



COSA NEWS *PRESIDENT'S REPORT*



Professor Bruce Mann, President, COSA

Welcome to the first edition of the Marryalyan for 2009, and my first report as President of COSA.

It is an honour to serve as President for the next 2 years, and I am in the fortunate position to have taken the Presidency of such a vibrant organisation. COSA is well managed and financially secure. We are established as an important player in the field of cancer care, and our contributions in a range of cancer areas are widely recognised. We have close and mutually beneficial relations with the Cancer Council Australia (CCA), acting as the medical and scientific advisory body on clinical matters for CCA, and benefiting from their advocacy and media skills, and also from their material support.

We are not in this fortunate position by accident. We are a volunteer organisation, ably supported by a small staff. All of our activities and successes have come about

from the voluntary commitment of time, energy and enthusiasm from a wide range of COSA members. Each of our activities has been driven primarily by a small number of individuals. In particular the Executive Committee, who regularly meet at early morning teleconferences and engage in constant email exchanges, the Council, who willingly give up days to attend Council meetings in Sydney and the individuals who have taken the lead on particular projects.

The voluntary nature of COSA represents both a strength and a weakness of our organisation. We are entirely dependent on the voluntary contribution and goodwill of our members. This means that we do things because of their intrinsic value and this can be seen in the remarkable impact that many of our projects have had. However, if we lose the engagement of our membership and our key contributors, we lose our ability to help and influence. As we have become more active, the volume of our activities has increased, and the demands on the time of our active members have also increased.

It is vital that more members identify areas of their particular interest and become more involved in Australia's leading Multidisciplinary Clinical Cancer organisation.

COSA has had a very active and successful year in 2008, and is looking forward to more of the same in 2009. I will briefly address some of our main activities to give an idea of what we are doing.

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COSA ASM

2008

The COSA ASM in 2008 was our largest ASM ever, with 1400 registrants. We estimate that ~1000 were primarily interested in the COSA program. It was held in association with the International Association of Cancer Registries and the Australian and New Zealand Gastro-oesophageal Cancer Association in Sydney.

Eva Segelov and the organising committee did a wonderful job, producing a very tight program with a focus on Gastric and Oesophageal Cancer on the Tuesday, Melanoma and other skin cancer on Wednesday, and Cancer Information on Thursday.

The programme finished with a debate "Who owns your Genes?", moderated by George Negus, which was particularly timely given the controversy regarding the BRCA1 and 2 patents.

2009

In 2009 the ASM will be in the Gold Coast from November 17-19. Dr Art Kaminski, Radiation Oncologist from Brisbane, is program convener. Following the successful model of recent years, we have identified lung and CNS malignancies as the main diseases for the meeting, and are building our multidisciplinary program around these diseases. These diseases were chosen as they have relatively low community profiles, and have a lot in common, in particular the poor prognosis faced by many when these diseases are diagnosed. Consequently we are planning a strong supportive care and palliative care component of the meeting.

We are delighted that the Cooperative Trials Groups for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO) and Australasian Lung Trials Group (ALTG) are joining with a number of our other cooperative groups and taking the opportunity to hold their annual meeting as part of the COSA program. We also hope the Pre COSA Consumer Day, held the day before the ASM, will both benefit from and contribute to the success of our meeting.

Strategic planning day

COSA Executive held a strategic planning day prior to Christmas. The current Executive and some past presidents attended the day, which was professionally facilitated by Mark Douglas. The report of the day is yet to be finalised, but it was an opportunity to reflect on the mission of COSA, identify where we plan to be in 5 years, and develop guidelines for our next few years. It will be circulated to the membership once it has been signed off by the Executive and presented to Council for endorsement as the blueprint for our on-going activities.

Special interest groups

Our special interest groups are one of the many legacies of immediate past-President Professor David Goldstein. We are pleased that David has agreed to stay on with a defined role of leading and facilitating the special interest groups.

The Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) project has been particularly successful, with federal money allocated. There are challenges ahead in rolling out the project.

The Geriatric Oncology is a key project at a much earlier stage of gestation. The need for alignment of geriatric and oncology services is obvious. The method by which this can be achieved is less obvious. We have an enthusiastic group of interested individuals and a determination to make progress.

Projects

President-elect A/Prof Bogda Koczwara is leading a project in the challenging area of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM). With the clear interest of many cancer patients in the area, and the massive amounts of money spent each year on CAMs, it is vital that the clinical oncology community has a clear understanding of and position regarding these things. This will be an on-going project, with an initial meeting associated with the 2008 ASM generating some position statements and outlining the steps that COSA will take.

Professional Days

A new initiative of COSA Council is to sponsor professional days for our groups. Our recent ASMs have been financially successful, but have involved fewer parallel sessions. This has reduced the opportunities for some groups to conduct group business and pursue agendas and issues of limited rather than wide interest.

To address the problem there are up to 4 grants of \$7000 to help COSA groups conduct group activities that will promote the aims of COSA. We believe that this initiative will further strengthen the position of the COSA ASM as the key yearly educational activity for health professionals in the clinical oncology field.

NRHA conference

COSA and MOGA have arranged an oncology program at this years National Rural Health Alliance meeting to be held in Cairns 17-20 May. We aim to use this to facilitate our Rural and Regional agenda by presenting and discussing key problems in the provision of effective cancer care to rural and regional patients. This will also be the venue for the launch of the EPICC educational package for GPs by MOGA. Our thanks in particular go to David Goldstein, Bogda Koczwara and the Regional & Rural group for developing this program.

Clinical trials

Steve Ackland continues to oversee the enabling grant from the NHMRC. A major current focus is on the critical issue of clinical trials insurance. We are close to finalising a package whereby all the cooperative trials groups would be covered by a single insurance policy. This promises to reduce the costs to the individual trials groups and provide certainty to all participants regarding the presence and nature of insurance cover for their clinical trials activities. The other activity that COSA is undertaking regarding clinic trials is a project to facilitate tissue collection and tissue banking relating to clinical trial participants. We expect progress in this area in 2009.

I look forward to my 2 years as COSA President. It is a great opportunity to have an impact on the care of those affected by cancer beyond the opportunities that come from everyday clinical practice. I would like to



*Bruce Mann presents
David Goldstein his
Silver Marryalyan in
recognition of his
Presidency 2006-2008.*

personally thank David Goldstein for the enormous contribution he made to COSA during his 2½ years as President. I look forward to his continued contributions and to his wise council. I especially thank Margaret McJannett and the COSA team for their commitment and support to COSA and all that it stands for.

Professor Bruce Mann
President – COSA

BEST OF THE BEST

Congratulations to the winners of “The Best of the Best” 2008

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

**Yu Yang Soon, Elgene Lim, Kerrie Clover
and Sara Beckett**

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

**Jordana McLoone, Victoria White, Carole Harris,
Nimit Singhal, David Speakman, Lindy Masya, Heather
Shepherd, Teresa Simpson, Jamie Clarey and Steven Tipper.**

Looking forward to 2009 submissions.

***COSA acknowledges Roche
for their ongoing support of the
Best of the Best Awards***



*Prof David Goldstein and A/Prof Eva Segelov
with the recipients.*

The Tom Reeve Oration Award

FOR
*OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS
TO CANCER CARE*

The Tom Reeve Award offered by COSA is to formally recognise a national leader 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 2009 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 25 September 2009.**



Professor Lester Peters AM the 2008 recipient with David Goldstein and Bruce Mann.

COSA NEW INITIATIVE

CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL DAY (CPD)

COSA Council is pleased to announce a new initiative to enhance educational opportunities for our members. It is preferred that the COSA Clinical Professional Day (CPD) run adjacent to the Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) to allow a more focused forum for our COSA groups. Applications must describe the activity, its specific objectives, and outline how the grant money will be spent. It must clearly demonstrate that the funding will further the key objectives of COSA which are to improve outcomes and promote cancer related education and awareness.

- Submissions must be through the COSA Group Chair to the COSA EO;
- Proposals must be in line with our COSA objectives;
- Up to 4 grants will be awarded annually;
- Funding of up to \$7K + GST will be available to successful Groups;
- Report of the meeting/workshop outcomes shall be provided
- Clinical Professional Day submission template is available on COSA website www.cosa.org.au.

ANZCHOG group (ANZ Children's Haematology & Oncology Group)

It is time to start thinking again about attending the ANZCHOG Annual Scientific Meeting, which is to be held this year in Adelaide from 4 – 6 June.

In a departure from past meetings, this year's meeting will provide an integrated program for all members, rather than having separate programs for nurses, social workers and CRAs. It is hoped that this multidisciplinary approach will benefit all members by facilitating an exchange of ideas at round table discussions. Valuing different perspectives and contributions will lead to greater understanding and collaboration, which will ultimately lead to better outcomes for our patients.

