



COSA NEWS



Prof Fran Boyle, COSA President

Speaking of social media, I was loving the footwear features on twitter!

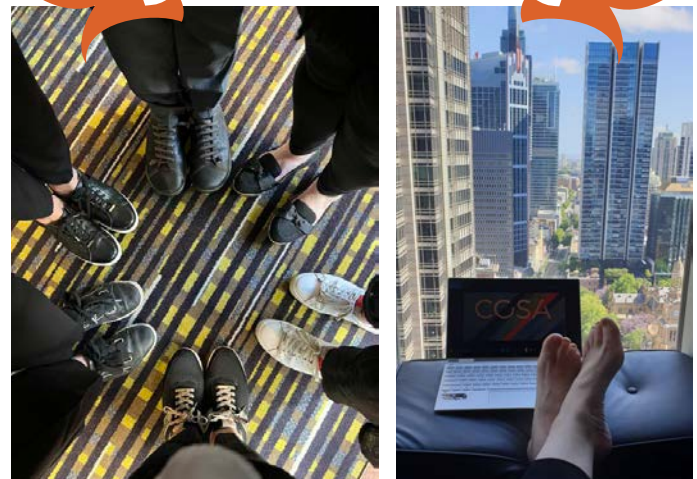
It was an absolute honour to bookend the ASM with the COSA Presidential Lecture delivered by Laureate Professor and Nobel Prize winner Peter Doherty. And what a treat for me to introduce him and conduct a little Q&A to close.

2021 – the year that was

Despite another year of disruptions due to the pandemic, it has been business as usual for COSA, and I am proud to say we achieved a great deal throughout the year. As some cancer treatments and screening services were closed due to the lockdowns, we upped our advocacy efforts and were pleased to see BreastScreen NSW open again in November.

Obviously, telehealth featured heavily during the pandemic, so much so that we added a session at the ASM from the submitted abstracts. Congratulations to all the Best of the Best Awards recipients, especially Claire Cooper from PoCoG for her abstract titled *“Development of psycho-oncology telehealth recommendations”* for winning the best presentation in that category.

It wasn't just the ASM we had to take online. Like so many other events, most of COSA's educational events were held virtually. We partnered with CNSA for a webinar series on geriatric oncology, cancer care coordination and financial toxicity. Another great collaboration was undertaken with the Australian Cancer Survivorship Centre, Cancer Council Victoria and CNSA for two special webinars on survivorship: Nurses integrating optimal survivorship care: it's everyone's business; and Allied health providing cancer survivorship care. It has been really helpful to pool our resources with these collaborators to deliver quality education.



President's Report

It's difficult for me to grasp that I am already halfway through my COSA Presidency. The last 12 months have flown by and I have enjoyed (almost) every minute.

COSA ASM

Despite the challenges that COVID-19 has presented us, COSA has delivered another stellar virtual ASM. I had the pleasure of co-chairing the opening plenary with our past President, Nick Pavlakis. One particular tweet stood out for me, "I'm loving the female presenters and leaders at this conference". I promise Nick was not invited to co-chair as the "token male" – we invited him as the plenary focussed on the learnings from 2020 (Nick's tenure) and the implications for practice in 2021 and beyond (my tenure). The speakers though were a formidable all female line up, each presenting on the conference themes: Dorothy Keefe on leveraging the opportunities presented by the pandemic; Bogda Koczwara on PROMs; and Sara Pai from Harvard on developing a quality framework for immunotherapy.

I don't intend to highlight any particular COSA Group over the others – they have all achieved a great deal – but I must commend Michael Jefford, the outgoing Chair of the COSA Survivorship Group. You can read about their achievements in his report, but suffice to say the impact of the Group has been exceptional, especially the inaugural Cancer Survivorship Fellows who Michael and his colleagues mentored. Fiona Crawford-Williams and Carolyn Mazariello both had their abstracts accepted for an oral presentation at the ASM, and Carolyn won the best presentation in the PROMs and PREMs session.

As I write this report, the festive season is upon us. I hope you all enjoy some quality time with loved ones. The COSA team are all still currently working from home with the plan to return to the office in the new year.

I want to thank you for your continued support of COSA, the contributions of the COSA Board, Council, Groups Chairs, Executive Committees and especially the COSA staff. Stay safe and we hope to see you in person at the 2022 COSA ASM in Brisbane next November.

Fran Boyle AM
COSA President 2021–2022



Chief Executive Officer's Report



Marie Malica, CEO, COSA

I am not shy about saying goodbye to 2021 – see ya! Just as we did in 2020, we faced multiple challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we did it with positivity and achieved a great deal. The team and I worked from home more than in the office. Luckily, we stayed connected through virtual catch ups and I may

have won some favours with chocolate deliveries!

2021 COSA ASM

As always, the ASM was our feature event this year. We gained so much knowledge and experience from running our first fully virtual event last year, which boded well for this year. I must commend the team for another very successful event (even if I do say so myself, again). I'll briefly touch on my ASM highlights, but be sure to read more about it in Kate Webber's convenor report.

We initially planned for the 2021 ASM to be a face-to-face conference at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. By late August, it became obvious that the travel and border restrictions in place at that time would prevent us from safely planning for an in-person conference. The COSA Board therefore made the decision to take the ASM virtual, again – a decision we conveyed to COSA members and delegates promptly. This gave people the confidence to plan their attendance, and so we saw an instant spike in registrations.

We opted for the Delegate Connect platform again. It worked really well for us last year, and they implemented many improvements following our feedback and that of their other clients. The formal delegate evaluation survey is underway as I write this, but anecdotally and informally the feedback we've received so far has been extremely positive. Many of the speakers said it was THE BEST platform and virtual conference they have attended.

Over the three days of the ASM, 16–18 November, virtual delegates had access to all content from plenaries and five concurrent sessions in each time block, as well as morning and evening symposia. Last year we only had three concurrent sessions, but the committee had done such a great job planning the program we couldn't truncate it and still do justice to the content. Plus we received more submitted abstracts which deserved to be featured, especially in the new categories of learnings from COVID-19 and tele-health.

A reminder that all registered delegates have access to the recorded content on demand for 12 months after the ASM.

Some fun statistics!

2.3M
twitter
impressions

215,053 mins
of **live stream** views

267 participants
in the **leader board**

2,898
e-Poster
views

For all you tweeters out there, I'm sure you saw the twitter frenzy throughout the ASM. Of course, our top tweeter once again was Haryana Dhillon (@hagsie). She's hard to beat! So we've decided to name an award in her honour – the Hagsie Top Tweeter Award – and the winner this year was Bogda Koczwar. Congratulations Bogda!

Our top 10 most prolific tweeters!

@COSAoncology	100
@hagsie	84
@bogda_koczwar	64
@COSA_Surviv	60
@Afaf_Girgis	60
@M_Jefford	60
@shalinivinod13	50
@Fiona_CW1	49
@POCOG1	49
@ShakiraMilton	44



Here are a few tweets that stood out.

From one of our top tweeters Shakira Milton;

\$186 billion was spent on cancer treatment in the US in 2020 and cancer outcomes for African Americans are worse, Dr Sara Pai from @harvardmed explains at #COSA21 I'm loving all the female presenters and leaders at this conference

From @bogda_koczwara;

So no dancing at #COSA21 this year. For those of you who feel like you are missing out, I have created a playlist made entirely out of the titles of the session I'm chairing later today. Enjoy!

From @hagsie Haryana Dhillon, COSA member and chief tweeter;

what a #masterclass in delivering an engaging lecture virtually & worldwind tour of #killerdefence from @DrPCDoherty #COSA21 thankyou for taking the time to talk with us!

Submissions

Since my last report we made another two submissions:

1. Commonwealth Department of Health Review of the Efficient Funding of Chemotherapy (EFC) program, July 2021, a joint submission with Cancer Council Australia, the Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA) and the Australasian Leukaemia and Lymphoma Group (ALLG).
2. The Review of the National Medicines Policy, September 2021, a joint submission with Cancer Council Australia, the Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA) and Cancer Nurses Society of Australia (CNSA).

Changes on COSA Council

COSA has been delighted to welcome some newly appointed representatives to COSA Council in the last six months. Professor Gail Garvey was appointed as the inaugural Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander representative, and Kathy Bell and Leonie Young were appointed as Consumer representatives. Council has also approved the formation a new COSA Global Oncology Group. The Group's inaugural Chair will be Professor Desmond Yip, and COSA members will be aware that we have recently called for nominations for the Group's Executive Committee. We have also called for nominations for a new Chair of the COSA Gastrointestinal Cancer Group, which was vacated by Desmond to take up this new Chair role.

Group	Incoming Chair	Outgoing Chair
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander rep	Gail Garvey	New position
Advanced Trainee representative	Andrea Knox	Andrew Parsonson
Cancer Genetics	Simon Troth	Lucinda Salmon
Cancer Pharmacists (co-chairs)	Marissa Ryan & Geeta Sandhu	Dan McKavanagh
Clinical Trials Research Professionals	Adam Stoneley	Annette Cubitt
Consumer representatives	Kathy Bell & Leonie Young	New position
Exercise & Cancer	David Mizrahi	Andrew Murnane
Gastro-intestinal Cancers	Vacant	Desmond Yip
Global Oncology	Desmond Yip	New position
Nutrition	Merran Findlay	Nicole Kiss

Team COSA

Sadly we said goodbye to our fabulous Social Media Coordinator Olivia Hart. Our friends at Cancer Council recognised her talents and scooped her up. We have been temporarily outsourcing the social media activities to our design team, namely Soraya Franklin from We Love Mondays Creative, and she has done a great job, but as I write this we are recruiting for a new Communications Manager. More about that in the new year. Earlier this year we also farewelled COSA Project Managers Chantal Gebbie and Jessica Harris.

