

SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL DAY – OZPOS/PoCoG



OZPOS in collaboration with PoCoG and the COSA Survivorship Group successfully obtained funding for the 3rd Psycho-Oncology Professional Day. It was held immediately prior to the COSA 2013 ASM in Adelaide, attracting more than 65 registrants. The broad aims of the day provide a forum for discussion of psycho-social practice issues as well as new data and emerging research questions. It also provides opportunities for networking and peer-support.

This year was conducted on a background of men's mental health, how we are engaging men and the interventions that might work in this population. After a presentation that reminded us of the high level of unmet needs in men's mental health, we heard two excellent presentations of different interventions that may help. Dr Addie Wootten presented the development of the PROSTMATE web-portal designed to assist men and their families living with a diagnosis of prostate cancer, it has capacity to act as an appointment reminder system to triaging patients towards information and computer-based consultations with allied health professionals. Dr Prue Cormie then discussed a group-based exercise intervention for men with prostate cancer that is showing promise as both a physical activity intervention and a source of psycho-social support for the participants.

A panel discussion regarding the potential benefits and harms of screening for psychological distress in cancer populations, led by the dynamic and always entertaining Prof. Stewart Dunn, generated lively discussion. While there remains interest and feeling that screening for distress is important, it is by no means clear that we have determined what outcomes doing so will impact or the optimal model of screening, there continues to be much work to be completed in this sphere.

We enjoyed two sessions of oral abstract presentations related to survivorship. The first addressed a range of interventions and approaches to physical activity in the cancer survivorship setting. The second provided interesting experiences of developing, trialling and implementing a range of survivorship interventions, providing valuable insights to the group for future research and implementation.

Our final session focused on the development of psychological interventions, how this is approached and the importance to intervention fidelity in psycho-oncology research. We are grateful to the Investigators and POCOG staff leading the Fear of Cancer Recurrence Study, who developed this session. It was a very vibrant discussion about the issues confronting psychologists delivering care in practice and being involved in research..

OZPOS wishes to thank COSA for generously providing funding for the third Psycho-Oncology Professional Day. OZPOS thanks PoCoG for the provision of additional funding to support the day, including conducting evaluation. The major organisational and administrative contributions of Joanne Shaw, Joanna Fardell and Melanie Price from PoCoG is especially acknowledged and appreciated.

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