The meeting has six themes:

- Paediatric and adolescent leukaemia
- Bone marrow failure and stem cell transplantation
- Peri-natal haematology
- Neuro-Oncology
- Education and self care in cancer care
- Adolescent and young adult malignancies

Key note speakers include Professor Vaskar Saha, Head of Cancer Research UK Children's Cancer Group, and Professor Blanche Alter, from the Clinical Genetics Branch of the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics at the US National Cancer Institute.

For information on the ASM go to: www.sapmea.asn.au/conventions/anzchog09/index.html and register your interest.

Australia's seven paediatric cancer centres continue to participate in numerous clinical trials and ACCT is close to commencing its first trial. More news on that as it becomes available. ANZCHOG is grateful for the continued support of the Commonwealth Government through Cancer Australia for trial activities.

Finally, ANZCHOG members participated in an AYA Forum held at last year's COSA ASM, continuing the important collaboration between the paediatric and adult sectors to ensure the best treatment and experiences for patients in this category. This collaboration will continue in 2009.

Peter Downie, Chair

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Breast group

The formation of a Breast Surgeons' Society to represent the interests of Australian and New Zealand breast surgeons is still in development and the hope is that invitations/applications for membership will be starting by late 2009.

The RACS Annual Scientific Meeting is in Brisbane May 6-10. Visiting experts this year include Pat Whitworth from the USA and Emiel Rutgers from the Netherlands. Daniel de Viana has organised an excellent program.

There is currently renewed activity from those people who argue against the benefits of population based screening in breast cancer. The latest article by Goetzche et al. is rightly pointing out that full information is not given about issues such as over diagnosis, over investigation and resultant anxiety from call backs and biopsies in patient information brochures around Europe.¹ The BreastScreen NSW website does give some hints about these sorts of issues when read carefully but these are complex issues to discuss in a brief glossy flyer.² BreastScreen Australia has been operating since 1992 and during that time there have been major advances in breast cancer diagnostics and therapy. The quality assurance aspects for BreastScreen have frequently flowed across into symptomatic clinics and radiology practices. Informing patients accurately of the risks and benefits and uncertainties of breast screening is good medicine and should be encouraged. How to interpret the conflicting and complex data making it easily understandable by the screening population is the challenge.

The other issue attracting interest from the media is the expansion of onco-plastic breast surgery and the purported increasing advocacy of the lack of need for standard adjuvant radiotherapy. This approach has been promoted as safe with no substantial evidence base. Dr Morrow has discussed and recommended caution by those undertaking these procedures in another article in the BMJ.³ It is a timely warning for the increasing number of Australian surgeons who are also expanding their practices in this direction. There is an increasing need for an Australian Onco-plastic Breast Surgeons' group, that collaboratively audits itself, to be a part of the aforementioned breast surgeons' society.

1. Goetzche, P.C., et al., Breast screening: the facts – or maybe not. BMJ, 2009. 338: p. b86.

2. http://www.cancerinstitute.org.au/cancer_inst/campaigns/media/bs06-00679_breastscreen-brochure2-its-time.PDF

3. Morrow, M., Minimally invasive surgery for breast cancer. BMJ, 2009. 338: p. b557.

Andrew Spillane, Chair

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Newcastle has been announced as the host city for our 12th Winter Congress in 2009. Keynote speakers this year include Sara Faithful and Nancy Teixeira. See our website www.cnsa.org.au for more details. This year Maryanne Hargraves (of HOCA, Brisbane) has taken up the position of Winter Congress Coordinator, and is working with the Chair of the Local Organising Committee, Kim Adler, working with the Hunter Regional group.

Work has been progressing at a hectic pace through the EdCaN "National Professional Development Framework for Cancer Nursing" project, due for major completion in mid 2009. In addition to the Framework, resources are being developed to facilitate learning and development, together with competencies to assess the capability of specialty nurses in cancer nursing practice. Various projects addressing the implementation of the Framework are about to get underway nationally. The Framework has been adopted and supported by the Council of Deans, and by State and Territory Chief Nurses, who are exploring ways that it can be integrated in their jurisdictions. See www.edcan.org for further detail.

The National Executive Committee of the CNSA met in early 2009 to do some strategic planning for the Society for the next few years ... to ensure the CNSA's relevance, growth and engagement in cancer control in Australia. We will communicate our plans when we have finalised that document for distribution!

One activity for the Society this year, in recognition of our capacity to contribute to primary health and cancer control is the development of our own tobacco control position statement. Watch out for that PS during this year. Julie Clowry, Mesothelioma Nurses from the ACT on the national executive will lead that position statement development.

The CNSA's Breast Cancer Nurses Special Interest Group launched the "Nursing Principles for the management of Post-Surgical Seroma" document recently at the Breast Cancer Conference in Melbourne. You can access this new publication on our site: <http://www.cnsa.org.au/documents/feb2009/CNSA%20Seroma%20Principles%202009.pdf>

As a member society of the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care (ISNCC), the CNSA is participating in voting for changes to the governance of that organisation as it progresses forward to represent the voice and activities of cancer nurses across the world. www.isncc.org

Other key projects the CNSA are involved in include:

- COSA's "Guidelines for the Safe Prescribing, Dispensing and Administration of Cancer Chemotherapy", which was finalised and released at the end of 2008. Of course these are available on the member's section on COSA's site www.cosa.org.au
- COSA's Annual Scientific Meeting on the Gold Coast in November – Chris Long is our CNSA rep on the Organising Committee for that meeting.
- participation in the Cancer Australia CanNET Consumer Survey Project
<http://www.canceraustralia.gov.au/cannet-homepage/about-cannet/overview.aspx>

See the CNSA Newsletter on our website for a more detailed wrap up of the activities of the CNSA – especially calls for expressions of interest or nominations for many aspects of involvement in cancer nursing and the CNSA and on the activities of the Regional Groups of the CNSA.

Gabriel Prest, Chair

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Cancer Pharmacists group

ASM 2008

The ASM in Sydney had a record attendance for Cancer Pharmacists. Thanks to everyone who attended and I hope you all enjoyed the program both educational and social. Thanks also to all of those who managed to get to the AGM on the Wednesday morning at 7.30am and to the many who actively contributed. We had about 30 pharmacists attend and had a lively and successful meeting agreeing on many ways forward for 2009. Thanks to Jim for his minute taking. The minutes have been posted on the CPG discussion forum so please take time to read especially if you were unable to attend. The minutes will update you on where we are with a number of items.

Many members have agreed to help progress areas discussed so thank you to all for your commitment and enthusiasm. The key areas for us to work on include the development of the CPG Clinical Pharmacy Practice course/seminar, the preparation of monoclonal antibodies and the CPG Guide to Pharmaceutical Care of Patients with Cancer to include key performance indicators and workforce recommendation.

ASM 2009

The COSA ASM 2009 is on November 17th -19th at the Gold Coast Convention Centre, Queensland. Put the date in your diary and start planning your holidays. The tumour focus this year is on lung and CNS malignancies (both primary and secondary) and an overall theme of awareness, action and access in relation to cancer and services. The CPG is inviting an international speaker and will again be taking the lead in developing content for some of the sessions. Contributed papers for both oral and poster presentations will again be themed, please give some thought to submitting an abstract, there is plenty of time before the deadline and there will be plenty of prizes on offer once again.

CPG Clinical Pharmacy Practice Course/ Seminar – Brisbane 2009

I hope by the time this newsletter is published that the dates and venue of this course will have been released. All those who have emailed an expression of interest will be invited to register their attendance. Further details of the course will be posted on the website and via email as they become available. Thanks everyone for your patience.

Guidelines for the Prescribing, Dispensing & Administration of Chemotherapy

The final glossy version is available on the website under publications as a printable document. If you would like

to request a hard copy please contact the COSA office (limited numbers are available). Please also note that the release sent out during the ASM had a couple of minor errors that were not spotted until later. To check if you have the correct version please check page 5. The list of tables should state

Table 12 Details required for labelling chemotherapy and targeted therapy 23

Table 13 Additional requirements when labelling oral anti-cancer therapy 24

If the version you have states that table 12 and table 13 are the same – you have the wrong copy. We have been asked to develop a set of audit tools to measure the applicability and use of the guidelines in practice which will be one of our tasks for 2009.

The Website

We now have a fabulous database of questions and discussions on our discussion forum and some good discussion threads happening so please continue to use the discussion forum. I encourage you to regularly check the forum for information. This is where we post updates and information about areas of interest and current developments.

Remember we also have a resource centre for the group which contains links to useful websites and other material that supports pharmacists working in cancer services. Please continue with suggestions for items that you think should be there.