In September we welcomed back Hayley Griffin, COSA Project Manager, from parental leave. We are delighted to have her back on the team, as are the Cardio-Oncology Working Group who she's already whipping into shape.

In closing I'd just like to give a huge shout out to the COSA staff: Fran Doughton who is much more than my Executive Assistant, she keeps the whole ship sailing smoothly; Peter Robinson who works closely with Fran rounding out our highly effective administration team; and the best project management team you could wish for – Rhonda DeSouza, Hayley Griffin and Gillian Mackay. I'm really looking forward to working even more closely together when we get back into the office more permanently in 2022. And even more so, seeing all your lovely faces at the 2022 ASM in Brisbane.

Best wishes for the festive season. Stay safe and be well.

Marie Malica
Chief Executive Officer

2021 COSA ASM Convenor's Report



*Kate Webber,
2021 COSA ASM Convenor*

2021 certainly threw some challenges at us, and planning for a virtual COSA ASM was not one we anticipated at the beginning of the year. Luckily the COSA team had plenty of experience from last year when the Brisbane ASM went virtual. I was honoured to be invited to convene the 2021 COSA ASM. Together with a

highly engaged program committee, and the teams at COSA and ASN Events, I was confident we would deliver another exciting and highly educational program, and I'm proud to say we did just that. Whilst the registration numbers were slightly down on last year, I think the engagement of those that did attend was very high, and abstract submissions were in fact higher than last year.

The theme this year was **"Cancer care and research: Learning from the past and improving the future"**. We chose this theme because we could not ignore the challenges of last year, rather there is much to learn and implement now and into the future. Additionally, your feedback from the delegate evaluations from previous years indicated that you would like us to build on recent ASM topics rather than introduce all new themes.

In terms of clinical themes, the program had a focus on **immunotherapy**. This theme was very well received when we last featured it in 2017. There has been a lot of progress since, and in multiple disease areas, so we featured new research and ground-breaking treatments for diseases such as mesothelioma and rare cancers. Anna Anderson's impassioned contribution to the hot topic panel discussion which closed out the conference was a perfect ending. A mother of three young children, Anna was diagnosed with a rare, aggressive and inoperable cancer of her gallbladder in October 2017. Given only months to live, now four years on and in complete remission, Anna shared her remarkable cancer journey and the wonders of immunotherapy that see her alive and well today.

We also had a focus on **PROMs and PREMs** building on the excellent presentations in last year's program – also convenor's privilege as this is of personal interest to me. We wanted to move the discussion from WHY to HOW, to the implementation of PROMs and PREMs into routine cancer care, and discuss the barriers and enablers to making this happen.

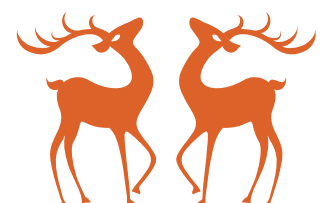
Of course, we couldn't let the opportunity pass to reflect on the COVID-19 pandemic – what we have learned, changes to practice and potential impacts on patient outcomes. Presentations focussed on the key learnings from COVID-19 including an understanding of the clinical and system implications particularly in relation to new and advanced cancer diagnoses; stakeholder perspectives on the impact of the pandemic on oncology services; what is known about vaccine response in cancer patients; and another consumer's perspective from Deborah Maher, who received her treatment during the height of the 2020 lockdown in Melbourne. As you can imagine we received a vast number of submitted abstracts focussed on the experience of the past year, so we added a special Best of the Best oral session on COVID-19 and cancer, and another on tele-health.

I can imagine you are all probably zoomed out and didn't get to watch as much live content as you would have hoped. Luckily for us, COSA has made all the recorded content available on demand for registered delegates for 12 months after the ASM. It's always such a challenge deciding which concurrent session to attend during an in-person meeting – I even had the same challenge online – so I'll certainly be taking advantage of playing catch up.

I really enjoyed working with the ASM Program Committee and thank them for their enthusiasm and valuable input – Jonathan Cebon, Steve Fraser, Mahesh Iddawela, Andrea Knox, Mei Krishnasamy, Chi Hao La, Alexandra Lewis, Jenelle Loeliger, Sophie Nightingale, Carmel O'Kane, Gail Rowan and Lesley Stafford – some of whom I still haven't met in person! Everything comes together under the watchful guidance of the teams at COSA and ASN Events. Once again, they really had their work cut out for them, but did an amazing job.

Just like many of you, one of my favourite things about the COSA ASM is the opportunity to meet up with colleagues. As much as I tried to connect with some of you online, there is nothing quite like bumping into a friend in the COSA exhibition hall, or on the dancefloor at the conference dinner. I sincerely hope we can all get together in person in 2022 in Brisbane. See you there then!

*Kate Webber
2021 COSA ASM Convenor*



International Speaker Profiles

For those not fortunate enough to attend this year's Annual Scientific Meeting (either live or on-demand), or those wanting to know a little more about some of our international speakers, COSA took five minutes to speak with Associate Professor Sara Pai and Dr Jedd Wolchok.



Sara Pai

Sara Pai

Sara Isabel Pai, MD, PhD, FACS: Dr Pai is Associate Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School, Director of Translational Research of Head and Neck Cancer at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), Member of the Cancer Immunology Program at the Dana-Farber Harvard Cancer

Center, and a Member of the Center of Systems Biology at the MGH. She serves as chair of the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) Quality Subcommittee, Chair of the SITC Quality Measure Technical Expert Panel (TEP), and a member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Immunotherapy Technical Expert Panel which is focused on developing quality care measures as it relates to immunotherapy. Her research interests focus on immunotherapeutic strategies that can be applied to reactivate the host immune response against human papillomavirus (HPV)-associated tumors through therapeutic vaccines and immune modulatory drugs. She leads several investigator-initiated immunotherapy clinical trials and has a research laboratory that is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and industry.

What was your experience like of presenting at the virtual COSA ASM?

I really enjoyed the experience. It was one of the best virtual run meetings that I have participated in. The AV support during the live session was very helpful.

How does delivering a virtual presentation compare to face-to-face?

I still prefer the face-to-face presentation due to the ability to network with the broader community.

Did you get to view any other presentations at the ASM? Can you tell us your highlights or your overall impression?

I enjoyed the live Q&A session and discussion with the speakers. It was very engaging and informative.



Jedd Wolchok

Jedd Wolchok

Dr Wolchok is Chief of the Immunology Service, Human Oncology and Pathogenesis Program and the Director of the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy at MSK and holds The Lloyd J Old Chair in Clinical Investigation at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Dr Wolchok

is a clinician-scientist exploring innovative immunotherapeutic strategies in laboratory models, and a principal investigator in numerous pivotal clinical trials. Dr Wolchok has helped establish MSK as a leader in the discovery and treatment of cancers with novel immunotherapies. Dr Wolchok was instrumental in the clinical development leading to the approval of ipilimumab for advanced melanoma. He supervises an NIH R01-funded basic science laboratory which is focused on investigating novel immunotherapeutic agents in pre-clinical laboratory models. The focus of his translational research laboratory is to investigate innovative means to modulate the immune response to cancer as well as to better understand the mechanistic basis for sensitivity and resistance to currently available immunotherapies.

What was your experience like of presenting at the virtual COSA ASM?

The experience was excellent. The technical support was great, and the live Q&A made this a very meaningful experience. The live panel was a highlight for me.

How does delivering a virtual presentation compare to face-to-face?

In the context of the above reply, I think the experience was excellent. Of course, I miss seeing friends and colleagues in person but the time and cost savings of avoiding long distance travel is a true advantage.

If you could have come to the ASM in person, what's on your list to see and do in Australia? Or if you've been before, can you tell us about your favourite experiences?

I have been to Australia twice and loved visiting Sydney and Melbourne, as well as Hamilton Island. When I return, I would like to visit the Outback.



Clinical
Oncology
Society of
Australia

**SAVE
THE DATE**
2 - 4
November
2022

BRISBANE

Convention
& Exhibition
Centre

**ASM
20
22** COSA's
49th Annual
Scientific
Meeting

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2021 Tom Reeve Award for Outstanding Contributions to Cancer Care

Scientia Professor Michael Barton OAM

Professor Michael Barton OAM was announced as the 2021 recipient of the Tom Reeve Award for Outstanding Contributions to Cancer Care at the 2021 COSA ASM.

As one of his nominators said, “As a pioneer of academic radiation oncology in Australia, Michael has made, and is still making, outstanding contributions to clinical care, in oncological research, and cancer services policy throughout his career. He would be a very worthy recipient of the Tom Reeve Award.” And the COSA Board agrees.

Professor Barton will be well known to the COSA community. He is a clinical academic specialist Radiation Oncology at Liverpool Hospital, Cancer Therapy Centre and Research Director of the Collaboration for Cancer Outcomes Research and Evaluation (CCORE), who has dedicated his lifetime’s work to the improvement and innovation in the field of radiation oncology and cancer care.

Michael’s greatest contribution to radiation oncology in Australia and internationally may be considered his work in providing the evidence on which to base health policy and advising governments on frameworks for cancer services and then evaluating the impact of those services. A pivotal study was the determination from evidence-based treatment guidelines of the percentage of cancer patients who should receive radiation therapy at some time in their treatment, which enabled planning of radiation services.

