups representing people with pain to finalise a national strategy. Importantly there is a cancer and palliative care working party particularly exploring the issues for national strategies to address cancer pain throughout the cancer journey, from those who have had curative treatment but have pain related to their therapy, to those with advanced disease. As a multidisciplinary group COSA will aim to support initiatives to ensure that people with cancer pain receive equitable, timely and coordinated access within all sections of the health service (hospital settings and the community) to oncology professionals, palliative care services, and interventional pain specialists; with the supporting allied health, nursing and psychosocial professionals in these teams; highly skilled in evidence-based cancer pain management.

The National Palliative Care Strategy (NPCS) was founded on the premise that palliative care should form an integral part of a comprehensive health care system that supports people at all stages of life, with the development of the current National Palliative Care Strategy commenced in 1998 and it was endorsed by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council in October 2000. The National Palliative Care Strategy represents the combined commitments of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, palliative care service providers and community-based organisations to the development and implementation of palliative care policies, strategies and services that are consistent across Australia. The National Palliative Care Strategy is now under Review. Details of how to contribute can be found at: <http://npcsu.comuniogroup.com/>

We continue to welcome ideas and suggestions for further development of the Palliative Care group within COSA.

### **Meera Agar, Chair**

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## Psycho-Oncology group

### **Research**

PoCoG is pleased to announce the arrival of a new biostatistician, Dr Melanie Bell who commenced work on the 1st February 2010. PoCoG members can access the biostatistician's services at no cost for up to 6 hours per year, subject to availability. New terms and conditions

for accessing the service will be available on the PoCoG website at the end of March 2010. In the meantime please call the PoCoG executive office on 02 9036 5002 for enquiries or email [pocog@psych.usyd.edu.au](mailto:pocog@psych.usyd.edu.au)

### **Improving Supportive Care**

In response to three years (2007 – 2009) of cancer outpatient experience survey data and public consultation, the Cancer Institute NSW has designed the Supportive Care Intervention Program to address patient identified unmet needs. The Program includes distress screening and clinician education and promotes the *Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Psychosocial Care of Adults with Cancer* psychological care referral pathway. Up to \$3 million dollars has been allocated to support the design, implementation and evaluation of the intervention in NSW cancer services. A new collaborative partnerships approach between NSW academic institutions and clinical cancer services, and a competitive funding model, will support Program implementation. Funding guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions can be downloaded from the Cancer Institute NSW competitive Grants Calendar [http://www.cancerinstitute.org.au/cancer\\_inst/grants/](http://www.cancerinstitute.org.au/cancer_inst/grants/). The call for applications opens on the 1st March 2010 and closes 9th April 2010.

### **Scientific Meetings**

- **IPOS Congress:** OZPOS anticipates having a significant presence at the IPOS 2010 conference in Quebec City in May.
  - Professor Phyllis Butow will facilitate a pre-congress workshop: Teaching communication about palliative care and end-of-life issues
  - Kerrie Clover will co-facilitate a pre-congress workshop: Evidence-based screening for distress in cancer - a hands-on demonstration of methods
  - Afaf Girgis and staff from CHERP have submitted seven papers as part of two symposia. The first, *Flourishing or flailing? The impact of cancer on survivors and their caregivers across the cancer trajectory*, will bring together three cutting-edge studies and provide a comprehensive description of the psychosocial issues encountered by cancer survivors and their caregivers by presenting data from patient cohorts at different time points along the illness trajectory and different sub-groups, including cancer caregivers and cancer survivors from culturally diverse backgrounds. The second, *Innovative psychosocial intervention trials to improve the health and wellbeing of patients and their caregivers across the illness trajectory*, will describe four innovative psychosocial interventions recently developed to improve illness adjustment and wellbeing of patients and their caregivers. Together, these interventions use different delivery formats (from professionally-led interventions to self-directed interventions) and target a wide-range of psychosocial issues and participant sub-groups, including caregivers and patients with colorectal cancer; two sub-

groups often neglected in current psychosocial intervention research. Two highly regarded international figures in the survivorship area, Dr Paul Jacobsen and Dr Julia Rowland, have agreed to be discussants at the workshops.

- Further information about the scientific programme and registration is available on the IPOS website: <http://www.ipos-society.org/ipos2010/>
- **Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer (MASCC):** Professor Afaf Girgis has been invited to be a faculty member in the 2010 MASCC *International Symposium on Supportive Care in Cancer: The Key to Care* to be held June 24-26, 2010, in Vancouver, Canada.

  - Afaf is also on the organising team of a collaborative venture among three MASCC Study Groups (Rehabilitation & Survivorship, Fatigue and Psychosocial) to create international collaborations in cancer survivorship research and practice. The team has been funded to host a pre-conference workshop on 23 June: *Cancer Survivorship: Creating international collaborations to study the supportive care needs of cancer survivors*. The workshop will bring together leading researchers and clinicians to highlight international work in the field of cancer survivorship, and in so doing, explore ways of facilitating collaborative partnerships. It will include invited presentations, including one by Afaf on "International research and clinical priorities: Australia"; then breakout into small groups specifically focussing on strategies for international collaboration on key issues nominated by the larger group. The goal is to ultimately develop an international consortium of expertise in cancer survivorship research and practice.
- COSA/OZPOS members with an interest in psycho-oncology who are planning to attend the MASCC conference can register for the workshop on the MASCC website: <http://www.mascc.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=86955>. Registrations are limited to about 50 and will largely be by invitation.

  - Please contact Afaf if you would like more information: [Afaf.Girgis@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Afaf.Girgis@newcastle.edu.au)
- **COSA ASM:** The scientific organising committee for the ASM to be held in Melbourne on 9th to 11th November has made considerable progress in developing the programme.

  - The theme for the meeting is "Cancer and Beyond" covering the cancer experience from diagnosis through treatment and to the years beyond for cancer patients, their families and carers.
  - The focus will be on breast cancer, gynaecology cancer, urological cancer, melanoma cancer and translational research. Specific surgical streams will be included to accommodate the newly formed Breast SurgANZ and the Sino-Aust Surgical Colleges Association who have both indicated their participation.
  - Members are strongly encouraged to attend.

### **Invitation to members:**

- Following the enormous success of the inaugural OZPOS/PoCoG Professional Day held in November 2009, there is enthusiasm about the establishment of a similar Professional Day as a regular event. Members of OZPOS who have an interest in contributing to the development of such a day in 2010 are warmly invited to contact me: [jane.turner@uq.edu.au](mailto:jane.turner@uq.edu.au)

As 2010 is the second year of my second term as Chair of OZPOS, it will be necessary to elect a new Chair this year, to take over the role in 2011/2012. I encourage members to consider nomination for election, and am happy to provide details about the role: [jane.turner@uq.edu.au](mailto:jane.turner@uq.edu.au).