The Intravenous Chemotherapy Supply Program (ICSP) and New PBS Rules

COSA and the CPG held a consultation meeting with the DoH at COSA last year to discuss the new arrangements and further to this a meeting was held in February 2009 with many of the pharmacy and medical groups that may be affected by the new arrangements. An 11 page document has been prepared by the CPG and COSA in response to the most recent information released by the DoH (10th February) and this has gone back to the DoH. If you would like more information on what has been taken back to the DoH please contact me (Christine Carrington). Please keep a look out on the website and your inbox for further information on the proposed arrangements and what CPG and COSA are doing.

Etoposide

A teleconference was held recently amongst medical oncologists and members of the CPG to discuss the development of recommendations on the prescribing, supply and labelling of etoposide products following the incidents recently that were the subject of media attention. This work is progressing and I hope to be able to update you all via the website soon.

Membership

Your membership will now be due for 2009 so don't forget to renew. If you have new pharmacists working in cancer please encourage them to join COSA...Or if you have some old pharmacists that haven't yet joined COSA and the CPG please encourage them to join!

Christine Carrington, Chair

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Cancer Research group

This report comes rather early in my tenure as group chair but nevertheless there is much afoot in this area. Firstly I would like to acknowledge the legacy of work carried out by my predecessor Prof Bernard Stewart. Bernard presided over a period in which the phrases "translational research" and "personalised medicine" became the buzz words both in clinical and basic laboratory research and did a great deal to frame a strategy by which COSA could play a useful role in this field. Specifically he has identified the importance of COSA being the bridge between clinical and laboratory-based researchers who do not necessarily find it easy to communicate in the same language. Finding a common ground whereby we 'translate' the laboratory findings into clinical practice will involve bringing the two groups together and engaging them in a substantive dialogue. This may be driven in part by one COSA initiative, that of facilitating the banking of biological specimens from clinical trials.

At the ASM in 2008 we heard presentations from Mr Peter Geary from the Canadian Tissue Repository Network (CTRNet) and Prof Emile Voest, a medical oncologist from Utrecht in the Netherlands. Both speakers highlighted the fact that biological research on well annotated human tissue specimens was fundamental to the discovery of new targets for therapy, as well as for validation of existing agents like Cetuximab and Herceptin. However, it is clear that the best annotated specimens are those collected from people enrolled in clinical trials, a further strength being that they are randomised between treatment groups eliminating biases so often present in generic collections.

If it were as simple as realising this then life would be easy, but in reality we are presented with some substantial challenges to delivering such a resource in Australia. It is not just financial and logistical resources that are lacking, but also information. We simply do not have ready access to knowing how many samples are being collected, where they are stored and who is using them. So that is our first task and one we are well underway with. We held a workshop of stakeholders (clinical trial groups, tissue bank staff, pathologists and researchers) in September last year which Prof Goldstein presented at the COSA ASM in the same session described above. This report identified several areas of need that would have to be addressed if COSA intended to facilitate coordinating samples collection from clinical trials. From this we have refined a work plan and are presently engaged with procuring consultants to conduct a scoping exercise to define what activity there is and how COSA may be able to play a role, based in part upon the report generated by last year's workshop.

In the meantime I will also be getting in touch with members of the research group and inviting comment on how I might be able to work toward promoting a 'translational research' agenda for COSA. I would also like to take this opportunity to invite suggestions from any other members of COSA as to how they may see a role for the research group in the coming years.

Nik Zeps, Chair

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Cancer – It's all about Collaboration

Collaboration may be defined as **"coming together to work toward a common vision."** The collaborative process is intended to move participants away from the traditional definition of power as control or domination and towards a definition that allows for shared authority. This results in greater achievements than would be attained by one organisation working alone.

Because no one agency operates in a vacuum, engaging stakeholders in change, helps eliminate barriers, increases opportunities for success, enriches the change process, educates stakeholders and creates a shared vision that supports change in the cancer arena. Collaboration is difficult because organisations get really stuck in their own proprietary silos. But **collaboration is a necessity**, not just for sharing resources, sharing best practices, increasing our collective strength but more importantly for survival. As we face the current economic situation, more often than not, the research and support sector is the first to be affected. We must make it a priority to band together, realise that we are not competing with each other, and understand that we are all providing unique services for the betterment of the entire cancer community.

National Bowel Cancer Alliance

Bowel cancer is the second most common cancer in Australia and kills around 80 people each week – more than breast, prostate or skin cancer.

CVA has teamed with a number of Australian bowel/ colorectal cancer groups to raise the awareness of bowel cancer in this country. The Bowel Cancer Coalition is a group of independent, non-profit organisations committed to raising awareness of the risk of bowel cancer - Australia's second biggest cancer killer - and ensuring that there is sufficient policy emphasis on prevention, as well as support for people diagnosed with this disease. The Coalition believes that Government investment in clinical trials and R&D should be in line with bowel cancer's relative burden of disease.

The coalition has written to the Federal Minister for Health and provided her with a manifesto to reduce the incidence in this country by 2012 through better awareness and screening campaigns. The group is looking to advance this issue through a National Bowel Cancer awareness week in June 2009.

E-health

This matter has been on the national agenda for some time and CVA welcomes the recent appointment of David Gonski as Chair NEHTA.

The National E-health Transition Authority is not that anymore and its name should reflect its role and become that of an 'implementation authority.'

The Government must develop an E-Health strategy to provide the infrastructure to enable secure data linkage across both each individuals' health experience and treatments and also for the benefit of population health policy and research needs.

The point at this time is to recognize that successful inclusive community wide governance must be the priority and is itself the prime challenge for the implementation of E-health

The leadership for the development of a national eHealth system clearly needs to be the responsibility of the elected government and it seems clear that COAG / AHMAC has in principle accepted this responsibility.

Health is a complex issue which requires the whole of community participation. CVA is a member of a national e-health coalition determined to ensure that this occurs.

Acknowledgements

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

CVA also appreciates the generous input from cancer consumers who want to make a difference.

John Stubbs, Executive Officer

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Clinical Research Professionals group

ASM

On Monday 17th November 2008, prior to the Annual Scientific Meeting, the Clinical Research Professionals group & the COSA Enabling Project held a joint workshop. The aim of the workshop was to provide clinical research professionals with an opportunity for role specific education & training. This was achieved by offering training for research professionals in the morning as part of the Enabling Project and in the afternoon, a forum. Twenty eight clinical research professionals attended the workshop and feedback was very positive. The Clinical Research Professionals are very interested in offering a similar workshop prior to this year's ASM, dependent on interest and ability for the group to source funding.

Professional Development

4th R&DTF Forum: CR IN CRISIS - Preparing Ourselves For Survival

Dates: Wed 25 Mar 2009 – Thu 26 Mar 2009 (2 days)
Venue: Mercure Hotel Sydney Airport

The 4th R&D Taskforce Forum (RDTF) provides an opportunity to hear from government (State Health Departments, NHMRC, Federal DIISR) and industry regarding efforts to streamline R&D activities in Australia with a goal of increasing our global competitiveness. RDTF initiatives to date include efforts towards a national approach to clinical trial approvals, streamlining start-up and SAE reporting activities, improving capacity, value and quality measures. Sessions will also include workshops designed to capture your priorities for future action so these can be addressed and reports on survey data regarding Australia's global competitiveness. The R&D Taskforce is a taskforce of the Pharmaceuticals Industry Council.

Course Highlights:

- Review and feedback on progress to date with respect to
 - A national system of ethics approval for multicentre trials (HoMER Enabling System-NHMRC)
 - State initiatives to streamline approvals
 - Recommendations from the Pharmaceuticals Industry Strategy Group report.
- Provide report on inaugural survey of investigator perceptions on value of sponsored CR
- Provide data on Australia's global position as a clinical research destination - via benchmarking survey
- Determine key roadblocks hindering Australia's research environment. Workshops to determine future priorities of RDTF
- Explore the roles of industry and government at state and federal levels to facilitate change and foster competitiveness
- Gain agreement on next steps by all stakeholders

For instructions on how to register, please visit:
<http://www.arcs.com.au/How-to-Register-Online.html>

For more information, please visit the ARCS website
<https://arcs.eventsinteractive.com/cm.esp?id=3&script=&cd=50539&pageid=EVD&event=GO250309>

Cate O'Kane, Chair

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COSA Member benefits

Your membership to COSA entitles you to a free subscription to the

Asia-Pacific Journal of
Clinical Oncology

APJCO is an important vehicle for the collaboration and exchanging of information on key issues and developments in the Asia-Pacific region on all aspects of cancer treatment and care.

Any COSA members not receiving copies should contact the Society at
cosa@cancer.org.au.



Clinical
Oncological
Society of
Australia



Epidemiology group

COSA Epidemiology was highlighted in 2008 at the COSA Annual Scientific Meeting which was partnered with the International Association of Cancer Registries (IACR). Members of IACR presented at plenary sessions and joint sessions as well as at IACR sessions. Attendance at many of the IACR epidemiology sessions was often standing room only as COSA members swelled the numbers.