Throughout his career he has mentored, educated, researched all the while providing excellent, team-based clinical care. This has provided an environment that has brought on another generation of researchers and provided clinical care in the more resource-challenged areas of Greater Sydney.

Michael initiated the Basic Science in Oncology Course (BSOC) which has continued to grow and thrive since its inception in the early 1990’s. Countless clinicians from a range of oncology and palliative care backgrounds have benefited from this work. Most recently, he brought together the three cancer streams through the Translational Cancer Research Centres (TCRC) at the University of New South Wales into a cohesive team working closely together on research and translation of research into clinical care.

Michael has written 42 commissioned reports for a wide variety of agencies on the delivery plans for various health jurisdictions, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the Global Taskforce for the use of Radiotherapy for Cancer Control (GTFRCC), an international collaboration to advise and plan for expansion of radiotherapy facilities around the world to better cater for the cancer needs of every country, especially those countries with serious health service delivery deficits. He chaired the Australian guidelines for the management of Adult Gliomas.

In terms of individual research output, as Research Director of CCORE he has been awarded over \$20M in peer-reviewed funding. He has published 200 original scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals, 43 published abstracts, 9 editorials, 2 books, 15 book chapters, 8 electronic publications, and has over 9048 citation and an h-index of 46.

And the list goes on!

Professor Barton was presented with the award during the 2021 COSA ASM on Wednesday 17 November. The presentation and Professor Barton’s oration are available on demand to ASM delegates.

2021 COSA Psycho-Oncology Awards

We are delighted to announce the recipients of the 2021 COSA Psycho-oncology Awards.

Generally offered by COSA every two years in partnership with PoCoG, these Awards recognise outstanding contributions to psycho-oncology from among our members.



Gail Garvey

Professor Gail Garvey, the 2021 Melanie Price Australian Psycho-Oncology Award recipient

This Award recognises the highest level of contribution to psycho-oncology from amongst our members. In 2019 we acknowledged our

colleague Melanie Price and named the Australian Psycho-Oncology Award in her honour.

Professor Gail Garvey, a Kamilaroi woman from NSW is currently Professor Indigenous Health Research, School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, The University of Queensland. Prof Garvey has devoted her career to improving the health, particularly cancer, outcomes of First Nations peoples in Australia and globally. Professor Garvey has achieved significant and impactful research outputs during her career focusing predominately on the psychosocial aspects of cancer care and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and is committed to embedding research translation into her research projects to ensure research efforts will lead to positive policy and practice change.



Joanna Fardell

Dr Joanna Fardell, the 2021 Phyllis Butow New Investigator in Psycho-Oncology Award recipient

This Award recognises research achievements and potential for an ongoing contribution to the discipline of psycho-oncology in Australia. In

2021 we are pleased to name the New Investigator Award in the honour of a past COSA President Professor Phyllis Butow AM in recognition of her leadership and generous mentoring of so many psycho-oncology researchers in Australia and internationally.

Dr Joanna Fardell is an outstanding psycho-oncology professional and researcher who demonstrates both breadth and depth of research experience spanning the translational pipeline. Dr Fardell is an emerging leader in implementing evidence-supported policy and practice change, who works tirelessly to translate her scientific work into real changes for young people affected by cancer.

Did you know COSA is on social media?



Please follow us on Twitter
<https://twitter.com/COSAoncology>



Link to us on LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/clinical-oncology-society-of-australia-cosa>



Like our Facebook Page

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2021 COSA Best of the Best Awards

Best of the Best Oral Presentation Awards

Clinical research

Mitchell S von Itzstein abs#96
Clinical and biological correlates of immune-related adverse events

COVID-19 and cancer care

Yada Kanjanapan abs#23
COVID-19 vaccination in patients with solid tumours: development of an Australian position statement

Education

Sylvia Eugene Dit Rochesson abs#83
Exploring healthcare providers' perspectives on psychosexual healthcare for LGBTIQ+ cancer survivors: A mixed-methods study

Epidemiology

Sarah Badaoui abs#77
Association between patient-reported outcomes and survival in patients initiating first-line atezolizumab combination therapy for advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)

Health services

Kate Dunn abs#153
Variability across Victorian hospitals in the care of patients with metastatic colorectal cancer: using comprehensive registry data to explore potential quality indicators

Immunotherapy

Prachi Bhawe abs#17
Efficacy of checkpoint inhibitors (CPIs) in acral melanoma (AM)

PROMs and PREMs

Carolyn Mazariego abs#126
Priority Recommendations for the Implementation of Patient Reported Outcomes in Clinical Cancer Care: A Delphi study

Supportive care

Kate White abs#64
Evaluating a shared care pathway intervention to reduce chemotherapy outpatients' unplanned presentations to hospital: A randomised controlled trial (RCT)

Telehealth

Claire Cooper abs#88
Development of Psycho-oncology Telehealth Recommendations

Translational research

Lisa Beatty abs#144
Finding My Way in the real world: how do outcomes of a digital psycho-oncology program compare from clinical trial to implementation?

Best of the Best Rapid Fire Poster Oral Presentation Awards

Clinical Research

Jessica McKie abs#238
The use of neoadjuvant systemic therapy in early breast cancer as a guide to locoregional therapies: A single institution review

Exercise, nutrition and other supportive care strategies

Lara Edbrooke abs#357
Cost-effectiveness analysis of home-based rehabilitation in inoperable lung cancer

Families, care givers and communication

Eva Yuen abs#396
The moderating role of social connectedness on the relationship between cancer caregiver burden and psychological outcomes

Health services and molecular studies

Fanny Franchini abs#272
Budget impact modelling for listing new cancer treatments in different cancer stages using real-world data

Immunotherapy

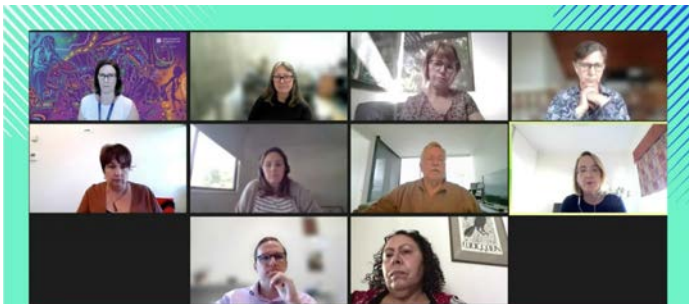
Sarah Lewis abs#319
Improved survival predicted by irAEs on 18F-FDG-PET in response to PD-1 antibody therapy in metastatic melanoma

PROMs, PREMs and other decision measures

Jon Emery abs#270
The CRISP Trial: a randomised controlled trial of a risk assessment and decision support tool for risk-stratified colorectal cancer screening in primary care

2021 COSA ASM in pictures

With the COSA ASM going virtual again this year, we didn't have a photographer on site, but luckily our friends on twitter were very active!



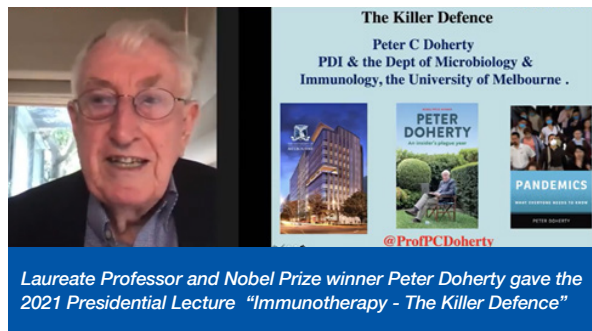
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with cancer PROMs and PREMs expert panel included Gail Garvey



The Hot Topic panel discussion on Immunotherapy in the real world saw a passionate discussion with panellists Clare Delaney, Peter Doherty, Oliver Klein, Anna McRae-Anderson and Robyn Ward, ably facilitated by Adam Spencer



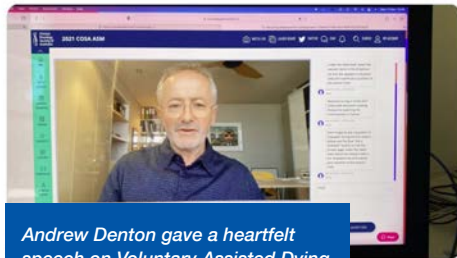
Dorothy Keefe chaired the panel From OCP (Optimal Care Pathway) to ACP (Australian Cancer Plan): A pathway to the future



Laureate Professor and Nobel Prize winner Peter Doherty gave the 2021 Presidential Lecture "Immunotherapy - The Killer Defence"



Rob Zielski @DrRobZielski
#cosa21 ready for Andrew Denton and his discussion on Voluntary Assisted Dying. A wonderful voice and leader in this sensitive topic.