## **Summary Of Professional Day – OZPOS/PoCoG**

The initiative of COSA Council to provide funding for Professional Days for member groups provided the impetus for the development of a Professional Day for the Psychosocial Oncology Group (OZPOS) in collaboration with PoCoG. The OZPOS/PoCoG Professional Day was held immediately prior to the COSA 2009 ASM on the Gold Coast, attracting 130 registrants. The broad aims of the day were to afford an opportunity for presentation of emerging research not being presented in the ASM Program, provide opportunities for networking and discussion of strategies for implementation of research into clinical practice, as well as opportunities to participate in clinical skill development through workshops.

The day commenced with a plenary presentation by the International guest speaker for the ASM, Barry Bultz, setting the scene for further discussion about the integration of screening for distress into routine care in oncology. Subsequent concurrent sessions allowed emerging researchers to present material related to the following themes: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse populations, clinical care, and emerging "hot topics" in psychosocial research. A multidisciplinary panel discussion used structured case vignettes to explore aspects of delivery of psychosocial care, including systems and training issues. The clinical workshop topics were Sexuality, and Mindfulness.

Participants in the Professional Day included researchers, nurses, social workers, students, psychologists and psychiatrists, all of whom endorsed the quality of the presentations, and the value of opportunities to extend clinical and research collaborations. There was enthusiasm for the establishment of Professional Days as regular events.

OZPOS wishes to congratulate COSA Council on the initiative to establish Professional Days, and to thank COSA for generously providing funding for the inaugural OZPOS/PoCoG Professional Day. OZPOS thanks PoCoG for the provision of additional funding to

support the day, including conducting evaluation. The major organisational and administrative contribution of Monika Dzidowska from PoCoG is especially acknowledged and appreciated.

**Jane Turner, Chair**

Email: jane.turner@uq.edu.au

## Radiation Oncology group

**Dear Members,**

This year's ASM will be held in Melbourne with the dominating themes Breast and Gynaecological malignancies and Melanoma. A preliminary meeting held in January 2010 was hosted at the COSA Offices where the program for this years meeting was discussed. A number of potential local and international speakers were nominated and the programme is already looking exciting, building on the success from last year.

There is an opportunity to put forward a radiation oncology international speaker for consideration. I would be delighted to hear from the membership with any suggestion of a possible guest.

I have prepared a Radiation Oncology Report for the annual COSA report and hope you take the opportunity to have a read.

I hope you all have a safe and productive 2010.

**Sandro Porceddu, Chair**

Email: sandro\_porceddu@health.qld.gov.au

## Regional & Rural group

Welcome to 2010 after what has been a fairly exhausting end to 2009. The long anticipated invitation to apply for funding from The Regional Cancer Centres Grant of \$560M was announced in early November. The timeline was short with applications closing on January 8th. Up to 10 centres will receive funding as part of this very welcome grant from the Federal Government. This is entirely capital infrastructure funding. A lot of hard work has gone in to developing the guiding principles for this project and we all wait with interest to see who the successful applicants will be.

Once the announcements have been made it will be important to meet and look at ways of maximizing the chances that this initiative will translate in to optimal cancer care outcomes over time. Sustainable cancer centres rely on a sustainable multidisciplinary workforce and this will need to be addressed. It will also be important to look at ways of improving networking amongst like regional centres and between regional and metropolitan centres. I see these as projects to work on this year and beyond.

Health reform is a definite political hot topic this year. With an election looming (anytime really) it is again

time to lobby your local members and promote the importance of regional cancer service delivery. Any ideas on improved services and access to cancer care would be greatly appreciated and I would be happy to take these forward.

I look forward to an exciting year for the group and hope to have a little more time to meet and discuss issues with you.

**Adam Boyce, Chair**

Email: drboyce@bigpond.net.au

## Social Work group

As I write this report we have already commenced the new year, and the momentum of work is building up, even though it seems that we have just barely had a chance to wind down from all of the activity of 2009. COSA ASM 2010 planning is well and truly underway following a successful 2009 ASM. The focus of this report will be the OSWA conference which was held following the COSA ASM. This was possible with the award of a COSA clinical professional grant. Approximately 70 oncology social workers came to the Gold Coast for the meeting, many of whom had the opportunity to take in the preceding COSA conference. Both the COSA conference and the OSWA meetings were a success. We were able to have Dr Carolyn Messner who was one of the international invited speakers at COSA as well as having our invited national speaker Dr Pam McGrath. As you will note below the two days covered a plethora of topics from a range of presenters.

### International Keynote Speaker

Using communication technologies in innovative ways to provide psychosocial care and support to cancer patients and their loved ones: more tools for your toolbox – Dr. Carolyn Messner, New York University and CancerCare.

- The therapeutic toolbox: what are the essential tools? – Angela Cotroneo, Sydney Cancer Centre, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
- Uncovering the psychosocial needs identified by women undergoing treatment for locally advanced cervical cancer – Alison Hocking, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Melbourne.
- Two left feet: social issues with prostate cancer and the role of PCFA in mitigating them - Graeme Higgs, Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia
- An exploratory study into oncology professionals' perceptions of the health care preferences of young people living with cancer – K. Thompson, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne
- Redkite Telegroups: keeping families connected when transitioning from hospital to their local community – Leigh Kurth, Redkite, Brisbane.
- MaP Therapy © charting a description of the



meaning and purpose in the life of individuals with advanced cancer – Carrie Lethborg, St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne.

- From Practice to Research: Strengthening the research tool kit of oncology social work – Lynette Joubert, University of Melbourne.
- Assumptions made by health professionals about the impact of culture do not reflect the lived experience of Vietnamese patients living with a cancer diagnosis – Denise Beovich, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne.
- My kite will fly: development of manual & guidelines for working with parents as patients and their dependent children (aged 3 to 12 years) as young carers – Cynthia Holland, Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne.

### **National Keynote Speaker**

Psycho-social oncology: maintaining the momentum  
- Dr Pam McGrath, Central Queensland University

- Being everything at once – the demands of carers of cancer patients. How can we increase their well-being? Pauley Kessel, St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne.
- Caregiving at the end of life: towards a civic model of care – Kate Burns, Flinders University.
- Life reflections: a patient biography service – Sherryl Searles, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane.
- Talking with children about illness, loss, grief and death – Liz Crowe, Mater Children's Hospital, Brisbane.
- The forgotten third – workshopping psychosocial care for older people with cancer – Carrie Lethborg, St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne.
- Alleviating the burden: a financial assistance program for patients and families living with cancer – Peta McLean, Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney.
- Complex needs may only be met through multi-disciplinary collaboration – working with other disciplines to develop a psychosocial intervention prior to major head and neck cancer surgery – Laurelle Stalker, St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne.
- Surviving social work oncology long term - Liz Crowe, Mater Children's Hospital, Brisbane.