Prior to the main conference, a well attended workshop was held on record linkage organised by Paul Jelfs at the ABS. A cancer registration software demonstration (concerning CanReg, a program produced by IACR for use primarily in the economically less developed nations) was organised by Narelle Grayson at The Cancer Institute, and a 2-day course in descriptive statistical analysis was organised by Freddy Sitas at the Cancer Council.

Altogether, a stellar year!

Graham Giles, Chair

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Familial Cancer group

Our Professional Development day: The Familial Cancer: Research & Practice 2009 meeting will be held at the Mantra on Salt Beach, Kingscliff on the 11th August 2009. Specific topics to be covered include chemoprevention & chemotherapy for mutation carriers, counselling adolescents, expedited genetic testing and Von Hippel-Lindau syndrome. This will be followed by the combined clinical and scientific meeting of the Kathleen Cuninghame Foundation Consortium for research into familial breast cancer (KConFab) with input from the Australian Breast Cancer Family Study, Australasian Colorectal Cancer Family Study and the Australian Ovarian Cancer Study. A program of outstanding local, national and international speakers will present as always. Confirmed speakers include Fergus Couch (Mayo Clinic), David Goldgar, Will Foulkes (McGill University), Annika Lindblom (Karolinska Institute), and Jose Palacios (Hospital Universitario Virgen del Rocío). Sessions will focus on the clinical & research aspects of familial breast, ovarian & colorectal cancer, including: epidemiology of cancer, classifying variants in cancer predisposition genes pathology of familial aspects of cancer, the role of genes that modify cancer risk, updates on PARP inhibitors, tamoxifen and raloxifene trials, psychosocial research updates and case presentations with particular focus on counselling theories which inform genetic counselling practice. Details can be found at www.kconfab.org, and all comers are welcome to attend. A number of our members will also have involvement in the International Society for Gastrointestinal Hereditary Tumours,

InSiGHT which holds its biennial meeting in Dusseldorf, June 24-27 2009. This meeting is of interest to oncologists, surgeons, gastroenterologists, geneticists and counsellors, and is always extremely friendly and inclusive.

We are keen to invite as broad a range of interested health professionals as possible to consider joining the familial cancer group in 2009 and to add their expertise and ideas. An AGM will be held on the Gold Coast and I would encourage people with an interest in genetics, pathology and counselling as well as physicians and surgeons to join us.

Lara Lipton, Chair

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Gynaecology group

ANZGOG is in good health mostly due to the great work done at the Trials Centre but also because of the excellent data collection support and site participation. November saw Michael Friedlander step down as our inaugural Chair; we all owe him a huge debt for his vision, leadership, industry and not least for his interminable patience. Thank you Michael!

Trial Accrual is on track. PORTEC 3 has 12 active sites and 9 patients to date. TRIPOD has finally got to 24 patients and Corona Gainford is commencing the interim analysis of the first 15 patients. Symptom Benefit has 24 patients and will be opening up to other sites across Australia and New Zealand soon.

ICON7 has just closed with 76 patients from Australia and SCOTROC 4 will soon be undergoing analysis. New trials about to get going include ICON 6 and OVAR 16, both probably by the end of June.

We are soon to hold our first joint meeting with ASGO at the end of March...4 days of exciting science, debates and innovative new trial concepts. We have 27 abstracts to date so please come and be part of this inaugural event!

Michael Quinn, Chair

Email: maquinn@unimelb.edu.au

Medical Oncology group

We had ended last year on a high note with the excellent COSA ASM with strong presence of many talented MOGA members – Eva Segelov, the outstanding Convenor; David Goldstein, the outgoing President who has impressed many with his drive and energy and Ian Olver, the so well deserved recipient of the Cancer Achievement Award. As we have started the year with Jim Bishop's appointment as the Chief Medical Officer I am looking forward to another year where the achievements of our members will remind us of how much our profession can contribute.

The end of 2008 also marked the successful MOGA Drug Roundtable which raised a number of issues relating to drug availability in Australia. The main one relates to the review of Herceptin Program and proposed restrictions to the availability of trastuzumab. MOGA believes that it is essential that the profession contributes a considered voice to the debate and has since convened a working group of experts to examine patterns of practice and provide recommendations on how listing should support best practice in Australia. We hope to present

our recommendations to the Minister of Health in April and would welcome members' feedback on this issue.

The new year has brought a new intake of oncology trainees and we have been busy ensuring that they are well supported in their training. State specific orientations were held in a number of states, the trainee start up packs have been dispatched and the final preparations for the national Basic Science of Oncology (BSO) Program sponsored by the unrestricted educational grant from GSK are nearly complete. The BSO is a trainee specific educational program provided by MOGA and adds to already successful communication skills training program developed especially for trainees with support by an unrestricted grant from Roche which will run in its second year in 2009.

Our work in education reaches beyond our members' direct needs as we plan to deliver the EPICC – Educational Program in Cancer Care for non cancer specialists – an education program supported by Cancer Australia aimed at providing resources to general practitioners and non cancer specialists with a particular focus on rural and remote locations. The online program will be piloted at the Cairns National Rural Health Conference where COSA and MOGA are supporting a cancer specific stream to highlight the new developments needs in rural cancer care. Many MOGA members and COSA members from other craft groups are contributing to what shapes up to be an excellent educational resource.

As we work to develop supports for non cancer professionals to manage cancer, we are constantly reminded of how stretched the medical oncology workforce in Australia is today. This is a major issue that requires addressing and this year MOGA is directing resources to a dedicated project examining workforce demands on medical oncologists in Australia. We hope to gather information on the workload current and future for all medical oncologists in the country which, when examined against cancer rates projections, will allow us to develop a range of strategies designed to address future workforce shortages. We are supported in this project by Michael Barton's expertise from radiation oncology and we are working closely with consumers who are just as concerned about the shortages as we are.

Finally, the preparations for the ASM in Canberra are well underway. This year, our Birthday ASM will be followed up by the first Australian Best of ASCO which will bring the highlights of this premiere international cancer meeting to Australia and may be of interest to not just medical oncologists. I hope to see many of you in Canberra.

Bogda Koczwara, Chair

Email: bogda.koczwara@flinders.edu.au

Melanoma & Skin group

The visit of Dr Charles Balch, world renowned expert in Melanoma, to the COSA ASM in November 2008 was a highlight at that meeting. He spoke of the newly revised Melanoma staging system and gave us many new insights on the demographics of Melanoma gleaned from this work. He reported some highly interesting data on

outcomes of Melanoma care in the USA and also unveiled a tool for predicting the risk of recurrence at various time points after diagnosis. This should prove very useful for patients and clinicians in the future. The new clinical practice guidelines for the management of Melanoma in Australia and New Zealand were also formally launched by Dr John Thompson, head of the Sydney Melanoma Unit. These were eagerly awaited, and not only in Australia and New Zealand, but also by other groups around the world who see Australia as a major player in this area.

After many years as chair of this group, Dr Brendon Coventry has stepped down. Brendon has performed tirelessly in promoting the interests of Melanoma patients and the discipline throughout this time. He has been integral to the success of many COSA ASMs and also a key figure in the establishment of the Australian and New Zealand Melanoma Trials Group (ANZMTG). I'm sure I speak for all the membership when I once again applaud Brendon for his leadership and his exceptional performance in this role. Well done and thank you from us all.

David Speakman, Chair

Email: David.Speakman@petermac.org

Neuro-Oncology group

2009 is starting with a flurry of neuro-oncology activity. Brain and CNS tumours are going to be highlighted at this year's COSA Gold Coast ASM in November so a group of us are already at work on the programme. Wednesday 18th November will be a day of overlap themes between neuro-oncology and lung cancer concerns (lung cancer is the other tumour to be highlighted) such as the optimal management of cerebral metastases and a number of other overlap topics (e.g. cord compression/EGFR inhibitors/paraneoplastic syndromes). Primary brain tumours will be highlighted on Thursday 19th November (we hope to include a session on rare and paediatric brain tumours) and there will be the COGNO satellite meeting (& 2nd ASM) on the Friday 20th November (as well as an AGOG investigator meeting for those involved with the glioma tumour banking project currently sponsored by a Cancer Council NSW STREP Grant). Please contact me if you have any ideas for content or speakers. We are currently confirming international speakers (hoping for Roger Stupp and Normand Laperriere to shortly confirm their attendance).