Andrew Denton gave a heartfelt speech on Voluntary Assisted Dying

Michael Barton @bogmund · Nov 17

Delighted to receive the 2021 Tom Reeve Award from COSA today. Tom Reeve is a national treasure. I am forever grateful for his guidance when we put together the Adult Glioma guidelines it is a tremendous honour to receive an award that commemorates his contribution



Michael Barton later tweeted his appreciation for "National treasure Tom Reeve"



Fran Boyle, Adam Spencer and Marie Malica



Adam Spencer facilitated the closing Hot Topic panel discussion live from the COSA "studio"



Fran Boyle welcomed Dorothy Keefe to COSA ASM HQ

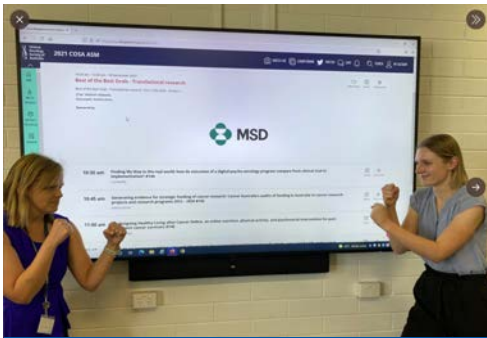


Michael Barton was a popular choice for the 2021 Tom Reeve Award

#COSA21 Participants



Thanks to Haryana Dhillon for this great collage: "As we aren't f2f for #COSA21 here are the people I've been interacting with via @twitter"



Lisa Betty tweeted this great photo of her Best of the Best showdown with supervisee Morgan Leske



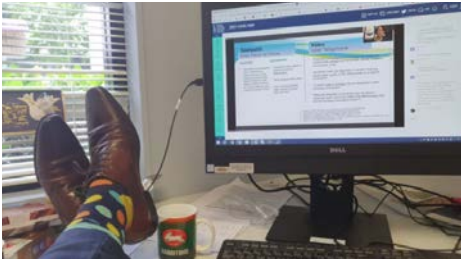
Bogda Koczvara started the comfy ASM footwear trend



Sophie Nightingale tries to keep warm



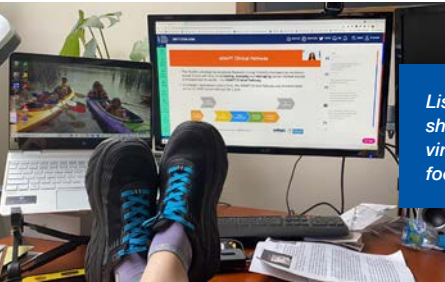
"Peter Doggety": Janette Vardy and her furry friend viewing the Presidential Lecture



Deme Karikios enjoying the #footie



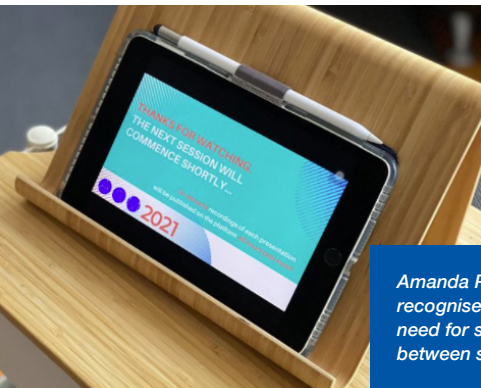
Michael Jefford's furry friend and twitter regular Harry enjoying the ASM after his stretch



Lisa Betty showcases her virtual ASM footwear

Ready to tune in again Haryana Dhillon puts her feet up after walking the dog

Annie Curtis was excited to share her e-Poster on dietary patterns with ASM delegates



Amanda Piper recognised the need for stretches between sessions



COSA Group Reports

Cancer Genetics Group

This report is also on behalf of the Human Genetics Society of Australasia (HGSA).



It has been a busy and ever-changing year for the COSA Cancer Genetics Group. There have been several updates within the Executive Committee membership. As the new incumbent Chair of the COSA Cancer Genetics Group I would like to acknowledge Lucinda Salmon for her work as Chair over the past three years. There have been several new members and members taking on new roles within the Executive. As Chair, I would like to welcome new members to the Executive and thank those who have taken on the important roles of deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

A key component of the Executives work is the COSA/HGSA Familial Cancer Clinic professional day. This was held on Tuesday 31 August 2021 with great success. This was the first time that the day was held virtually. There were four sessions throughout the day, these included topics addressing:

- Palliative Care
- Somatic Cancer in the familial cancer clinic
- Paediatric Cancers
- Interesting cases

The familial cancer session at the COSA ASM on Tuesday 16 November was well received. The session included discussions of managing patients with unclassified variants and uncertain cancer risks, germline mutation in prostate cancer, multi-organ cancer predisposition and surveillance, and the ever-evolving nature of genetic risk. The Executive also advised and contributed to content for the HGSA ASM.

The Executive continues to meet the needs of its members working in somatic and/or familial cancer. To do this the Executive has two subgroups (familial and somatic subgroups) that meet monthly and come together bi-monthly to plan events and discuss involvement in various projects.

A key part of meeting the needs of our members has been the delivery of webinars on topics relevant to both somatic and familial cancer. These have included:

- neurofibromatosis type 1
- the SEQC2 oncopanel sequencing working group
- how germline and somatic cancer variants collide in the clinical cancer space
- the germline contribution to haematological malignancies

The webinars have been very well attended. The Executive would like to thank the speakers and those who contributed to their development. The Executive would also like to thank the HGSA and COSA for their support in running, and involvement in, events throughout the year.

The Executive has been involved in the review, advocacy and support for MSAC

submissions including the whole-body MRI submission for adult TP53 carriers and reviewing item number 73296 – hereditary breast and ovarian cancer predisposition gene testing. To guide our involvement in the review of item number 73296 a survey was sent to the membership. There was an overwhelming support from our members for the review of the item number. The Executive has also contributed to the review and development of guidelines including the statement on universal MMR IHC testing.

We were excited to offer professional development grants to our members for the first time in 2021. Although we did not have many applicants this year, likely due to travel restrictions, we look forward to offering these grants to our members next year. We had one successful application in 2021.

We look forward to delivering webinars, contributing to conference programs, and advocating for our members as we deliver on various projects in 2022. We encourage any member of COSA with a special interest in somatic or familial cancer to join the Group.

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Cancer Pharmacists Group



CPG Executive Committee

The second half of 2021 has seen some changes to the CPG Executive Committee. We, Marissa Ryan and Geeta Sandhu, are the incoming Co-Chairs and feel privileged, along with Deputy Chair Kimberley-Ann Kerr, to lead such a fantastic group of cancer pharmacists. Importantly, we would like to acknowledge Daniel McKavanagh's time with the CPG. Dan has been a member of CPG for 13 years and Chair for the last two years. We thank Dan for his enthusiasm, commitment, and leadership over the years, especially during the past couple of years, with the continual changing environment of the pandemic response. Dan will be stepping down from his long tenure with the committee in early 2022, to focus on other professional activities.

On behalf on the CPG Executive Committee, we would also like to welcome the most recent members of the Cancer Pharmacists Group Executive Committee:

- Kate Wright (Senior Oncology/ Haematology Pharmacist, Central West Cancer Care Centre, Orange Health Service, Forest Rd, Orange NSW)
- Zainab Reslan (Senior Cancer Care Pharmacist, Oncology Pharmacy, Concord Repatriation General Hospital, Concord NSW)
- Marliese Alexander (Deputy Director of Pharmacy, Quality and Research, Peter Mac and Clinical Research Fellow, Peter Mac/University of

Melbourne, VIC)

- Sonia Cuan (Senior Clinical Pharmacist, Westmead Cancer Care Pharmacy, NSW)

The CPG Executive Committee therefore currently consists of the following members:

- Marissa Ryan (Co-Chair)
- Geeta Sandhu (Co-Chair)
- Kimberley-Ann Kerr (Deputy Chair)
- Gail Rowan
- Courtney Oar
- Chi Hao La
- Kate Wright
- Zainab Reslan
- Marliese Alexander
- Sonia Cuan
- Dan McKavanagh (stepping down in early 2022)

Advocacy, support, collaboration and educational activities

Regarding the Committee's advocacy and support for COSA and the CPG, and delivery of educational activities, the back half of 2021 continued with the same momentum that the beginning of the year kicked off with. Since the last newsletter, activities the CPG have been involved in include:

Foundation Clinical Practice for Cancer Pharmacists Course, 5 and 12 June 2021

The Foundation course was delivered as a mix of pre-recorded video content and live video conferenced group workshops this year. The course conveners (Geeta Sandhu, Courtney Oar, Marissa Ryan, Dan McKavanagh) and speakers did an amazing job of adjusting to the revised format, and the desire for such an educational course was high with attendance capacity being reached.

CPG – Professional Development Day 15 November 2021

Another successful CPG Professional Development Day was held prior to the start of the COSA ASM. Thank you to Gail Rowan and Helen Gougougiannis for their hard work in organising the virtual workshop. Over 40 attendees used the opportunity to further their knowledge and develop their skills over three interactive sessions. Our first session showcased the depth of resources available via eviQ Education and provided invaluable insight into how these can be used both for developing our own practice and in training and upskilling pharmacists moving into the cancer area. In our second session we had an update on the new immunotherapy trials being released and an in-depth look at the expanding role of immunotherapy in the treatment of lung malignancies. The day finished off with an interactive session looking at how we can discuss the use of complementary therapies (CAM) with our patients, the common types of concerns with CAM and cancer therapies and where to find good evidence-based CAM information. The organisers thank all attendees, sponsors, and speakers for their time, for making this year's Professional Development Day a success as always.

COSA ASM 2021, 16–18 November 2021

CPG's contribution to the ASM was once again showcased by member involvement in the delivery of presentations, showcasing of posters, judging abstracts and chairing sessions. The CPG-led "Medicines Matters" session focussed on onco-nephrology and included international and national speakers discussing anticancer drug dosing in kidney dysfunction from a multidisciplinary perspective. Peter Smith discussed immunotherapy and its potential interactions with cannabis and alternative medicines in the "Immunotherapy: what we are learning session". Julie Adams was

a finalist in the Best of the Best Orals (Health Services) on her topic about the delivery of home chemotherapy during COVID-19. Gail Rowan also presented in the Best of the Best Orals (COVID-19 and cancer care) on the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of pharmacy services to patients with cancer; regional (Oceania and Asia) response from an international survey. Thanks ever so much to Gail Rowan and Chi Hao La for being the CPG representatives on the ASM organising committee and adaptation to the changing situations of delivery to a virtual conference. Overall, the program provided great options for pharmacist involvement and learning.