The conference was very well received by participants with great positive feedback! The other main change at OSWA is that a new term brings a new executive office, to this end the President of OSWA 2010-2011 is Jane Whelan from QLD. I will remain as the OSWA rep on the COSA Council. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me via email at [angela.cotroneo@sswahs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:angela.cotroneo@sswahs.nsw.gov.au).

**Angela Cotroneo, Chair**

Email: [angela.cotroneo@sswahs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:angela.cotroneo@sswahs.nsw.gov.au)

## **Surgical Oncology group**

As discussed in the Annual Report, the focus for the Surgical Oncology group in 2010 will be to explore options for improving collaboration with both national and international organisations involved in delivering surgical cancer care. One such possibility is the option of forming an association within SSO representing surgical oncologists in Australia. This would offer a number of benefits (including journal access and attendance at meetings) and fit well with COSA's draft strategic plan. Links with international organisations such as ASCO (medical oncology), ONS (cancer nurses) and AACR (cancer researchers) already exist, so a link with an organisation representing cancer surgeons would be complementary and beneficial for the group.

This will require greater alignment with the College of Surgeons Surgical Oncology group. Whilst this has been occurring gradually over the last few years, this may be the opportunity to formalise the relationship and open the door to improved collaboration in surgical cancer care.

I also draw your attention to the following initiative from within the group and my thanks to Christobel Saunders, Rik Thompson, Michael Henderson and Glenys Dixon for this contribution:

### **EMPathy Project - A novel national collaborative targeting breast cancer recurrence**

As a result of a successful \$5 million National Breast Cancer Foundation grant, Western Australian (Prof Christobel Saunders) and Victorian (A/Prof Michael Henderson) surgeons have teamed up with scientists from around the country headed by A/Prof Erik Thompson (University of Melbourne Department of Surgery and St Vincent's Institute). The aim of this group is to investigate the ability of breast cancer cells to "flip" between epithelial and mesenchymal states. It appears that this ability may allow them to resist current therapies, and provide mechanisms by which they become dormant after initial treatment then later emerge as distant metastases. The survival of such metastatic cells in new environments is paramount to breast cancer recurrence. Epithelial-mesenchymal plasticity (EMP) is the term coined by this group, and is known to be both part of normal embryological development as well as a newly recognised process in cancer metastasis. The EMPathy network's primary aim is to target EMP for improved outcomes in breast cancer, especially in reducing breast cancer recurrence by eradicating disseminated tumour cells (DTCs) which resist adjuvant therapy. To do this we will develop methods to monitor EMP in DTCs, identify regulators and mediators of EMP in breast cancer, and develop therapeutics designed to target EMP. The program is described more fully on our website: <http://www.mtci.com.au/TEMTIA/EMPathy.html>

The surgical arm of the EMPathy group will be providing a unique in-vivo testing ground for these theories by developing a resource of tissue samples

taken from biopsies and surgery for both primary and metastatic disease, bone marrow samples and circulating tumour cells from peripheral blood. This will be linked to data on the tumours, treatments and the outcomes of the patients. We provide an important interface between the research team and medical oncology colleagues.

**Susan Neuhaus, Chair**

Email: [susan\\_neuhaus@hotmail.com](mailto:susan_neuhaus@hotmail.com)

## Urologic Oncology group

The 2009 ASM once again provided a forum to showcase the depth and breadth of activity within the Urologic Oncology. Jarad Martin and his team came up with a program of broad interest that attracted a considerable audience. This included a multidisciplinary prostate cancer symposium, with presentations from a urologist, a radiation oncologist, a medical oncologist and a cancer nurse. The AGM was held on that day and the agenda included discussion of issues of membership and leadership; project priorities; interactions with ANZUP and other organisations; informatics and tissue collection initiatives; consumers and advocacy; funding opportunities; and plans for the 2010 COSA ASM. After the conclusion of the main COSA ASM a satellite symposium sponsored by Novartis was held. This was a case-based panel discussion entitled, "An holistic approach to the advanced RCC patient." It was chaired by Ron Bukowski from Cleveland and generated considerable interest and participation from the audience. Panel members represented urology, radiation oncology, medical oncology, palliative care and nursing, representing the eclectic nature of the group. A highlight of the day was the announcement of the winners of the COSA/sanofi-aventis "Advancing Care for Prostate Cancer Patients 2009 Research Grants." Once again, congratulations to Jane Phillips and Geneviève Baratiny, and we look forward to hearing the results of their work later this year.

A fortunate few were able to stay on for the ANZUP Annual Scientific Meeting on the Friday following the COSA ASM, with discussion of current and pending trials, future trial ideas, opportunities for engagement of others including basic science, psycho-oncology/supportive care, and tissue collection. Key agenda items also included discussions of strategic directions, and mentorship of younger investigators. I encourage you to visit [www.anzup.org](http://www.anzup.org) and join and participate in ANZUP activities.

Unfortunately David Nicol resigned as deputy chair of the Urologic Oncology, however Shomik Sengupta took up this role on the recommendation of the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand. The executive thus continues to consist of a medical oncologist, a urologist and a radiation oncologist. The fact that all are Victorian is entirely coincidental but anyone concerned about this should know that nominations will be called for the new executive for election at the 2010 AGM to be held during the COSA ASM.

The group will once again be well represented at the 2010 COSA ASM in Melbourne at our shiny new convention centre. I am representing the group on the convening committee this year. Although genitourinary cancer is not a major theme for the 2010 ASM, we will ensure that there is a vigorous program covering as many aspects of urologic oncology as possible.

The group continues to interact with other COSA groups and initiatives, including tissue collection, informatics, clinical trials, advocacy, public health and consumer involvement. We have been fortunate that the membership of the Urologic Oncology covers a wide range of disciplines and crafts, which has brought people together and allowed new opportunities for collaboration and research. Our consumer/community involvement is very strong, ensuring that we are in touch with issues relevant to the community and are moving appropriately to set priorities for our activities into the future. We continue to develop links with various others within COSA and other cooperative trials nationally and internationally. We want to continue this very positive trend, so please encourage other people with an interest to join. In particular we wish to encourage trainees from all disciplines to participate, as you are the future of the organisation and will take over from us fossils in the not too distant future.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you want further information or you would like to participate more actively.