On the 13th February, there was a meeting initiated by the Cancer Institute NSW Neuro-Oncology group to get representatives of all the neuro-oncology interest groups/stakeholders together in one room including agencies such as the Cancer Council NSW (who hosted the event), charities specifically in the business of raising money for brain tumours (Cure For Life Foundation, Sydney Neuro-Oncology group, Andrew Olle Memorial Trust Fund), other general oncology charities (Oncology Children's Foundation, Children's Cancer Institute Australia, Red Kite), groups performing neuro-oncology research (Brain & Mind Institute, University of NSW Lowy Institute), clinical groups

(NSW Neuro-Oncology group, COSA Neuro-Oncology group, COGNO, Greater Metropolitan Task Force Neurosurgery Committee) and Consumer Groups (the nascent Brain Tumour Alliance Australia, known as BTAA and International Brain Tumour Alliance known as IBTA). Taking a leaf out of the wonderful breast cancer network groups, there has been a decision to create a neuro-oncology strategic alliance which will advocate as a group, collaborate and support each other. The alliance will form as a pilot in NSW, with the view to become national as soon as feasible. The Cancer Council NSW agreed to coordinate with the Cancer Council Australia to create a webpage available through their site, to link the brain tumour organisations together, with a summary of what they each do and a link to their individual websites. This ensures that patients and carers are able to access relevant and reliable high-level information to assist them through their journey. This group will meet again in 6 months. If any members from any State wish to participate, please contact us. We are still working on possible names and logos for the group. We intend to lobby ministers soon regarding such issues as provision of neuro-oncology care coordinators, places for young patients in nursing homes and financial assistance for families (brain tumours have recently been identified by Cancer Council NSW researcher, Graham Newling to be the most expensive tumour per patient with average cost to patient/family being \$149,400 compared to ~\$47,200 average for "All Cancers"), just to name a few issues raised.

The National Consensus Guidelines for the Management of Astrocytomas and Oligodendrogliomas in Adults is waiting for final sign-off and indexation and may be published as soon as April, with the official launch slated for the COSA Gold Coast ASM in November. There are moves afoot to potentially trial an electronic "wiki" form of the guidelines to help ensure it is a living document which can be amended in a timely rigorous fashion as new evidence is published. The draft version is available for perusal on www.cancer.org.au (click onto clinical guidelines, then onto brain tumours); alternatively the full link is <http://www.cancer.org.au/Healthprofessionals/clinicalguidelines/braintumours.htm>

Our close affiliate group, COGNO (**Co-operative Trials Group for Neuro-oncology**) held their 1st ASM in Melbourne on the 22nd of November 2008 overlapping with the "Controversies in Neurosurgery" meeting. This was very successful with over 40 attendees. COGNO itself now has 120 members and already has one completed protocol (Prof Rosenthal's study looking at Caelyx and temozolomide up-front for GBM). Two other protocols are moving ahead, co-badged with TROG (Low grade glioma study and GBM Elderly study). COGNO has also successfully negotiated with EORTC to participate in their anaplastic astrocytoma study. Please contact COGNO at cogno@ctc.usyd.edu.au for any membership or trial enquiries.

Looking forward to seeing you all later in the year. The Gold Coast meeting is not to be missed.

Liz Hovey, Chair

Email: Elizabeth.Hovey@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au

Nutrition group

The formation of the Nutrition group was formally ratified at the COSA Annual General Meeting in Sydney in November 2008. The aim of the Nutrition group is to promote the importance of the role of nutrition in cancer care across the multi-disciplinary team.

Some initial goals of the Nutrition group for 2009 include the following:

- Increase awareness and membership of the COSA Nutrition group
- Inclusion of nutrition relevant resources on the COSA website (e.g. evidence based nutrition guidelines, malnutrition screening and assessment tools, education material)
- Dedicated nutrition speakers at the COSA Annual Scientific Meeting
- Nutrition workshops in conjunction with the COSA Annual Scientific Meeting (e.g. nutrition screening and assessment workshops)
- Development of multi-centre nutrition related quality projects and research trials
- Investigation of the possibility of having a nutrition theme in a future issue of Cancer Forum, and submit articles to the Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology

I am thrilled to announce that in February, our first substantial grant was received from the Cancer Institute NSW for the Development of Evidence Based Practice Guidelines for the Nutritional Management of Patients with Head and Neck Cancer. Congratulations to Merran Findlay, Oncology Dietitian, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital for leading this submission.

Judith Bauer

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Palliative Care group

I would like to take this opportunity to thank A/Prof Katy Clark for her enthusiastic leadership of the Palliative Care group during her time as chair. We will continue working in the multidisciplinary arena to build on the initiatives commenced in areas of research and education initiatives, and participation in collaborative efforts to improve cancer care.

2009 brings progress nationally in developing clinical trials infrastructure in palliative care; and this also has brought an exponentially number of new clinical trials nursing professionals and research officers. We will be working with these groups to develop resources to best support them in their roles, and provide a professional forum in which they can network and present ideas.

Educational initiatives in 2008 have included the first tailored communication workshop, for advanced trainees in Palliative Medicine; which brought the ONCOTALK group as facilitators. Dedicated face-to-face structured communication training will become an integral part of advanced training in Palliative Medicine.

A new initiative from Australian New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine (ANZSPM) in 2009 are educational forums for medical practitioners interested in palliative medicine across Australia and New Zealand between March and May 2009, for which further details are available on the ANZSPM website.

A reminder of the Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (PEPA); an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, funded through the National Palliative Care Program. This program allows health care professionals to be placed within palliative care teams, with the aim to help participants learn more about palliative care and to forge links between services and the specialist palliative care services. Placements are still available for 2009 and is a valuable opportunity.

We would 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's 2nd Concept Development Workshop – November 2008: PoCoG's second Concept Development Workshop on 17 November 2008 was a great success. The focus of the Concept Development Workshop was to develop a study owned by all PoCoG members, in which our own members recruit patients, deliver the intervention and co-ordinate measurement of outcomes at their own centres. More than 40 participants worked on developing new collaborative psycho-oncology intervention studies. Four new concepts were developed. PoCoG has already initiated the formation of the writing team for two of these to develop the concepts into fundable protocols. *To all the workshop participants – a big THANK YOU for your valuable input and participation during the PoCoG Concept Development Workshop.*
- Survey of PoCoG Members about Research Priorities in Psycho-Oncology: PoCoG would like to thank all members who took part in PoCoG's psycho-oncology research priorities survey. 180 members (61%) completed the survey. To our knowledge this was the first psycho-oncology priorities survey to be conducted in Australia. The top three priorities identified were:
 - Survivorship
 - Distress identification, referral and management
 - Issues for carers. The results were presented at the COSA Annual Scientific Meeting during the Best of the Best poster session on 19 November 2008 and are currently being prepared for publication in peer reviewed journals. PoCoG plans to make the priorities survey one of its regular activities involving the whole membership.
- World Map of Psycho-Oncology Research Centres: World Map of Psycho-oncology Research Centres –

the map is an interactive index of psycho-oncology centres throughout the world. We anticipate that this feature will assist researchers in psycho-oncology to:

- identify collaborating centres for studies
- identify centres for PhD / post-doctoral studies / work experience
- identify centres/individuals with expertise in particular areas
- foster collaborations between researchers conducting work in the same area

Centres in Australia and around the world were contacted directly and asked for submissions. An announcement and call for submissions was also emailed using the International Psycho-Oncology Society's (IPOS) mailing list. The map currently hosts 9 Australian entries, 2 entries from Asia, 10 entries from Europe and 4 entries from the Americas. Work will continue in 2009 to expand the world map. To access the map go to the following link: <http://www.pocog.org.au/content.aspx?page=Mappsychoncences>

Conferences

- 15th UICC Reach to Recovery International Breast Cancer Support Conference:

In May 2009 over 600 delegates from around the world will converge on Brisbane, for the 15th UICC Reach to Recovery International Breast Cancer Support Conference. The conference will focus on survivorship, capacity building, and peer support. It will be the first global forum for women affected by breast cancer.

The conference program was designed to benefit health professionals who will have the chance to draw from pre-conference workshops and plenary sessions to gain professional experience and new understandings of breast cancer care. World-class international and Australian speakers will be presenting at the conference with plenary sessions on current issues in breast cancer treatment, treating secondary cancer, and the importance of psychosocial care and peer support. The program is highly relevant to the various disciplines of health professions, highlighting the importance of multidisciplinary care.

The conference program includes two optional full day pre-conference workshops designed specifically for health professionals: Lymphoedema Training for Health Professionals and a Specialist Breast Care Nurses Symposium. The conference will also feature abstracts and presentations from women affected by breast cancer, giving health professionals the opportunity to learn from their experiences. If you haven't already registered, time is running out to secure a seat. To view the conference program and register, go to: www.reachtotherecovery2009.org/.

The National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre (NBOCC) is pleased to be an Australian partner for the conference. In addition NBOCC has awarded seven scholarships to nurses in regional and rural areas across Australia to support their attendance at UICC. The scholarships were awarded through the Polo Ralph Lauren Pink Pony Campaign.