Collaboration with British Oncology Pharmacy Association

We successfully co-hosted a “My Research Session” webinar with the British Oncology Pharmacy Association in October. Australian BMT pharmacist Julian Lindsay showcased his research on CMV management in allogeneic haematopoietic stem cell transplantation. There are plans to continue the collaborative effort in 2022 with hope of expanding to include international cancer pharmacist groups.

Pharmacology of Cancer Chemotherapy for Advanced Trainees workshop (cancelled)

Unfortunately, the Pharmacology of Cancer Chemotherapy for Advanced Trainees workshop (planned to be presented by Christine Carrington and Dan McKavanagh) was cancelled for 2021, however COSA plans to hold this workshop in 2022, date and venue to be confirmed.



Other activities

Members of the CPG committee have also participated in:

- PBS Active Ingredient Prescribing Advisory Group (Marissa Ryan)
- PBS Efficient Funding of Chemotherapy (EFC) Roundtable Consultation (Daniel McKavanagh and Marissa Ryan)

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Clinical Trials Research Professionals Group

Members of the CTRPG Executive Committee (EC) represent regional and metropolitan clinical trials research organisations across Australia. While the current committee members are unchanged, there has been a shift in responsibilities within the group as follows: Adam Stoneley, Research Operations Manager, Icon Group, Brisbane QLD (Chair); Dianne Lindsay, Clinical Research Consultant, Newcastle, NSW (Deputy Chair); Annette Cubitt, Clinical Trial Manager, Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital, QLD; Annette Dempsey, National Study Coordinator, ANZCHOG, Newcastle, NSW (Secretary); Joanne Benhamu, Research Manager, Cancer Surgery and Anaesthetics, Melbourne, VIC; Alison Richards, Clinical Trials Manager, Flinders Medical Centre, SA; Natasha Roberts, Research Coordinator, Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital, QLD; and, Krystyne Hiscock, Affinity Clinical Research, Perth, WA.

It is with great pleasure to inform the COSA membership that the manuscript relating to the successful 2020 COSA Clinical Professional Day Workshop on teletrials has been accepted for publication in the next issue of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology*. The article, “Teletrials, the new norm? Expert recommendations for teletrials into the future: Findings from the Clinical Oncology Society of Australia Clinical Trial Research Professionals Group Workshop”, authored by the CTRPG’s Natasha Roberts, documents the expert advice and shared learnings of the implementation of the Australasian Teletrial Model.

Four key themes were identified from the analysis of the workshop feedback and recordings, including “Being on the Same Page”, “Building Foundations”, “Key Roles in Teletrials” and “Incentives.” It was recognised that although there were many successes and improvements in clinical research conduct that were accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, there is still ample work to be done and improvements ahead. As anticipated, given the successes of the COSA Australasian Teletrial Model within the involved membership of COSA, the Australasian Teletrial Model has been identified as acceptable and feasible. Future directions include the need to continue to work on streamlining regulatory processes, implementation and monitoring, and increasing knowledge to further build networks across Australia.

Also following the success of the virtual Clinical Professional Day Workshop in 2020 and the expanded use and proficiency of videoconferencing platforms, the CTRPG will be conducting bimonthly lunchtime or twilight webinars for COSA CTRPG members. The first webinar is scheduled for February 2022 and will cover the topics of electronic investigator site file and trial master files. Additional topics of interest to follow later in the year will

include patient centric recruitment and quality management in clinical trials. Dissemination and promotion of the events will be advertised via the [@COSA_CTRPG](#) Twitter account.

The missions of the CTRPG Executive Committee remain to continue our efforts to support cancer clinical trials research in Australia, improve outcomes for patients as well as enriching and supporting the critical clinical research workforce. Please feel free to contact any members of the CTRPG committee for help with any research queries. The contact details are available on the COSA [website](#), or you can contact us via Twitter. We look forward to the opportunity to meet and network with colleagues during the next face to face Annual Scientific Meeting in November 2022 in Brisbane.

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Exercise and Cancer Group

Exercise at COSA's 48th Annual Scientific Meeting

The Exercise Group was well represented at the 2021 COSA ASM with a number of excellent presentations. The conference themes 'Cancer care and research', 'Immunotherapy' and 'PROMS and PREMS' enabled exercise presentations to be showcased throughout the conference program. In particular, some key exercise-oncology oral presentations were given, including:

- **Exercise prehabilitation prior to cancer surgery – Favil Singh**
- **Multidisciplinary Prehab in Action: An Exercise, Nutrition and Psychology perspective – Anna Beaumont, Jess Crowe and Christina Prickett**

- **Do exercise oncology guidelines have to be met to obtain improvements in breast cancer outcomes? – Carolina X Sandler**
- **The Effects of Physical Exercise in the Palliative Care Phase for People with Advanced Cancer: A Systematic Review with Meta-Analysis – Kellie Toohey**
- **A randomised controlled trial investigating the ability for supervised exercise to reduce treatment-related decline in adolescent and young adult cancer patients – Claire Munsie**
- **Preventing Cancer-induced Muscle Loss Through Exercise and Nutrition – Robin Daly**
- **Co-designing Healthy Living after Cancer Online, an online nutrition, physical activity, and psychosocial intervention for post-treatment cancer survivors – Morgan Leske**

There were also many fantastic exercise-oncology poster presentations. Please check out the [conference website](#) for all the exercise related work presented at the ASM. Remember that if you registered for the 2021 COSA ASM, you have 12 months on-demand access to view the recordings of any presentations you missed or want to watch again!

COSA research update

During the 2019 ASM, members of the COSA Exercise Committee conducted a cross-sectional study that explored referral habits to exercise professionals and attitudes to exercise-based interventions. Secondary aims looked at individuals' fitness levels and the relationship between fitness and exercise referral habits. The study was set up and run during conference breaks at a booth sponsored by COSA, ESSA and the APA.

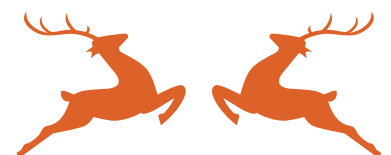
67 delegates completed the survey and 49 completed fitness assessments. 60 per cent of Oncology Health Professionals (OHP) met physical activity

guidelines and 92 per cent agreed that physical activity is important among cancer survivors to attenuate treatment-associated symptoms. Most understand the role of exercise physiologists (67 per cent) and physiotherapists (70 per cent) in cancer care. OHP believe exercise physiologists (54 per cent) and physiotherapists (22 per cent) are best placed to increase survivors' physical activity levels. Two-thirds of OHP were aware of the COSA Exercise and Cancer position statement, with 54 per cent referring patients to exercise professionals. 75 per cent of OHP had above-average aerobic fitness levels, although fitness was not associated with referrals to exercise professionals. OHP with higher self-perceived fitness were more likely to provide their own physical activity recommendations ($r=0.29$, $p=0.02$).

Overall, there was good awareness of the benefits of physical activity in cancer care among OHP. However, there remains a large proportion that do not refer patients to exercise professionals, despite good awareness of the COSA Exercise and Cancer position statement. Efforts should be focussed on implementing referral pathways from oncology centres to increase the number of active survivors.

Full reference: Physical activity referral patterns and physical fitness levels of Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) conference delegates. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology* (published 29 June 2021). onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/ajco.13594

Citation: Mizrahi D, Murnane A, Quinn S, Crowe J, Rosenbaum S, Adams, D, Atkinson M. Exercise recommendations and referral patterns of oncology professionals. *Asia-Pac J Clin Oncol.* 2021;1–8. doi.org/10.1111/ajco.13594



Publications update

There have been a number of exciting new papers in exercise-oncology published in 2021. This is a testament to the increasingly important role that is being recognised for prescribing exercise and supporting patients to become more physically active during and after treatment. Below is a small snapshot of some recent articles:

- **Effects of exercise on cancer treatment efficacy: a systematic review of preclinical and clinical studies.** Yeng et al. *Cancer Research* (published October 2021).
- **The benefits of exercise in cancer patients and the criteria for exercise prescription in cardio-oncology.** D'Ascenzi et al. *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology* (published July 2021).
- **Exercise for cancer cachexia in adults.** Grande et al. *Cochrane Library* (published 18 March 2021).
- **A Systematic Review of the Safety, Feasibility and Benefits of Exercise for Patients with Advanced Cancer.** De Lazzari et al. *Cancers* (published 6 September 2021).

Executive Committee Updates

This will be my last report as the Exercise and Cancer Group Chair as I will be stepping down from the role at the end of 2021. I have enjoyed my time on the Executive Committee over the past six years and past two and a half years as the Group's Chair. The opportunity to work with such a diverse and dynamic group of cancer clinicians all working towards the promotion of the role of exercise in cancer care in such a supportive organisation has been a real pleasure. Dr David Mizrahi, Research Fellow at the Daffodil Centre, has been appointed as the new Chair and I wish him all the very best. Also stepping down from the Executive Committee

is Dr Elysia Thornton-Benko as the GP representative. We have greatly appreciated the important perspective Elysia has brought to our work. Expressions of interest for new Executive Committee members will be circulated shortly and I highly encourage everyone with an interest and passion for exercise and cancer to apply.

The Exercise and Cancer Group welcomes new members and anyone with an interest in exercise to get involved in our projects. If you would like to participate in the Group's activities, please login to your member profile on the COSA website and either select Exercise as a COSA Group or Area of Interest. We encourage members from all discipline areas to participate in our Group.