**Ian Davis, Chair**

Email: [ian.davis@ludwig.edu.au](mailto:ian.davis@ludwig.edu.au)

## COSA & Cancer Cooperative Trial Groups Enabling Project Update

The Combined Clinical Research Professionals Group and the COSA & Cooperative Groups Enabling Project Joint Workshop held at the 2009 COSA ASM was well received by workshop participants who comprised Executive Officers from the Cancer Cooperative Trial Groups (CTGs), clinical trial managers and coordinators as well as several clinical investigators. The topics covered included an update on RECIST criteria, budgeting for clinical trials, the separation of ethics and research governance and Clinical Trial Research Agreements.

Significant progress has been achieved towards the goal of having a national Clinical Trial Research Agreement for Cooperative Trial Groups (CTRA CTG) template. At the time that the Enabling Project commenced this work in 2009, Victoria, NSW and QLD had already mandated the use of this template for trials conducted in these 3 states. Since then, we have obtained endorsement of this CTRA CTG template in ACT and WA (albeit a modified version in WA) with "official" endorsement by SA Health pending. The ability to use a CTRA template has already made a significant improvement towards streamlining the approval process for CCTG sponsored trials in the jurisdictions where it is mandated or

endorsed for use. The COSA Executive Officers Network (EON) has also modified the Australian CTRA CTG template to create a version which can be used in New Zealand. The NZ CTRA CTG is currently undergoing another step in the review process in NZ.

For the remainder of its funding period, The Enabling Project will focus on the Quality Assurance component, in particular, the provision of online training modules for clinical research staff. To achieve this, we are currently developing a partnership with the Association of Regulatory & Clinical Scientists (ARCS) to develop some oncology-specific online modules in order to supplement their existing online Good Clinical Practice (GCP) modules. Through this partnership, the Enabling Project is also working towards subsidising 50 clinical research staff study coordinators, data managers & clinical investigators and other interested parties from the CTGs to complete the existing ARCS GCP online modules over the next 12 months.

Inception of the Umbrella Clinical Trials Insurance Scheme for participating CTGs took place in June 2009. The scheme is progressing well and the renewal process for Year 2 of this Scheme has just commenced for the 9 participating CTGs.

**Professor Steve Ackland, Chair**  
**Dr Margie Campbell, Program Coordinator**

## **COSA Interest Group Updates**

### **AYA Interest group**

Over the past two years COSA has been working with CanTeen and Cancer Australia in a national collaborative effort to improve outcomes for adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with cancer.

In 2008 the Australian Government committed \$15 million funding for the Youth Cancer Networks Program (YCNP) to develop services for adolescents and young adults with cancer. Funding is allocated for five jurisdictional projects (\$12 million) and for eight national projects including evaluation (\$3 million). It will be administered by CanTeen in the period from November 2009 to June 2011.

While project proposals were still being negotiated, COSA convened a workshop in November last year to enable key stakeholders to be advised on progress in rolling out the YCNP program, about other jurisdictional and national projects, and identify opportunities for national collaboration and/or coordination to enhance AYA cancer services across Australia.

A report of the workshop, which includes an overview of state/territory (jurisdictional service) projects and the national projects, is on the COSA website under "publications".

COSA has been contracted to manage implementation of three separate but related national YCNP projects, which will draw on the expertise of members of our AYA Cancer Interest group and broader multidisciplinary membership. The three projects are:

- 1. Development of an AYA Network of health professionals.**
  - Associate Professor David Thomas, chair of COSA's AYA Cancer Interest group and Medical Director of OnTrac@Peter Mac is overseeing this project aimed at informing, linking and supporting health professionals providing cancer care to AYAs.
- 2. Producing AYA cancer guidelines and protocols.**
  - Dr Marianne Phillips, Senior Paediatric and Adolescent Oncologist; Princess Margaret Hospital WA is chair of the working group that will manage development of web-based, evidence-based guidance on particular issues related to the care of AYA cancer patients. The Cancer Institute NSW will develop related protocols to be added to the eviQ website.
- 3. Increasing AYA cancer clinical research and participation of AYAs with cancer in clinical trials.**
  - The steering group overseeing this project is chaired by Dr Wayne Nicholls, Paediatric Oncologist at the Royal Children's Hospital Brisbane. The project aims to increase AYAs' access to and participation in cancer clinical trials, and to support new trials in recognised areas of need.

The Marryalyan will provide a forum for Jurisdictions to report their progress and updates as part of the AYA Interest group reports. To register your interest in joining the COSA AYA Interest and/or contributing to the YCNP please email Tanya Wigg, COSA's AYA Project Coordinator: tanya.wigg@cancer.org.au.

**David Thomas, Chair**

## **Care Coordination group**

At the 2009 Annual Scientific Meeting, COSA convened the third pre-conference workshop on care coordination. The third workshop built on outcomes from previous meetings, and aimed to explore and define practical outcome measures that can be used to measure the impact of the Cancer Care Coordinator role. The workshop was attended by 41 participants, the majority of whom were practising in Cancer Care Coordinator roles. A range of issues were identified that should be considered when identifying outcome measures for the Cancer Care Coordinator role, and potential outcome measures were identified. A report on the outcomes of this workshop will be disseminated in the near future.

Members of the Cancer Care Coordination Interest group are actively involved in preparing for the 2nd National Cancer Care Coordination Conference to be held on the Gold Coast on March 25-26th. The conference is being organised and sponsored by COSA,



in collaboration with Queensland Health. The program addresses topics including achievements to date, as well as challenges for the future. Perspectives of consumers, care coordinators, multidisciplinary team members, and policy makers will be considered during the conference. The conference will also include a session focussed on identifying strategic priorities for the professional development and advancement of cancer care coordinators.

**Patsy Yates, Chair**

## Complementary Therapies Interest group

The Complementary Therapies Interest group is now two years old. In this rather short time, the group has convened two workshops on complementary care, developed a resource website and ran two dedicated sessions at past ASMs with scientific presentations on complementary care. The ASM held on the Gold Coast in November attracted a record number of delegates to the session; 'Complementary Care in Cancer – Challenges for Practicing Oncology Professionals'. Members are to be congratulated for the quality of work presented.