- COSA ASM:

Members of OZPOS are contributing to the development of the Programme for the ASM to be held at the Gold Coast in November. The theme of the meeting is "Cancer Services and Our Community: awareness, access, action" with a particular focus on brain and lung. Members of OZPOS will be acutely aware of the often profound psychosocial difficulties facing patients in these tumour streams and are encouraged to actively participate in the meeting in order to promote evidence-based psychosocial care for these patients whose needs are often not addressed.

Communication Skills

- New Workshop Module: CAM

NBOCC has developed a new communication skills training module: *Effectively discussing complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) in a conventional oncology treatment setting*. Experienced clinicians and researchers from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and University of Melbourne were commissioned to develop a literature review, recommendations, slides and scenarios to be implemented in a communication skills training workshop. The module resources are now available.

- New Model of Communication Skills Training: Teaching on the Run

NBOCC is partnering with researchers in Western Australia to trial a new model of communication skills training delivery: *Teaching on the run: incorporating good communication*. A train-the-trainer workshop program will be developed that will teach senior or supervising cancer clinicians to incorporate the principles of effective communication skills into the real-time clinical training of junior cancer health professionals. The workshop program will be implemented as a pilot program in three capital cities before June 2009. For more information please contact Heidi Wilcoxon heidi.wilcoxon@nbocc.org.au or 02 9357 9411.

Supportive Care: UPDATE

Under the NSW Cancer Plan 2007 – 2010, the Cancer Institute NSW initiated a State wide patient satisfaction survey to understand patients' experience and to support the delivery of optimal patient care. The results from both the 2007 and 2008 surveys identified areas of high and low satisfaction and areas for improvement. The Cancer Institute NSW is developing a three year Supportive Care Program to assist Area Health Services implement a range of interrelated activities to improve cancer patient experience. It is envisaged that the program will include activities to support distress and pain management, effective information and communication and the management of bedside needs.

Professional Groups

Psychologists in Oncology

A new interest group has been formed through the Australian Psychology Society (APS) that caters specifically for psychologists working in oncology. It aims to provide a forum for psychologists working in the hospital system, in private practice and in areas otherwise unsupported. The special interest group arose

from the desire of a group of psychologists working clinically in oncology to make links with others in similar areas of work to share ideas as well as to work together on raising the profile within the APS of this growing area of psychology. It is hoped that mentoring programmes will be established to support psychologists new to oncology and also to provide peer consultation where needed. Psychologists do not have to be members of the APS to join the special interest group. For further information, please visit the website at http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/poig/about_us/ or download an application form at <http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/igs/>

Professional Education

The Education Program in Cancer Care (EPICC) is a project being guided by a multidisciplinary Steering Committee, led by the Medical Oncology Group of Australia. This project is an initiative of Cancer Australia funded by the Australian Government. EPICC aims to improve the quality of cancer care particularly in rural and regional Australia by providing greater opportunities for non-cancer specialist medical practitioners (general practitioners, gynaecologists, surgeons, general physicians, etc) to increase their knowledge of cancer management.

Available online, the program will provide access to cancer education and information through five broad topics so that medical practitioners may utilise the program to gain knowledge in specific areas of cancer management as required for their practice or complete the entire program for a comprehensive understanding of cancer management in order to play a more active role in the delivery of quality cancer care. Members of the Psychosocial Oncology group are contributing to the development of the Psychosocial Module. Program development is currently underway and is set for completion in mid 2009.

Further information is available from Kevin Comlossy: T +61 2 9256 9656; F +61 2 9247 3022, www.moga.org.au or kcomlossy@moga.org.au

Jane Turner, Chair

Email: jane.turner@uq.edu.au

Radiation Oncology group

As we all know the COSA ASM 2008 was an outstanding success. I am pleased to say that the Radiation Oncology group was well represented at the recent meeting in a number of areas including oral and poster presentations, session chairs and involvement in Interest Groups.

The meeting was capped off with one of our own, Professor Lester Peters, world renowned Radiation Oncologist, receiving the Tom Reeve Award. An article on the award is featured in next months ANZ College of Radiologists journal.

On behalf of the Radiation Oncology group we would like to congratulate Eva Segelov, Margaret McJannett, Mike Pickford and the entire organising committee. Congratulations also goes to Bruce Mann, in his new

role as our President, replacing David Goldstein, who did an outstanding job over the last couple of years.

After a number of years, A/Professor Roger Alison has stepped down as the Dean of the ANZ Faculty of Radiation Oncology. Dr Alison devoted a significant amount of time and effort into the running of the faculty within the college. During his tenure he oversaw the very involved and important development of the new curriculum for radiation oncology trainees within ANZ. We thank Roger for his wonderful role he performed as leader.

The new Dean is one that is well known within the ANZ oncology community, Christopher Milross and we wish him well in his new role.

Over the next year I hope to engage greater involvement of my radiation oncology colleagues, and seek to encourage other radiation oncology-related health professionals, such as radiation therapists and medical physicists, to consider joining COSA.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Sandro Porceddu, Chair

Email: sandro_porceddu@health.qld.gov.au

Regional & Rural group

The ASM 2008 featured a session on "Building a Cancer Centre". I would like to thank all of those that contributed. It was clear that cooperation from all levels of government, interaction from private and public institutions and patient centred multidisciplinary care are amongst the key elements in developing such centres. This session was inspired by the Regional Cancer Centres of Excellence document. I would certainly encourage members to read through this. Hopefully further research into improving cancer services in regional Australia can grow from this.

David Goldstein also deserves thanks for his ongoing efforts in securing funding to promote this cause. I would still encourage active lobbying of politicians in regional and rural areas.

The turn out at the group meeting at COSA was disappointing but thanks to those that attended. 2009 can only get better!

May 17-19 this year is the 10th National Rural Health Alliance conference in Cairns. COSA will be running a cancer stream and this will be an excellent chance to highlight the needs of rural cancer workers and how these needs can be met.

Time is always a problem in arranging meetings but it would be good to arrange a tele-conference for the first part of the year (pre-Easter) and another in October before the ASM.

Please feel free to contact me with any issues regarding the delivery of cancer services in regional and rural areas.

Adam Boyce, Chair

Email: drboyce@bigpond.net.au

Urologic Oncology group

Although urologic oncology was not a key theme for the COSA ASM in Sydney in November 2008, the group still had an active presence. A significant number of relevant posters were presented. The program included symposia held jointly by the group together with the Australian and New Zealand Urogenital and Prostate Cancer Clinical Trials Group Ltd (ANZUP, previously APUG); the International Association of Cancer Registries (IACR); the Australian Prostate Cancer Collaboration (APCC); and specific involvement from other COSA groups. These symposia were attended by an enthusiastic audience and covered topics ranging from epidemiology to basic science. A breakfast session on renal cell carcinoma was also well attended. We plan to continue to have a presence in future ASMs in terms of symposia, posters, oral presentations and other sessions. A priority will be to continue to include involvement of other COSA groups in joint sessions. Make a point now of blocking out 17-19 November for the 2009 ASM on the Gold Coast.

Other recent activity has included representation of the group at other meetings in November, including TROG, the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, the Australian-Canadian Prostate Cancer Research Alliance, and an ANZUP scientific meeting held in December.

The group AGM held in November addressed issues relating to membership, prioritisation of projects, group subcommittees, relationship of the group to ANZUP, interactions with the Australian-Canadian Prostate Cancer Research Alliance, and other issues. Ian Davis and Scott Williams continue as group chair and secretary respectively. Sadly Raji Kooner is no longer able to continue as deputy chair and has been replaced by David Nicol. We thank Raji for all of his good work since the group was established. Jarad Martin has agreed to be the group representative on the 2009 ASM convening committee.

Our priorities for 2009 and beyond will include:

- Increasing the number and diversity of members. Please encourage other people in your department, discipline or diocese to join.
- Establishing subcommittees for tissue collection and bioinformatics
- Improving consumer involvement
- Becoming a resource for advocacy for patients and clinicians involved with urologic cancers

With respect to ANZUP, I am pleased to report that the group is now a reality, having merged ANZGCTG and APUG and formally becoming a company limited by guarantee late in 2008. ANZUP was successful in obtaining support from Cancer Australia under its Support

for Cancer Clinical Trials program. This will ensure the continuation of the highly successful germ cell program, while vastly improving the capability of Australian and New Zealand researchers and patients to participate in cooperative clinical trials in other genitourinary cancers. It will also support meetings, website development and maintenance, consumer involvement, all the "back office" functions required to run a clinical trials program, and specifically an ANZUP Clinical Trials Research Fellowship. I am very grateful for the support of COSA and the group members, the other members of the ANZUP executive (Guy Toner, John Ramsay, Liz Kenny and Pam Russell), and the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre through Martin Stockler. Several new trials are being worked up through the ANZUP Scientific Advisory Committee including some important concepts that have come from the group membership.

