

2014 COSA-HGSA Familial Cancer Clinics Clinical Professional Day Report 12 August 2014



The 2014 COSA/Human Genetics Society of Australia (HGSA) Familial Cancer Clinics Clinical Professional Day was held Tuesday 12th August 2014, at the Mantra resort, Kingscliff, NSW.

Local Australian speakers Dr Kathy Tucker (Fanconi anaemia), Prof Hamish Scott (familial leukaemia), Prof Ingrid Winship (medulloblastoma due to *SUFU* mutations) and Nicola Poplawski (ovarian cancer associated with *SMARCA4* mutations) began the day, presenting papers focused on rare inherited cancers.

Delegates were then brought up to date with recent progress in our understanding of *BRCA2*-associated prostate cancer by three of the members of a world leading, Australian based team of prostate cancer researchers (Dr Renea Taylor, Dr David Clouston and Prof Damien Bolton).

After lunch three speakers addressed different aspects of the role of genomic testing in the Familial Cancer Clinic. Prof Ashok Venkitaraman (the Ursula Zoellner Professor of Cancer Research and Professor of Oncology Cambridge University; Director of the Medical Research Council Cancer Unit, Joint Director of the Hutchison/MRC Research Centre and Joint Director of The Cambridge Molecular Therapeutics Programme, United Kingdom) eloquently addressed the question of the role of tumour genomics for targeted cancer therapy, using the *BRCA2* gene to illustrate a range of important ideas and principles. Prof Judy Garber (Director and Medical Oncologist, Center for Cancer Genetics and Prevention, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston; Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School) discussed the practical implications of cancer panel testing for clinical practice, sharing insights from her experience of the introduction of this technology in her institution in Boston. Prof Margaret Otlowski (Dean and Head of School, Faculty of Law and Deputy Director, Centre for Law and Genetics, University of Tasmania) then spoke about the ethical and legal challenges raised by personal genomics. We were privileged to have three such eminent speakers contribute to our CPD.



Prof Ashok Venkitaraman



Prof Judy Garber



Prof Margaret Otlowski

The final session of the day focused on cancers associated with mutations in the *CDH1* gene. Dr Chris Butler presented his qualitative data on the lived experience of risk reducing gastrectomy in *CDH1* mutation carriers who are at risk of hereditary diffuse gastric cancer. Caroline Lintott challenged us to think beyond the “Eurocentric” model of individualised decision making, during her discussion of family focused predictive testing – a process of decision making commonly used by Maori *CDH1* mutation families. Dr Vanessa Blair updated us on the management of the risk of lobular breast cancer in female *CDH1* mutation carriers.

Over 120 delegates registered for the meeting, and informal feedback has confirmed the content was valuable, the programme relevant and the speakers impressive! All enjoyed the sensation of finishing the day with their “brains full”!

Our thanks to COSA, along with the HGSA and kConFab, for supporting our CPD.

Nicola Poplawski
Chair, COSA Familial Cancer Group