To guide the future work of the group a small steering committee was convened recently and the first teleconference was held. The bios of the members are outlined below:

- Monica Robotin, Medical Director of the Cancer Council NSW, heads the Research Strategy and Scientific Development Unit. She divides her time between the Cancer Council and the University of Sydney, where she is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Public Health. Monica developed and coordinates the Cancer Prevention and Control and the Chronic Disease Control units of study for the Master of Public Health curriculum.
- Paul Katris, registered psychologist employed by the Cancer Council WA. He is contracted by the WA Department of Health to head up the WA Clinical Oncology Group - a multidisciplinary educational body on all aspects of cancer control.
- Alayne Reid - Nurse Educator – Division of Cancer Services, Mater Adult Hospital, Queensland. Alayne had a varied nursing background in clinical nursing, before commencing in Oncology/Haematology 24 years ago. She has been employed at the Mater Adult Hospital, in the Division of Cancer, since 1990, and has been the cancer nurse educator for the last 14 years.
- Lesley Braun - a Research Fellow in the Department of Surgery, Monash University (cardiothoracic surgical research unit) and a Research Pharmacist at the Alfred Hospital. She is also an associate investigator in the Victorian based NICM (National Institute of Complementary Medicine) collaborative research centre. Her research includes conducting randomised and observational studies involving

various complementary medicines and supervising research students.

- Bogda Koczwarra (Chair): a Medical Oncologist, working at Flinders Medical Centre, South Australia. I have a strong interest in psycho-oncology and see a lot of young patients primarily with breast cancer. My interest in complementary therapy relates to symptom management, e.g. hot flushes, and exercise, and Health Services Research, particularly in the delivery of complementary care.

The initial teleconference generated a lot of ideas which will hopefully engage our diverse membership.

At the top of the list is to hold a Concept Development Workshop for investigators interested in Complementary and Integrative Therapies in the Oncology Setting.

If you have an interest in complementary and integrative therapies research we would like to hear from you and/or if you would like to be involved in the planning for the workshop you can contact Paul Katris by email: PKatris@cancerwa.asn.au or Kathy Ansell.

Our other important task is continuing refining of the website especially safety information regarding complementary care. If you would like to contribute to this work, we would love to hear from you – please indicate your interest to Kathy Ansell.

We are looking forward to your involvement and contribution during another exciting and busy year. Please contact Kathy Ansell, project coordinator by email [kathy.ansell@cancer.org.au](mailto:kathy.ansell@cancer.org.au) to join the group.

**Bogda Koczwarra, Chair**

## Developing Nations group

There was a great deal of interest in Developing Nations Group at COSA this year with over 100 people attending the Workshop: "So you think you can help". Attendees identified areas that they have assisted with on a world map; suggested potential projects and nominated ways that COSA can enable greater participation by Australia in cancer control throughout our region.



**Developing Nations Workshop at the 2009 COSA ASM**

We were then treated to a fascinating series of interviews conducted by Liz Hovey with guests, panel and audience. Nick Coatsworth recounted his experience with MSF, Alan Meares shared over 20 years worth of experience with the development of Interplast and experience was



shared by other panel members including Keith Cox, Martin Tattersall and Andrew Kiberu.

Several themes emerged as ingredients for success

- Responding to local priorities
- Bilateral Government support
- Local champions
- Adequate Reconnaissance
- Simple achievable goals
- Relationships

There was also a strong message about the personal satisfaction that emerged from such projects.

Clearly, service delivery poses significant problems in comparison with surgical projects which operate well as a fly in and fly out service – building capacity through teaching. COSA's response needs to address the difficulties in dealing with a more chronic care model.

Discussion about what COSA could do at this meeting and the AGM generated a very long list of potential ways of helping. A report has been sent to Executive on a number of options for the group to move forward with. In the next issue of the Marryalyan I will be able to inform you of the working priorities for the year ahead.

**Matthew Links, Chair**

## Geriatric Oncology group

The Geriatric Oncology Interest group held a very successful workshop on November 19, 2009 and I wish to thank COSA for their support through the provision of the Professional Day grants. The workshop was based around defining the best forms of geriatric assessment tools that could be made available to clinicians in the Australian context (please refer to the workshop summary in this edition of the Marryalyan).

Since November we have progressed with a number of hospitals working towards or obtaining ethics approval to proceed with undertaking an audit on medical oncology clinical practices. It will be data assessment of cognitions and poly pharmacy routinely carried out on medical oncology & surgical oncology patients over the age of 70 with the aim to show current clinical practice in some major treatment centres. There will be two sections, a retrospective & prospective review of patient files and the second part is to listen out in MDT's meetings to note relevant discussion about geriatric issues on patients. I aim to present data at SIOG in late October and at COSA ASM next November.

A subgroup of COSA's Geriatric Oncology group is also developing a research proposal in consultation with the relevant cooperative clinical trials groups (like the PoCoG model).

It looks to be a busy and exciting year ahead, if you are interested in joining the interest group please let us know. Email: kathy.ansell@cancer.org.au

**Christopher Steer, Chair**

## Geriatric Oncology Interest Group - Professional Development Summary Report

COSA's second Geriatric Oncology Workshop was held on 19 November 2009, supported by a COSA Professional Day grant. The steering committee wish to thank Professor Martin Tattersall for facilitating the workshop.

The original aim of the workshop was to define a national geriatric assessment tool for the Australian clinical setting. However in pre-workshop discussion COSA's Geriatric Oncology group acknowledged the absence of data to assist in evaluating and choosing one tool over another. Instead, workshop participants were invited to consider and recommend which tool or tools could best be used in clinical practice and research in the Australian setting.

In addition to members of COSA's Geriatric Oncology group, invited participants included medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons, geriatricians, dual medical oncology/geriatrics trainees, cancer nurses, pharmacists, palliative care specialists and others with an interest in improving the care of older people with cancer.

Dr Catherine Terret, a leading international expert in the field of geriatric oncology, was invited to help guide and contribute to workshop discussions. Dr Terret has extensive experience in the development of geriatric assessment tools and setting up geriatric oncology programs.

Dr Terret and the other workshop presenters – Australian oncologists and dual medical oncology and geriatrics trainees – outlined:

- the current geriatric assessment tools used in other countries and in Australia
- essential components of an 'ideal' screening tool
- considerations in assessing and choosing a tool such as feasibility, coverage of geriatric domains, patient acceptability, patient category and tool validation.

**Workshop participants then divided into three groups to consider and develop recommendations regarding the appropriateness and application of geriatric assessment tools:**

- in tertiary hospital settings, with a multidisciplinary geriatric oncology team
- by private/independent/small group practitioners
- in research.