Please continue to check the COSA website for news. ANZUP has reserved the domain names www.anzup.org and www.anzup.org.au, however there is nothing at those sites yet.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you want further information or you would like to contribute to the groups.

Ian Davis, Chair

Email: ian.davis@ludwig.edu.au

CONGRATULATIONS

Phyllis Butow has been awarded the International Psycho-Oncology Society (IPOS) Bernard Fox Memorial Award, to be presented at the 11th World Congress of Psycho-Oncology in Vienna, Austria, 21 – 25 June 2009. The award was established to honour an IPOS or community member who has made an outstanding contribution in education, research or leadership to the field of psycho-oncology.

COSA congratulates Phyllis on receiving this prestigious and well deserved award!

We also congratulate **Jim Bishop** on being appointed Australia's new Chief Medical Officer. Jim has been a great advocate for improving cancer outcomes in NSW and a supporter of COSA and our activities.

"Jim we wish you well in your new role and by the way, when do you start taking appointments?"

TRAVEL GRANTS

COSA offers a number of Travel Grants to members to attend the Annual Scientific Meeting. We are happy to announce there are a further three grants available through the COSA-Ipsen travel award. Please refer to the COSA website for further information. www.cosa.org.au



COSA Interest Groups Update

Announcement: Interest Group Members can now go into the Group Forums section on the COSA website and click on the established Interest groups. You can provide comment on the information already placed in the discussion area or post a new topic.

AYA

Improving outcomes and services for adolescents and young adults (AYA) with cancer

Adolescents and young adults (AYA) with cancer have distinctly different medical, psychosocial, social and information needs to children and adults with cancer.

Over the past two years COSA has been leading national collaboration and actions in an effort to improve survival rates and psychosocial outcomes for young people with cancer.

In November last year COSA convened a second **AYA Cancer Workshop** to bring together oncologists, health and other professionals and consumers interested in improving the treatment and care of adolescents and young adults with cancer.

This workshop updated stakeholders on progress following the May 2007 workshop (co-convened by COSA), which identified key elements of appropriate models of care of adolescents and young adults with cancer.

Participants at the November 2008 workshop were updated about the proposed Federal Government and CanTeen funding to establish AYA cancer services and development of AYA cancer services in the five mainland states and then discussed the value of having national guidelines and functions to assist implementation of services. They agreed that while the nature of AYA cancer services should be determined by each state and territory jurisdiction, national coordination of key functions to support these services, such as research, professional development and evaluation, would prevent duplication and ensure equity for people affected by AYA cancers across Australia.

To progress development of these national services COSA has formed an **AYA Cancer Steering Committee**, chaired by Associate Professor David Thomas.

Associate Professor Thomas, COSA President Bruce Mann and Executive Officer Margaret McJannett met with senior Department of Health and Ageing officers on 3 March to discuss COSA's capacity to ensure appropriate clinical input to discussions about funding allocation and to lead development of national guidelines and resources to support AYA cancer services.

For more information about COSA's AYA Cancer Interest group or to become a member please email cosa@cancer.org.au

The full report of the AYA Cancer Workshop is on the COSA website.

A/Prof David Thomas

CAM

The CAM Steering group convened a half-day workshop in November 2008 with the aim of defining principles of practice for COSA members around the use of complementary therapies within cancer care for health professionals.

Participants were asked to consider five key questions which concentrated on the clinicians' duty to inform patients on complementary options and requests, sources of reliable information and a range of website resources.

Actions from the workshop as documented in the workshop report included a number of options around the identification and consolidation of current sources of information, research options in complementary therapies to facilitate access by health professionals and consumers, the development of functional links with relevant professional bodies to encourage communication and engagement.

The CAM Interest group membership have been asked to volunteer their time to be involved with 6 key tasks for resource development for the COSA website.

The full report of the CAM Workshop 2008 is on the COSA website

For more information about COSA's CAM Interest group or to become a member please email COSA Project Coordinator, kathy.ansell@cancer.org.au

Prof Bogda Koczwar, Chair

Care Coordination

Activities since last report:

In 2008, COSA undertook a survey of its membership to elicit information around scope of practice, work experience, referral pathways, and learning and support preferences for Cancer Care Coordinators. The survey also included items which asked respondents to comment on the relevance of the performance indicators identified in the 2007 COSA workshop.

A total of 97 usable surveys were returned from COSA members who self-identified as care coordinators. The survey report will be placed on the COSA website. The outcomes of the survey and, in consultation with our Interest group and the COSA executive will set directions for 2009.

For more information about the Care Coordination Interest group or to become a member please see the COSA website or email COSA Project Coordinator, kathy.ansell@cancer.org.au

Prof Patsy Yates, Chair

Developing Nations

The Developing Nations group has a number of activities planned for 2009. As a newly formed group the consensus of the group has been that we should concentrate on establishing ourselves as a group before looking to engage more broadly with overseas cancer organisations.

An online survey has been built to develop a registry of interested people and a database of projects. This will be sent out to the broad COSA membership by email in the coming weeks.

Further progress has been made with developing a toolkit for people planning a project. Two draft modules have been developed on planning an educational project and engaging other aid organisations. The COSA website Group Forum section has now a discussion site for Developing Nations and we welcome your comments and postings.

For more information about the Developing Nations Interest group or to become a member please email COSA Project Coordinator, kathy.ansell@cancer.org.au

Dr Mathew Links, Chair

Geriatric Oncology

Professor Robert Prowse presented the outcomes of the Geriatric Oncology Meeting held in 2008 at the Aged Care Alliance Meeting held in Canberra in February. This was an opportunity to inform key representative of 22 peak national organisations involved in aged care about COSA's commitment to improving patient outcomes in the elderly.

Collaborative work is being undertaken with interest group members who currently use screening questionnaire's for patients, (greater than 70 years) in their institutions to improve patient outcomes. The group look forward to undertaking a project to develop a national assessment tool for elderly cancer patient. Preliminary plans are in place to hold a Geriatric Oncology session with international experts at the 2009 ASM.

For more information about the Geriatric Oncology Interest group or to become a member please email cosa@cancer.org.au

The full report of the 2008 Workshop is on the COSA website.

Dr Christopher Steer Chair

Neuroendocrine Tumours

COSA supported a workshop in July 2008 to advance the management of neuroendocrine tumours (NETs) in Australia. Progress in NETs treatment has been lagging behind that of the more common tumours, whereas there is increasing awareness amongst clinicians that this is a therapeutic area needing development.

Arising from the joint workshop in July 2008, and also ongoing discussions within the steering group, projects to be undertaken include:

- facilitating the set up of state based cross institutional NETs multidisciplinary networks, initially to be piloted in several states; -
- development of a national NETs database and tumour registry;
- development of NETs specific clinical trials;
- adaptation of international management guidelines for the Australian context.

A steering committee who represent many of the key opinion leaders in this area around Australia has been formed, the members are: Professors Rod Hicks, David Goldstein, John Zalcborg, Rob Padbury, Tim Price, Michael Michael. Invitation to join a NETs interest group is open to the COSA membership which will be served by a steering committee

The full report of the Neuroendocrine Tumour Workshop is on the COSA website.

For more information about the Neuroendocrine Tumour Interest group or to become a member please email COSA Project Coordinator, kathy.ansell@cancer.org.au

Dr Yo Jo Chua, Chair

National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre

New online resource to support young women with ovarian cancer

NBOCC has released a new online resource, *Ovarian cancer and menopause – information for younger women* to provide support for women dealing with the physical and emotional impact of treatment-induced early menopause. To view *Ovarian cancer and menopause – information for younger women*, visit www.nbocc.org.au/ocm.

Revised Guide for women with early breast cancer available now

National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre (NBOCC) is pleased to announce the eagerly anticipated revised version of its Guide for women with early breast cancer. The resource provides information to support women with early breast cancer in making decisions about their treatment and care, as well as advice for family and friends. To order the *Guide for women with early breast cancer*, please visit www.nbocc.org.au/resources or call 1800 624 973.

Other news

Specialist Certificate in Clinical Research (Oncology)

The University of Melbourne and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre will again teach the Specialist Certificate in Clinical Research (Oncology) later this year. This is a University award course taught over two one-week blocks in late April and late July.

The course aims to bring together multi-disciplinary health professionals involved with clinical research to give them a better understanding of all types of oncology research as well as provide an understanding of the essential components and features of successful research activities and careers.

More information is available from the website www.mccp.unimelb.edu.au/oncology

Enabling Project Update

COSA & Cancer Cooperative Trial Groups

The primary focus of work undertaken over the last four months has been the COSA Umbrella Insurance for Cancer Cooperative Trial Groups. We are delighted that 9 Cancer Cooperative Trial Groups have agreed to participate in the Scheme.