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Geriatric Oncology Group

GO Education

We were very pleased to collaborate with CNSA to deliver a geriatric oncology focussed webinar series for our members. These five webinars were led by recognised leaders in geriatric oncology, who shared their expertise over a range of topics to help increase knowledge and provide practical guidance to enhance the critical skills required to advance care and improve outcomes for older adults affected by cancer. The webinars included sessions on optimising medicines, immunotherapy, the value of the multidisciplinary team in caring for the older person with cancer, screening

tools and identifying frailty in older adults, and an overview of the OlderCan resource and the Older and Wiser study. The webinar sessions were very well received, and recordings are available on our [website](#). I encourage you to catch up on this resource if you didn't have the chance to join a live session. We have more ideas for further webinars, and look forward to bringing you these in 2022.

We were very pleased to be involved with another geriatric oncology breakfast session at the 2021 COSA ASM – *Enhancing geriatric care in the lung cancer MDT*. Meera Agar, Polly Dufton, Divyanshu Dua, and Heather Lane discussed the impact of geriatrician involvement in the MDT on outcomes for patients with stage III unresectable NSCLC, shared their perspective on what best practice looks like when caring for geriatric patients, and shared insights into treatment and management considerations for the geriatric patient. If you registered for the 2021 COSA ASM you can access a recording of this session for the next 12 months.

GO Guidelines

We have continued our work developing the Australian Geriatric Oncology Guidelines, and are pleased with the level of engagement from a broad range of interdisciplinary clinicians from across Australia. Guidelines in progress include screening older adults for geriatric assessment, and guidelines for referring older adults with cancer for systemic anti-cancer therapy, surgery, and radiotherapy. If you would like to get involved and provide clinical input to this work or contribute to a paper, please get in touch.

GOEER – Geriatric Oncology Emerging Experts & Researchers

We are very pleased to provide a brief introduction to the GOEER working group, led by Michael Krasovitsky. GOEER is drawing together an interdisciplinary range of 'emerging experts and

researchers' from across Australia with an interest in geriatric oncology. They are investigating a range of projects and options to take forward, and are now linked with our GO Group. This initiative is in its early days, and we look forward to sharing more as plans develop, including details about opportunities to get involved with their work.

GO Survey and plans for 2022

We have been undertaking an environmental scan over the last few months to help us understand the landscape of geriatric oncology initiatives across the country – please complete this survey if you would like to help us build this data:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/RM3B6PN.

We hope this information will help us to offer more tailored opportunities to meet the needs of both emerging and more established geriatric oncology services, connect like-minded people who want to improve care and outcomes for older adults affected by cancer, and build a community of practice in geriatric oncology.

With a view of building geriatric oncology information and working towards a community of practice, we also think it could be timely to reactivate our research concept development project. This initiative was very successful several years ago, and helped us develop research capacity and collaborative networks. Clinicians and researchers submitted a synopsis of a clinical study they wanted to develop or test, and then workshops-by-teleconference were convened as a forum to provide mentorship, capacity building and collaborative peer review. We will be considering this experience and how we might adapt this process to provide opportunities for our members in the coming year.

Meera Agar

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Nutrition Group

As we head towards December and the end of 2021, the Nutrition Group welcomes the opportunity to reflect on the year that was and how everything went exactly according to plan. Right? Well, not exactly. Still, trying circumstances can't abate the enthusiastic and committed COSA Nutrition Group members who continued their efforts to strive for the best in cancer nutrition clinical care and research.

2021 Highlights

COSA ASM

The 2021 COSA ASM was again well-received with an outstanding nutrition content in this year's program showcasing some of our international and national leaders in cancer nutrition. Of note, presentations by Professor Vickie Baracos, an internationally recognised expert on the physiology and pathology of cancer-associated wasting of skeletal muscle, were a highlight for many. Five dietitians had abstracts accepted in various Best of the Best Oral Presentation sessions with many more in rapid fire and poster sessions. The integrated sessions highlighting nutrition as part of multidisciplinary care were also considered a strong point of the program. We wish to thank Jenelle Loeliger for her contribution to the ASM program committee and were delighted she also received the Dietitians Australia External Research Prize for her outstanding work listed below. We look forward to working with COSA again to deliver an equally strong nutrition content for the 2022 meeting in Brisbane.

Grants

- Associate Professor Nicole Kiss et al, Medical Nutrition Industry (€30,000), 'An intelligent online platform to predict adverse outcomes from cancer-related malnutrition using the GLIM criteria.'

- Dr Merran Findlay, Sydney Health Partners Research Translation Fellowship (\$130,000), 'Leading Better value Supportive CARE for patients with head and neck cancer (BEST CARE).'

Awards and prizes

- Dietitians Australia National Award of Merit – Jenelle Loeliger
- Dietitians Australia External Research Prize at COSA ASM – Jenelle Loeliger, 'How do we improve nutrition care and information for cancer patients? Exploration of patient, carer and health professional access, perceptions and practices: A mixed-methods study.'
- Australasian Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (AusPEN) ASM: David Russell Prize for Outstanding Clinical Service Enhancement Study – Irene Deftereos (PhD Candidate), 'Preoperative nutrition intervention and association with outcomes in Upper Gastrointestinal cancer resection: findings from the Australia wide NOURISH study.'
- Australia & New Zealand Head and Neck Cancer Society ASM: Best Oral Presentation (Allied Health & Nursing Category) – Merran Findlay, 'Nutritional status and skeletal muscle status in patients with head and neck cancer: Impact on outcomes and implications for practice.'

PhD Completion

- 2021 Dr Merran Findlay: 'New insights to cancer-related skeletal muscle depletion and malnutrition in patients with head and neck cancer', Faculty of Medicine & Health, The University of Sydney.

Malnutrition Week 1–4 October

We were pleased to partner with Dietitian Connection to contribute to a series of cancer nutrition education events and resources, including a

webinar with international sarcopenia expert Professor Jürgen Bauer and myself, plus the recording of two podcasts, the first of which, titled “An oncology patient’s perspective on nutrition”, can be heard [here](#). We thank the Dietitian Connection team, Dr Teresa Brown, and Chris Brady, Specialist Sports and Exercise Physiotherapist, who kindly shared his experience of nutrition care following a diagnosis of head and neck cancer.

In 2022, the Group aims to seek opportunities to promote and progress the implementation of the COSA Position Statement on Cancer-Related Malnutrition and Sarcopenia. Another key focus will be ongoing evidence synthesis to progress the update to the COSA evidence-based guidelines for nutritional management of adult patients with head and neck cancer. We have had several systematic reviews led by Associate Professor Judy Bauer, Dr Teresa Brown and myself published this year that will form the foundation for this planned update.

The Nutrition Group welcome new members and would love to hear from anyone interested in becoming involved with our projects and about opportunities for collaborating with other Groups where nutrition expertise can value-add to their initiatives.

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Psycho-Oncology Group

2021 has proven to be a very busy and productive year for all – irrespective of whether the focus has been clinical or research. Despite most of Australia having limitations on travel and extended periods of lockdown, we have found various opportunities to connect, such as at the recent Clinical Oncology Society of Australia Annual Scientific Meeting in November 2021. While I think we were all keen to meet in person in Melbourne, the organising committee, COSA team and event organisers delivered a virtual scientific meeting that was thought provoking and exciting. The themes for the ASM were PROMS and PREMS and Immunotherapy.

Associate Professor Lesley Stafford provided an expert psycho-oncology voice to the 2021 COSA ASM. The quality of oncology research and, in particular, psycho-oncology research was exceptional, with researchers covering a range of topics from the implementation of an online psycho-oncology intervention, to development of telehealth guidelines in psycho-oncology, and perspectives of stakeholders on the impact of COVID-19 on cancer service. We were all treated to the COSA Presidential Lecture delivered by Laureate Professor Peter Doherty on the Killer Defence.

A highlight of the COSA ASM 2021 for psycho-oncology was the announcement of the Psycho-oncology Awards. This year, the inaugural Professor Phyllis Butow New Investigator in Psycho-oncology Award was given to the very talented Dr Joanna Fardell for all of her achievements to date. The Melanie Price Psycho-oncology Award was awarded to Professor Gail Garvey for her significant contribution to psycho-oncology, in particular in Indigenous health.

Once again, we are hoping to meet in person in 2022 at the COSA ASM which

is going to be in Brisbane. Please feel free to get in contact.

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Regional and Rural Group

It has been another disruptive year for cancer clinicians, mostly on the Eastern seaboard but the shadow of COVID-19 lingers on all of us.

There has not been a great deal of specific activity from the R&R Executive Committee given the above pressures. However, I was delighted to attend the virtual 2021 COSA ASM and once again walked away with so many good ideas and data to ponder. I always try and glean a practice changing presentation that I can take back home with me to my patients. The Cancer Associated Thrombosis (CAT) education session hit this mark. Dr Simon Noble from the Marie Curie institution in England provocatively challenged us to do much more work around patient education for CATs. Soberingly more people die from a CAT than from a febrile neutropenic episode yet patients are rarely presented with information on how to detect a CAT and what treatments are available. He espoused the value of delivering the following YouTube video www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSlwFwhoFA4 to patients.

There was further sobering data on the impact of COVID-19 on the drop in diagnostic procedures and the consequences of this to up migration and increased cancer related deaths due to a delayed diagnosis. A *BMJ* systematic review demonstrated there were ten additional breast cancer deaths with a four week diagnostic delay. We must advocate to our health organisations that screening health care personnel (BreastScreen) are essential

workers and should not be re-deployed in future lock downs.