Professor Martin Tattersall summarised key outcomes and recommendations from the group reports:

- The Adelaide screening tool seems to be very practical, appropriate and beneficial, but needs further evaluation.
- The availability of a MBS item number (700 – Older Person's Health Assessment) for

- assessing and developing a comprehensive care plan for older patients should be
- promoted to GPs and medical oncologists.
- COSA should consider advocating for lower eligibility age for patients for a health assessment to 70 (currently 75).
- A subgroup of COSA's Geriatric Oncology group should further develop the research proposal outlined by the workshop group, in consultation with the relevant cooperative clinical trials groups (like the PoCoG model).
- Given the absence of evidence on which to base a decision about which screening tool to use, can we simply choose one and add a couple of things to it or do we have to use one of the tools that exists? Why not follow the typical Australian approach and 'just get on with the job'?
- There needs to be greater involvement of oncology nurses and cancer care coordinators to enhance geriatric oncology and patient care.

The workshop highlighted the need and enormous opportunities to improve the management of geriatric oncology patients in Australia, and generated lots of ideas that COSA's Geriatric Oncology group will now pursue.

## NETs Interest group

The NETs Interest group has had an active 12 months, with multiple projects occurring simultaneously.

The Guidelines for the management of gastroenteropancreatic neuroendocrine tumours (GEP-NETs) are progressing, with chapter working groups now having compiled their contributions towards the final publication. COSA is developing a wiki platform for dissemination of the guidelines, as well as to facilitate group editing and updating of the content. Once finalised by the working group, these guidelines will be made available to the public through the COSA wiki website.

The goal to establish a national NETs database is well underway, with the establishment of a NETs Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) to oversee this and other NETs projects. This multidisciplinary group of National specialists, with consumer and cancer care representation, convened for the first time in February and will continue to meet monthly.

The NETs Interest group would like to bring to the membership's attention the Unicorn Foundation. Formed in 2009, their mission is to improve awareness of neuroendocrine tumours within the medical profession and the general public; foster patient understanding through support groups and raise much needed funding for Australian research in this area. More information on their activities can be found on [www.unicornfoundation.org.au](http://www.unicornfoundation.org.au).

**Yu Jo Chu, Chair**

## Specialist Certificate in Clinical Research (Oncology)

### Course Overview

Clinical research in oncology is an enormous field that integrates the efforts of a broad multi-disciplinary team; including medical, nursing, allied health, laboratory and other professionals. The Specialist Certificate in Clinical Research (Oncology) has been designed to bring together this multi-disciplinary group to give them a better understanding of all types of research conducted in oncology as well as provide an understanding of the essential components and features of successful research activities and research careers. Students will gain an understanding of the breadth of research in oncology and the range of career opportunities. They will be presented with some of the ethical and legal considerations relevant to clinical research in oncology. They will learn of the many different outcomes assessed by oncology clinical trials, including how and why these might differ from other disciplines. Students will gain an appreciation of how to develop a research proposal/study protocol and will develop skills in critically appraising presentations and publications concerning oncology research. Students will also be exposed to many of the current active areas of research in clinical oncology research.

### For further information please contact

**Danielle Boardman**

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**W:** [www.mccp.unimelb.edu.au/oncology](http://www.mccp.unimelb.edu.au/oncology)

## COSA website

Work is about to begin on upgrading the COSA website, [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au). The strategic plan for the website outlines four key areas to improve the current site, including:

- structure of the site - to make finding information quicker and easier
- new tools - research blog, professional development/jobs blog, RSS feeds to promote communication between members
- new navigation - reducing the number of clicks to get to desired information
- new look - new colours and design to help navigate the site

A copy of the strategic plan is on the 'Messages from Executive Officer' group forum.

We welcome your comments.

While you're on the site why not participate in your group forum. Access to the member's area and forum is your email address (username) and your COSA membership number (password). You can now also receive an email notification when a new post has been added to your selected forum discussions. Go to profile management in the member's area of the site and click on email notification to set up your email alerts.

## COSA Awards Committee – Call for nominations

It has been proposed that an awards committee be established to facilitate the determination of the recipients of the various COSA awards each year. This committee will consist of members from various groups within the membership. The Executive will review all nominations and appoint a chair.

Please forward all nominations to –  
[margaret.mcjannett@cancer.org.au](mailto:margaret.mcjannett@cancer.org.au)

## 2011 HOTT Fellowship Awards

Roche Oncology & Haematology, in conjunction with COSA, MOGA and HSNZ, is delighted to announce that two HOTT Fellowship Awards of \$50,000 AUD each will be available for 2011.

The award is open to individuals undertaking advanced training in medical oncology or haematology, or to more senior oncologists or haematologists with limited research experience, to fund projects undertaken over a one year period. The research or projects must be conducted within Australia. Applications for this Award are now open.

Closing date for applications Tuesday May 25 2010  
See COSA website [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au) for more details

## 2010 HOTT Grant

We are again delighted to announce that Roche Products is providing funds to COSA to support a Haematology and Oncology Targeted Therapies Allied Health (HOTTAH) grant of \$25,000 AUD.

This award is open to Allied Health Professionals and is intended to assist in the conduct of research or project initiatives that will be of benefit to the clinical oncology or haematology community within Australia. For the purpose of the grant, Allied Health is defined as anyone other than doctors or specialists. Health professionals including: Nurses, Pharmacists, Social Workers, Researchers, Physiotherapists and Psychologists. Applications for the grant are now open.

Closing date for applications Tuesday May 25 2010  
See COSA website [www.cosa.org.au](http://www.cosa.org.au) for more details

## Education and Research needs of COSA members: a COSA survey

A report on behalf of the COSA Education and Research Subcommittees.

Bogda Koczwaro.

### Abstract

In 2008, the Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (COSA) undertook a survey to elicit information about oncology education and research support needs of its members. A total of 414 responses were received, with the majority from nurses (58%), individuals working in metropolitan areas (77%) and those working predominantly in the public sector (76%). While survey outcomes represent views of only a section of the COSA membership, the results provide an indication of areas in which COSA could focus future education and research support activities.

### Background

COSA is Australia's peak multidisciplinary society for health professionals working in cancer research, treatment, rehabilitation or palliative care. With a membership of over 1250 individuals in 22 cancer professional groups, COSA's overarching mission is to develop and maintain high-quality clinical care of cancer patients in Australia. Membership includes doctors, nurses, scientists and allied health professionals involved in clinical care of people with cancer. COSA's education and research activities are guided by its Education and Research Subcommittees. In 2008, COSA undertook a survey of its membership to assess educational and research support needs with a view to informing future activities in these areas.

### Survey overview

The self-completed web-based survey of 36 questions was promoted to the COSA membership via email. Questions focused on preferred sources and formats of cancer education activities, barriers to accessing education, views on pharmaceutical industry sponsorship of educational activities, views on current COSA education activities and opportunities for COSA to provide education or research support for its membership. Responses were received from 414 COSA members (Box 1).