The participating Groups are AGITG, ALTG, ANZBCTG, ANZCHOG, ANZGOG, ANZMTG, ANZUP, ASSG & TROG. It has been a particularly difficult, complex and lengthy process to reach this stage. Thank you to all the Executive Officers Network and the Chairs of the Cooperative Trial Groups for their patience, time and commitment to help make this happen. We believe that once it is fully operational, the Umbrella Scheme for Cooperative Trial Groups will provide a cost effective, simplified and more streamlined approach to the management of insurance for clinical trials within Australia.

Professor Steve Ackland, Chair
Dr Margie Campbell,
Program Coordinator

The Course in Facilitating the Living With Cancer Education Program at Cancer Council Victoria

12 & 13 May, 19 & 20 August and 9 & 10 November 2009

The Living with Cancer Education Program is delivered by health professionals for people with cancer, their family & friends. This two day training course includes information on the range of issues people face when they are living with cancer as well as group facilitation skills, adult learning techniques, and program promotion. The course is accredited with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority. Book early, as places are limited! For more information please contact Sue Hegarty Cancer Services Coordinator on 13 11 20 or email lwcep@cancervic.org.au

Clinical Trials Partnership NSW Concept Development Workshop for Investigators

The Partnership between the Cancer Institute NSW and the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre (CTC) is sponsoring the first Concept Development Workshop for Investigators to be held **Friday April 17th 2009** at the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre in Sydney.

This series of one day workshops planned for 2009 aims to assist clinical investigators in the development of new clinical trial concepts in cancer. The workshop is designed for investigators who have an idea for a clinical trial and are suitably qualified individuals pursuing clinical research. Investigators from any cancer therapeutic area or discipline are able to attend. The program format will consist of a combination of presentations, exercises and interactive group discussions covering:

Structure and Purpose of a Concept Outline | Developing a Health Intervention | Trial Design and Sample Size Calculations | Specifying Suitable Target Populations | Outcomes | Feasibility and Funding Strategies

Participants will work on their proposed concept throughout the day and present them for discussion and feedback with support from faculty experts.

For more information on the workshop visit www.ctc.usyd.edu.au/trials/trial_support.htm or contact the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre at cpg@ctc.usyd.edu.au or on 02 9562 5310.

Please register your interest as soon as possible as there are a limited number of spaces in the workshop.



2009 COSA-Ipsen Travel Award

Travel award funding is now available for three members to attend COSA's Annual Scientific Meeting, Gold Coast Convention Centre, Queensland 17-19 November 2009. Each travel grant will be up to the value of \$1,100 to be used for expenses incurred in attending the Annual Scientific Meeting. Applicants must have an abstract accepted for presentation at the ASM. This can be either an oral or poster presentation. For further details please see the COSA website www.cosa.org.au



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Closing date for applications: Friday 11 September 2009

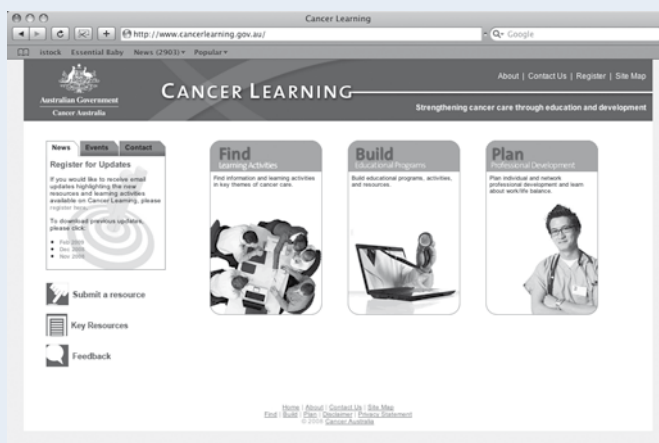


The Cancer Learning online hub is an initiative of Cancer Australia and is designed specifically for health professionals working in cancer care. The site allows you to FIND evidence-based resources and learning activities; BUILD educational programs; and PLAN your professional development pathway to further your career and improve your patients' experience.

Cancer Learning has been developed with extensive consultation and input from health professionals across Australia including many of our COSA members. You will also find a number of COSA's resources throughout the site along with an events calendar that includes key nationwide activities such as the COSA ASM.

Recent additions to the site include professional development pathways for a number of professional groups: clinical research, dietetics, nursing, pharmacy, radiation therapy and social work. The site now links to over 400 resources and you can register to receive a monthly update about new resources and activities.

For more information, email info@cancerlearning.gov.au or contact Ana Munro amunro@usyd.edu.au.



NEW RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

2009 Advancing Care for Prostate Patients Grants

The Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (COSA) is delighted to collaborate with sanofi-aventis to host the 2009 Advancing Care for Prostate Patients Grants. COSA will work collaboratively with sanofi-aventis to host the Research Grants and achieve its aims. Grants valued in a range from \$5000 to \$40,000 will be provided.

Aim of project:

To improve outcomes of patients diagnosed with prostate cancer by the development of sustainable processes.

Eligibility:

- Financial member of COSA;
- Nursing &/or allied health professional

Key selection criteria:

- Patient based project with a research component;
- Sound scientific approach and feasibility;
- Description of key milestones, research governance process, mentorship where applicable;
- Track record of the applicant and/or supervisor

• Budget

- Description of a business plan aiming to demonstrate how the position will move to become financially self-sustaining upon completion of the project.

The proposals should lead to:

- Improvement in patient outcomes.
- Cost savings for the centres involved.
- Development of models that can be rolled out to other centres.

Applications

- Call for applications by the end of March 2009 with applications to close by COB 30 April 2009;
- Applications will be judged by an independent review committee.

See COSA website for more details: www.cosa.org.au



▼ Professor Ian Olver, CEO of Cancer Council Australia, and the recipient of the MOG Cancer Achievement Award.



▲ Dr Judy Bauer (2nd from left) with colleagues following the breakfast session "Using evidence to advance nutrition practice" sponsored by Nestle. Judy is the inaugural Chair of the newly formed Nutrition Group.

▲ Our 2008 COSA ASM Convenor A/ Prof Eva Segelov along with Margaret McJannett, Exec Officer of COSA, congratulating Ms Haryana Dhillon recipient of the HOTTAH award with Prof Steve Ackland COSA Chair of HOTTAH Fellowship Committee

2009 HOTT Fellowship Awards

Roche Oncology & Haematology in conjunction with COSA, MOGA and HSAZ is delighted to announce that two HOTT Fellowship Awards of \$50,000 AUD each will be available in 2009.

This 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 May 22.
See COSA website www.cosa.org.au for more details.

2009 HOTTAH Grant

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

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 this grant is now open.

Closing date for applications May 22.
See COSA website www.cosa.org.au for more details.

Camp Quality is the children's family cancer charity that believes in bringing optimism and happiness to the lives of children and families affected by cancer through fun therapy. Their new Offspring Program is aimed at addressing the needs of children who have a parent or carer living with cancer.

Initially the Offspring Camps will be for children from birth to 18 and their families, whilst specific camps for children aged 4 to 12 will potentially be on offer as the program evolves. For more information please either contact Juanita Farley on Juanita.farley@campquality.org.au or (07) 3216 0299 or visit the Camp Quality website at www.campquality.org.au.



COSA'S 36TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING



**Clinical
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Australia**

**17-19 November 2009
Gold Coast Convention Centre**



Cancer Services and Our Community: awareness • access • action

INVITED SPEAKERS INCLUDE

A/Professor David Ball

Radiation Oncologist, Associate Director – Education, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
Melbourne, Australia

Dr Barry Bultz

Adjunct Professor and Chief, Division of Psychosocial Oncology
Director, Department of Psychosocial Resources and Program Leader, Psychosocial
Oncology, Supportive, Pain and Palliative Care, Tom Baker Cancer Centre
Calgary, Canada

Dr Normand Laperriere

Staff Radiation Oncologist, Princess Margaret Hospital and Associate Professor,
Department of Radiation Oncology, University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Dr Bernard J Park

Thoracic Surgeon, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
New York, United States of America

Dr Roger Stupp

Multidisciplinary Oncology Center, University of Lausanne Hospitals
Lausanne, Switzerland

Professor Patricia Hollen

Malvina Yuille Boyd Professor of Oncology Nursing, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA,
United States of America

Registration and
Abstract Submission
April 2009

Abstract Submission
deadline:
7 August 2009

Early Bird
Registration ends:
28 August 2009

All details and processes online at WWW.cosa2009.org

Thanks to our sponsors

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PLEASE NOTE THE MEETING THIS YEAR WILL RUN FROM TUESDAY 17 NOV TO THURSDAY 19 NOV