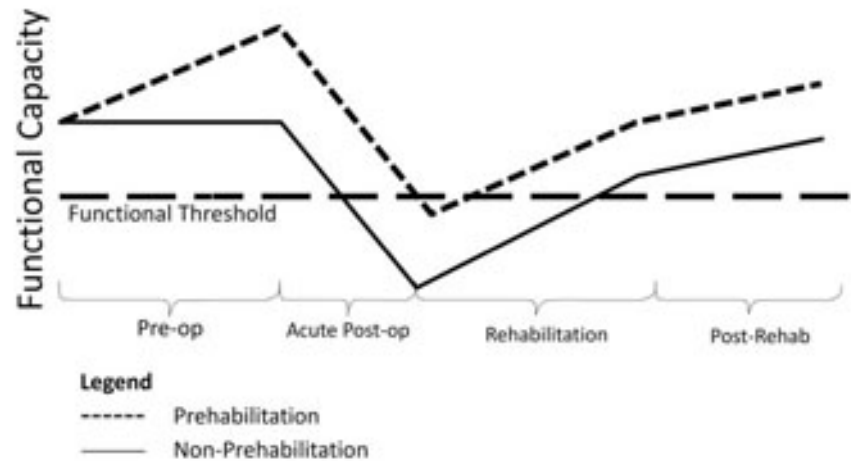
Lung Cancer screening was covered in some depth and it would appear we are not far away from adopting this into Australian clinical practice. This will require a huge effort from R&R members to help encourage “at risk” patients to present for their screening CT. International data is sobering that few eligible people are presenting for lung cancer CT screening. Also, we will need to advocate for increased resources (respiratory physicians and Cardiothoracic surgeons, and operating time) to handle the increase in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures that lung cancer screening will introduce. We all know that resources in public hospitals are already very stretched.

I found the sessions on Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) with Andrew Denton, a keynote speaker, very informative. This is a huge issue that our Victorian colleagues have shared their early experiences. It appears that most Australian jurisdictions will have a VAD bill passed in 2022 so I would recommend reviewing these fantastic sessions.

There was so much on telehealth, all of the pros and cons from patients and HCPs but I left these sessions with a telling quote from one of our brave patients who spoke about her cancer diagnosis and surgery in the midst of the pandemic. This was when staff were wearing full PPE at all times. Deborah ended her talk with this ... “At the end of the day, People Need People!” I suspect that telehealth doesn’t wholly deliver on this critical need of our patients.

There was a great session on the role of prehabilitation prior to cancer surgery which I would encourage members to watch. Dr Favil Singh from the Edith Cowan Exercise Medicine Research Institute portrayed a compelling case for embedding this service into cancer centres. It presents a window

Fig. 1. Conceptual model of generalized functional ability trajectory in patients undergoing prehabilitation compared with individuals prescribed rehabilitation only.



of opportunity to maximise physical, nutritional and psychological outcomes (see graph). It also is a great period of teachable moments to a vulnerable and worried patient.

Kate White presented her findings (**abstract #64**) from a prospective interventional RCT to reduce chemotherapy unplanned presentations to hospitals using a community nursing model. The implications for our regional and rural patients are obvious especially if a remote model could be adapted for our very remote patients.

I could not finish without a detailed summary of the abstracts presented in the session entitled, The Challenges of cancer care in rural and regional Australia – Challenges and Solutions. Our very own Executive Committee member Craig Underhill summarised the expansion of telehealth due to COVID-19. There were 3.4 million Telehealth consultations in Jul 2021 representing 20 per cent of all MBS services. Only 240k were using video, the remainder via telephone. It also presented new models of care including SURC (Symptom and Urgent Review Clinics), home based cancer care delivery, closest to home referrals, and sharing cancer workforce. I would also strongly recommend members check out this fantastic primer and learning

module from the VCCC (vccc Alliance.org.au/teletrials/online-modules/)

on explaining Teletrials, as it is a new model posted to expand into all rural territories shortly. Dr Ruth Jones presented the 10-year growth of cancer services in regional NSW with the key turning point being the employment of locally based medical oncologists and radiation services.

I wish all our COSA members a Merry Christmas and I hope many of you have that well deserved break to recharge for 2022.

References:

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2. Underhill C, et al. Towards new model of cancer care in Australia: lessons from Victoria’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. *IMJ*. DOI: [10.1111/imj.15012](https://doi.org/10.1111/imj.15012)

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Survivorship Group

The COSA Survivorship Group has enjoyed a productive second half of 2021. We were very pleased to see our Group so well represented at the 2021 COSA ASM, and congratulate the Convenor **Kate Webber** for delivering such a stimulating, high-quality program. Many of the topics were relevant to survivorship, and PROMs and PREMs were featured. Delegates have access to recordings for the next 12 months, so there is an opportunity to revisit or catch-up with these excellent presentations and discussions.

Survivorship research

A highlight of our year has been the success of the inaugural **COSA Survivorship Research Fellowships**. We offered this initiative to support our strategy to build capacity in survivorship research, and we are now exploring options to continue and sustain this initiative.

Fiona Crawford-Williams' project to establish research and infrastructure priorities for cancer survivorship in Australia has been accepted for publication in the journal *Supportive Care in Cancer*. In the meantime I encourage you to view and share her [summary of research priorities](#), to ensure that topics and areas are prioritised by researchers, funding bodies and other key stakeholders. Fiona also recently shared her work in an excellent presentation at the 2021 COSA ASM.

Carolyn Mazariego also delivered a presentation at the 2021 COSA ASM, and received a Best of the Best award for this work. Carolyn's project developed priority recommendations for the service level implementation of patient reported outcomes (PROs) into clinical cancer care, and a paper

is currently in press with the *Journal of Cancer Survivorship*. An overview is available [here](#), including a listing of the Top 5 most highly prioritised statements to consider when attempting to implement PROs into routine clinical cancer care practice.

Julia Morris undertook a review of current survivorship-focussed research in Australia. Having just returned from parental leave we now hope to support Julia to share this work.

Support from the Fellowship mentoring team has been integral to the success of this program, and we thank everyone for providing their time and expertise: Peggy Briggs, Ray Chan, Mahesh Iddawela, Michael Jefford, Bogda Koczwara, and Janette Vardy.

Educational opportunities

We have continued to deliver educational opportunities in cancer survivorship, through our collaborative webinars with the Australian Cancer Survivorship Centre, Cancer Council Victoria, and Cancer Nurses Society of Australia (CNSA). Our most recent webinar focussed on *the role nurses play integrating optimal survivorship care*. A further webinar, led by our Financial Toxicity working group in collaboration with CNSA will be held in December 2021, and will *challenge the misconception that nothing can be done to address financial toxicity*. The webinars have all received excellent feedback and contain valuable learnings, so if you didn't get a chance to attend, I encourage you to catch up via our [website](#). We are pleased that we'll be continuing our collaborations and developing new opportunities in 2022.

Group engagement

We thank our members who responded to our recent strategic planning survey, as these perspectives are very important to inform our future directions. We are very proud of the

Group's achievements against the 2019–21 Strategic Plan which can be viewed [here](#). We have recently drafted the 2022–24 strategic plan. We will seek feedback on these priorities from our membership and welcome any comments.

We recently consulted with the membership to refine the stated aim and main area of focus of the Group. While recognising that survivorship begins at diagnosis, "the overarching aim of the COSA Survivorship Group is to advance care and research to improve outcomes for all Australians *after initial treatment for cancer*." This slight change in wording more clearly recognises that some people are never cancer-free and that some never complete treatment.

We are pleased that that many of you were able to join us for our **Group AGM in November**, and were able to hear more about our work including from our various working groups:

Survivorship Policy working group (Chair Michael Jefford) and **Primary Care working group** (Chair Joel Rhee) – an initial working group focussed on more effectively integrating primary care in survivorship, but with the development of the Australian Cancer Plan (ACP) by Cancer Australia (CA), this was split into two groups: Primary Care (to inform the ACP regarding primary care across the cancer continuum); and Survivorship Policy (to inform survivorship considerations within the ACP). The Survivorship Policy working group has already provided preliminary input to CA, and we expect CA will lead broader consultation as the ACP develops.

PRO working group (Chair Bogda Koczwara) – as previously reported, the working group published its value proposition in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, which provides the foundation for an advocacy approach and outlines the principles of clinical use of PROs in cancer care. The working group

provided additional mentorship to Carolyn Mazariego's Fellowship (see above), and are now linked with a collaborative project to map national PRO activity across Australia.

Financial Toxicity working group

(Chair Ray Chan) – this working group's focus has been to define financial toxicity and map current activities; they are currently analysing results from their recent survey. Responses were sought from a broad representation of multidisciplinary health professionals to better understand current beliefs and practices regarding financial toxicity for cancer patients. These results will provide important information on the current context of financial toxicity in Australia, and will inform development of a consensus statement on agreed responsibilities in addressing financial toxicity.

At the Group's AGM I noted that I am handing over the role of Chair to our current Deputy, Ray Chan. Ray is an internationally-recognised leader in cancer survivorship. I have no doubt that the COSA Survivorship Group will continue to flourish under Ray's leadership, and I look forward to maintaining my connection with the Group including as Chair of the Survivorship Policy working group.

If you're not a member of the Survivorship Group, but would like to join, please do so! We keep in touch through regular [newsletters](#) and on Twitter ([@COSA_Surviv](#)). In 2022, we're also hoping to meet not only at the 2022 ASM, but also online. More on that in the new year...