#### Box 1: Profile of COSA education and research survey respondents (n=414)

- **Gender** – female: 84%; male: 16%
- **Discipline** – nursing: 58%; medical: 17%; allied health: 16%; other: 9%
- **Location** – metropolitan: 77%; regional: 22%; rural: <1%
- **Service type** – public: 76%; private: 29%; university: 21%; non-government organisations: 11%
- **Experience in oncology/haematology** – <1 year: 3%; 1–5 years: 18%; 6–10 years: 23%; >11 years: 56%
- **COSA membership duration** – <1 year: 18%; 1–3 years: 30%; 4–7 years: 22%; 8–10 years: 9%; ≥10 years: 21%

## Survey outcomes

### Approaches to education (Box 2)

Respondents identified a range of sources and interest areas for their own continuing professional education (CPD). Results highlight the importance of educational meetings and web-based information as sources of education for oncology health professionals.

#### Box 2: Approaches to oncology education: key results

- **Sources of CPD** (n=300) – professional body/college: 69%; other relevant organisations (eg Cancer Councils): 46%; tertiary institutions: 30%; local area health service: 21%
- **Education interest areas** (n=328) – new cancer treatments: 68%; guidelines/standards of care: 59%; symptom management: 51%; survivorship: 46%; psycho-oncology: 45%
- **Preferred education delivery format** (n=328) – large meetings: 68%; web-based learning: 60%; lectures: 59%; small group workshops: 56%
- **Barriers to education** (n=316) – lack of time: 63%; lack of staff to cover leave: 51%; distance to educational venue: 50%; cost: 49%

### COSA's role in providing education (Box 3)

Survey results indicate a potential role for COSA in delivering education for members but suggest that there may be opportunities to improve awareness of and satisfaction with existing activities. A range of areas in which COSA could provide education were identified, including self-education and CPD, patient education, education of junior staff as well as research into education and cross-disciplinary training. Some differences in attitudes were apparent based on discipline and location and there may be benefit in exploring views of individual discipline groups to identify specific needs. Given the importance placed on large meetings as a source of education, further exploration of members' preferences for activities offered through the COSA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) may be helpful in encouraging attendance at future meetings.

#### Box 3: COSA's role in providing oncology education: key results

- **Satisfaction with COSA education activities** (n=328) – satisfied/very satisfied: 40%; undecided: 44%; dissatisfied: 16%
- **Awareness of COSA education activities** (somewhat/very informed) (n=328) – educational session at COSA ASM: 65%; COSA website: 93%; Cancer Forum: 91%; Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology: 81%; ACCORD workshop: 62%; Education subcommittee: 47%
- **Attendance at COSA ASM** (n=315) – always: 31%; occasionally: 35%; never: 34%
- **Role for COSA in providing education** (n=326) – Viewed as more useful by nurses (94%) and allied health (91%) vs medical practitioners (71%) (p<0.001); and by rural/regional practitioners (97%) vs metropolitan practitioners (86%) (p=0.003)

### Pharmaceutical industry sponsorship of education (Box 4)

Survey responses highlight a range of views about pharmaceutical industry sponsorship of educational activities and underscore the importance placed by COSA members on transparency about industry involvement in research and education activities.

#### Box 4: Views on pharmaceutical industry sponsorship of educational activities: key results

- **Overall views** – 79% of 315 respondents agreed/strongly agreed that pharmaceutical sponsorship of educational activities is beneficial; 92% of 314 respondents agreed/strongly agreed that pharmaceutical sponsorship of meetings such as the COSA ASM is acceptable
- **Concerns** – 20% of 313 participants would prefer to attend non-industry sponsored events; 25% were concerned about pharmaceutical sponsorship of educational meetings
- **Transparency** – 85% of 315 respondents believed that pharmaceutical sponsorship of educational meetings for clinical trial groups is beneficial as long as sponsorship is transparent; 53% of 313 respondents believed that disclosure of sponsorship is sufficient to manage conflicts of interest.

### Research needs (Box 5)

Overall, 58% of 312 survey respondents indicated that they are involved in some form of research. Feedback from these respondents provided some information about possible roles for COSA in supporting cancer research professionals.

#### Box 5: COSA's role in supporting cancer research professionals: key results

- **Possible support roles for COSA** (agree or strongly agree) (n=179) – provide advice about funding opportunities: 90%; facilitate mentoring of junior researchers: 84%; identify topics for future research (83%)
- **Useful information that could be included on COSA website** (n=180) – research resources (eg statistical packages): 96%; links to research funding sites: 94%; resources for producing presentations: 91%; protocol/ethics templates: 88%; funding register of COSA member research activities: 87%; links to trial registries: 82%; web-based discussion group: 74%

### Conclusions

This survey provides a snapshot of the views of around one-quarter of the COSA membership in relation to educational needs and preferences and research support needs of oncology health professionals. While the results reflect a bias towards nurses and health professionals working in metropolitan and public settings, they provide some valuable information about areas for improvement and further exploration.



## Acknowledgements

The survey was developed by COSA's Education and Research Subcommittees. Survey programming was undertaken by Gemma Connolly at the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education, University of Sydney. Assistance with analysis of results was provided by Dr Gabriel Sam Gabriel and Professor Michael Barton from the Collaboration for Cancer Outcomes Research and Evaluation at the University of New South Wales. Assistance with report development was provided by Dr Alison Evans from Alison Evans Consulting.

## When Cancer Crosses Disciplines. A Physicians Handbook.

How should I treat patients with anthracycline induced cardiomyopathy? How should I assess patients known to have had hepatitis B before offering chemotherapy? How can the orthopaedic surgeon help in managing bone metastases? These are common questions which have in common the need for oncologists to consult other specialists.

In a joint project between Cancer Council NSW and Cancer Council Australia, Monica Robotin and her co-editors Ian Olver and Afaf Girgis have filled a niche in the literature by producing the book "When Cancer Crosses Disciplines" Most of the authors are Australian experts in their fields. The book goes well beyond the medical, surgical and gynaecological specialties to also include sections on epidemiology, genetics, survivorship, palliative care and complementary medicines. The chapters are well referenced for exploring a topic more comprehensively.

Multidisciplinary care is becoming increasingly complex and this book will provide practical advice for practising clinicians who seek more information on prevention, diagnosis, screening, cancer treatment and supportive care in patients ranging from children to the elderly.

The book was launched at the COSA ASM in 2009 and can be purchased through the publisher's website: <http://www.worldscibooks.com/medsci/p629.html> or from Cancer Council Australia with a special offer for COSA members.

## Other News

### Living with Cancer Education Program

The Living with Cancer Education program is for people with cancer as well as their family and friends. The Cancer Council Victoria's role with the Living with Cancer Education program is to train, resource, support, evaluate and coordinate the Program, as it is delivered through a diverse network of health professionals. We train appropriate health professionals including oncology nurses, breast care nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, pastoral care workers and radiotherapists to deliver this program.

Please find details for the 2010 two day facilitator training courses on the Cancer Council Victoria's website [www.cancervic.org.au/health\\_professionals/training\\_courses\\_and\\_education](http://www.cancervic.org.au/health_professionals/training_courses_and_education).

## Victorian Cancer Agency

The Victorian Cancer Agency, would like to inform you of research funding opportunities for 2010 and 2011.

Funding will be offered in the following areas:

- Clinical Research Fellowships – 3 categories:
- Clinical Research Fellowship (2)
- Palliative and Supportive Care Fellowship (1)
- Public Health Fellowship (1)
- Palliative and Supportive Care Scholarships (3)
- Early Career Seed Grants (4)
- Consumer Grants (3)
- Palliative and Supportive Care Capacity Building (4)

Call for applications for its 2010 funding round in March – date to be advised. Application Guidelines for each of the above funding streams are available on the Agency's website. The Guidelines can be viewed at: [www.victoriancanceragency.org.au](http://www.victoriancanceragency.org.au)

**If you have any queries, please call the Victorian Cancer Agency on (03) 9635 5481, or email [victoriancanceragency@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:victoriancanceragency@health.vic.gov.au)**



**Look Good...Feel Better.**

A COSMETIC INDUSTRY COMMUNITY INITIATIVE HELPING CANCER PATIENTS

## Look Good...Feel Better celebrates its 20th Anniversary this year

**The cosmetic industry, through their community service program, has helped over 80,000 cancer patients cope with the often distressing appearance related side effects of their treatment, since May 1990!**

Dr David Dalley, Senior Medical oncologist at St. Vincents Hospital in Sydney says,

*"In my 30 years of Oncology I have seen a lot of changes and a lot of advances. You would have heard on Daffodil Day how the survival of patients with cancer has improved significantly in the last few years. The quality of life and mental well-being of patients with cancer has been improved even further.*

*I have no doubts that a major contributing factor to the improved quality of life and mental well-being of patients has been Look Good... Feel Better"*

**For further information please visit [www.lgfb.org.au](http://www.lgfb.org.au)**

# COSA's 2010 Annual Scientific Meeting

9-11 November 2010 | Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

## 'Cancer & Beyond'



Australian New Zealand  
Breast Cancer Trials Group

The COSA Annual Scientific meeting has become an unmissable event on the calendar of all Australian cancer health professionals. This year, we anticipate almost 2000 participants from all aspects of cancer care will participate in our 3 day meeting, flanked by professional days and specialty seminars.

Our theme 'Cancer and Beyond' will focus not only on state of the art diagnosis and management of cancer, but long term issues both for survivors and carers, living with the legacy of cancer and its aftermath. The tumour streams to be highlighted are breast and gynaecological cancers, melanoma, familial cancers and urological cancer, tied together through a focus on translational research and survivorship. There is something for everyone, with topics such as "Mental health issues in cancer patients" "Survivorship as a cancer health professional" and "Personalised medicine and how it will change practise."

Our 2010 partners are the ANZ Breast Cancer Trials Group, BreastSurg ANZ, the Sixth Sino-Australia/New Zealand (RACS) Conference on Surgical Oncology and the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer (MASCC) and others.

COSA will again host a number of pre and post satellite meetings, 'Clinical Professional Days' and a Consumer Forum. We will also facilitate meetings of a number of the National Cooperative Cancer Trials Groups including ANZ Breast Cancer Trials Group (ANZBCTG), ANZ Melanoma Trials Group (ANZMTG), ANZ Gynaecology Oncology Group (ANZGOG) and ANZ Urogenital and Prostate Cancer Trials Group (ANZUP).

The growth in our ASM has led to innovations, such as:

- Streamlining of abstract submission and evaluation, with emphasis on high quality original research presenting mature data
- Large number of awards for "Best of the Best" Oral and Poster sessions
- A pre COSA workshop relating to a conference stream. "Everything you want to know about breast cancer" will be of particular value to trainees and junior staff, as it includes basic research and its translation into clinical practice.
- Inaugural Presidential Lecture, preceding our "Hot Topic Debate"
- ..And for a bit of fun, we are introducing "COSA's got talent" at our Conference Dinner!

We have already confirmed a number of leading experts from both Australia and the international community.

SO... CAN YOU AFFORD TO MISS OUT???

Check out our website [www.cosa2010.org](http://www.cosa2010.org) and DIARISE NOW!

See you there,

Eva Segelov,  
2010 convenor

### THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

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# COSA's 2010 Annual Scientific Meeting

9-11 November 2010 | Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre



## 'Cancer & Beyond'

### 2010 Invited Speakers include:

**Dr Wendy Demark-Wahnefried, Ph.D, R.D**

Nutrition scientist with training in biochemistry, genetics and behavioral science.  
The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center,  
Houston, TX, USA

**Dr Monica Morrow, MD, FACS**

Surgical oncologist with a practice dedicated to the treatment of breast cancer.  
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, USA

**Dr Christos Sotiriou, MD, PhD**

Head of Functional Genomics & Translational Research Unit  
Jules Bordet Institute, Brussels, Belgium

**Dr Sara Booth MD FRCP**

Clinical Director Palliative Care Services;  
Associate Lecturer University of Cambridge, London, UK

**Dr Isabel White**

Florence Nightingale School of Nursing and Midwifery,  
King's College London, UK

**Prof Martin Hauer-Jensen, MD, PhD, FACS**

Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Surgery, and  
Pathology  
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Arkansas, USA

**Dr Jervoise Andreyev MA PhD FRCP**

Co-chair of the British Society of Gastroenterology  
Guidelines  
Royal Marsden Hospital, London, UK

**A/Prof Ann Partridge**

Assistant Professor in Medicine, Harvard Medical School  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard, Boston USA

**A/Prof Matt Loscalzo**

Associate Clinical Professor Medicine, Cancer Symptom  
Control Program, University of California

**Professor Hani Gabra**

Professor of Medical Oncology, Division of Surgery,  
Oncology, Reproductive Biology and Anaesthetics, Imperial  
College, UK

**Awards & Grants on offer • Best of the Best • Travel Grants • Trainee Travel Grants**

**More details at [www.cosa2010.org](http://www.cosa2010.org)**

**KEY DATES: REGISTRATION AND ABSTRACT SUBMISSION OPENS 19 MARCH 2010**  
**ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE 2 AUGUST 2010**  
**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION CLOSURES 6 SEPTEMBER 2010**