Michael Jefford

Chair, Survivorship Group

Michael.Jefford@petermac.org



COSA Affiliated Organisation Reports

Australasian Gastro-Intestinal Trials Group



For 30 years the AGITG has conducted clinical trials in gastro-intestinal (GI) cancer to improve patient care, medical practice, and survival rates. The AGITG membership encompasses a wide range of medical specialists, scientists, nurses, allied health professionals and consumers involved in all aspects of GI cancer research. The group supports research through awards, grants, and events including the Annual Scientific Meeting. Members are also eligible for unique grant opportunities thanks to the fundraising efforts of the GI Cancer Institute, the community division of the AGITG working across Australia to raise funds for small-scale AGITG trials and raise awareness of GI cancer.

2021 Annual Scientific Meeting

The 23rd Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) boasted a record number of attendees, held virtually over four days, on 12–15 October 2021. Over 500 delegates joined the many workshops, presentations, panel discussions, award presentations and Q&A sessions. This ASM also marked a special occasion, commemorating the 30th anniversary of the AGITG, by recognising pioneers and looking to future leaders.

As always, an exciting part of our ASM is the AGITG Awards and Grants presentation. This also includes winners and runner ups from the ASM New Concepts Symposium and Best of Poster Session. Congratulations to the following winners:

- Western Health: AGITG Outstanding Site Award
- Joanne Parr: Christine Aiken Memorial Award for Excellence in AGITG Study Coordination
- Professor Nick Pavlakis: AGITG Member Fundraiser of the Year
- Associate Professor Tim Clay: Best of New Concepts (Winner)



- Dr Shehara Mendis: Best of New Concepts (Runner Up)
- Dr Kim Kennedy: Best of the Best Poster Award (Winner)
- Dr Andrew Parsonson: Best of the Best Poster Award (Runner Up)
- Professor Mark Smithers: John Zalcberg OAM Award for Excellence in AGITG Research
- Professor Niall Tebbutt: Gastric Cancer Research Grant (including Linitis Plastica)
- Professor Eva Segelov: Innovation Grant
- Dr Shehara Mendis: Innovation Grant

Thank you to all who attended, and we look forward to hosting another great ASM in 2022.

Latest Research News

Several trials have recently reached patient recruitment milestones and have now moved into analysis phase. The Australian-led, international TOPGEAR gastro-oesophageal trial and ASCOLT colorectal cancer trial both reached patient recruitment targets in June this year. The purpose of TOPGEAR is to investigate the benefit of adding radiation to chemotherapy (chemoradiotherapy) and surgery to treat and improve the overall survival in patients undergoing surgery for resectable stomach cancer. The ASCOLT study will evaluate the safety and effectiveness of low-dose aspirin compared to placebo in reducing recurrence of colorectal cancer and improving survival for patients with Dukes C and high-risk Dukes B colorectal cancer.

The FORECAST-1 trial team also reached their patient recruitment target in November this year. This trial aims to demonstrate the feasibility of utilising tumour organoids established from fresh tumour biopsies of metastatic colorectal cancer for high throughput drug testing to guide clinical decision

making. This trial received initial funding through the GI Cancer Institute-funded Innovation Grant, which is funded by the community through donations and the Gutsy Challenge.

Two more AGITG trials also recently closed. In August, the MONARCC colorectal cancer trial closed patient recruitment. This trial seeks to determine what the best initial treatment is for an elderly patient population, by studying the potential of using a 'lighter' chemotherapy regimen, 5-fluorouracil, together with the antibody treatment panitumumab. The MONARCC trial was awarded a GI Cancer Institute-funded Innovation Grant, and the trial team is thankful for the support the community has provided through the grant.

In September, the DYNAMIC-Rectal trial also closed to patient enrolment. This trial aims to show that ctDNA-based approach to adjuvant therapy will lead to substantially less patients receiving adjuvant therapy. If DYNAMIC-Rectal is successful, then there is greater potential for ctDNA analysis to one day become incorporated into patients' standard of care.

Patient enrolment for the NABNEC neuroendocrine carcinoma (NECs) cancer trial is closing soon, on 31 December 2021. The aim of this trial is to establish if carboplatin and nab-paclitaxel combination is an effective and tolerable chemotherapy treatment for grade 3 advanced gastrointestinal NECs, and to explore translational biologic, molecular and functional imaging endpoints to inform future research and improve outcomes for NEC patients.

There are currently 15 AGITG studies open to recruitment for people with colorectal, pancreatic, oesophageal and stomach cancer, and neuroendocrine carcinomas. Find out more at gicancer.org.au/opentrials

2022 Gutsy Challenges

The Gutsy Challenge community fundraising program raises vital funds for the Innovation Grant and we are thrilled to be hosting treks again in 2022.

The first trek will take place from 3–6 May 2022, where you can experience a stunning walk to the Twelve Apostles rock formations along the beautiful Victorian coastline. In this Gutsy Challenge led by Clinical Dietitian Belinda Steer, you will trek 46km of scenic coastline over four days. There are a handful of places remaining for the unique opportunity to challenge yourself.

From 27–30 May, fundraisers can also take on the Flinders Rangers Gutsy Challenge trek, led by our Board Member and former Chair, Professor Tim Price. Enjoy over 400km of some of the most dynamic outback landscapes in Australia. For those that want a one-day adventure, then join us on 8 October 2022 for a 15km Gutsy Challenge along the Grand Cliff Top Walk in the Blue Mountains, NSW.

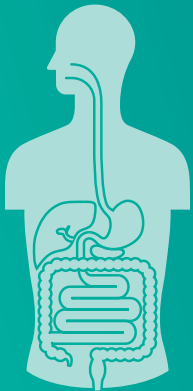
Take in some of the country's most iconic landmarks, and raise vital funds for GI cancer research. Find out more at gicancer.org.au/gutsy.

An invitation from Dr Lorraine Chantrill, AGITG Chair

The AGITG has a rich history of conducting practice changing clinical trials and cutting-edge translational research. We are a collaborative group that welcomes new ideas and out-of-the-box thinking.

I invite colleagues who are not currently members of the AGITG to join our Group. Our membership is strengthened by the range of specialists from varied disciplines including medical and radiation





Join the AGITG and help fight gastro-intestinal cancer

The Australasian Gastro-Intestinal Trials Group (AGITG) is a not-for-profit organisation that develops and conducts GI cancer research.

Become a member today to improve health outcomes for patients with gastro-intestinal cancer.



www.gicancer.org.au

oncologists, surgeons, data managers, research nurses, gastroenterologists, scientists, pathologists, statisticians, bioinformatics, radiologist, trial coordinators, consumers and allied health specialists.

Membership is free. To apply for membership visit gicancer.org.au/member-registration or to refer a colleague contact the Chief Executive Officer, Russell Conley at russell@gicancer.org.au.

Lorraine Chantrill
Chair, AGITG

Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group



The Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group (ALLG) held a virtual Scientific Meeting, 25–29 October, bringing ALLG Members, staff, and sponsors together as a blood cancer community. The event provided a full, in-depth haematology experience for all attendees, with valuable insights, information and exposure to the latest developments in Clinical Research. These Scientific Meetings help ALLG Members stay abreast of clinical practice updates, and are an ideal way to:

- Provide updates of current ALLG studies
- Present published data and opportunities for scientific discussion with colleagues
- Deliver ALLG Member support initiatives
- Develop new study ideas for ALLG scientific research working parties

By all accounts, the meeting was a great success, allowing our community to work virtually – yet together – through challenging times to continue delivering world-class clinical trials to better the lives of patients living with blood cancer.

Some of the week's sessions covered:

Scientific research Working Party Meetings and Plenary sessions – Lymphoma, Supportive Care, Laboratory Science; ALL, AML and MDS; Transplant Cell Therapies; CLL; Myeloma; CML & MPN.

The week featured a number of key local guest speakers, Prof Jeff Szer, Dr Phil Choi, Prof Con Tam, Prof Monica Slavin, Dr Tim Cutfield, Dr Brendan Beaton, Prof Stessswart Dunn, and international specialists:

- Prof Charles Craddock, Academic Director of the Centre for Clinical Haematology, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, UK, and Professor of Haemato-oncology, at the University of Birmingham – presented at the Transplant Cell Therapies session, on the MRD in AML transplant trials.
- Prof Pierre Fenaux, Hospital Saint-Louis, Paris, France – presented at the CML & MPN session, on the potential role of arsenic trioxide in myeloid malignancies.



- Prof Adele Fielding, University College London Hospital, UK – presented at the AML/MDS/ALL session, on current UK ALL trials and future plans.
- Dr Beth Phillips, Senior Clinical Lecturer and Consultant Haematologist, based at The Christie Hospital and University of Manchester – presented at the Lymphoma session, on RADAR protocol development, rationale, design and progress to date.
- Dr Annalisa Ruggeri, Senior Physician, Hematology and Bone Marrow Transplant Unit at San Raffaele Scientific Institute, Milano, Italy – presented at the Transplantation Cell Therapies’ session, on GVHD prophylaxis and use of the registry for prospective research.
- Prof Arnaud Jaccard, Head of Hematology Department, University Hospital of Limoges, France – presented at the Myeloma session, on current treatment of AL amyloidosis.
- A/Prof Suzanne Trudel, Consultant, Department of Medical Oncology and Haematology, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and A/Prof, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto and Clinician Scientist, Ontario Cancer Institute – presented at the Laboratory Science session, on Non-invasive and personalised testing for MRD in myeloma.

Some other highlights...

Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, The Hon. Greg Hunt gave the welcome address and talked about Government Health directions. ALLG Members were pleased to see Government commit \$300k for the continuance of the National Action Plan for Blood Cancer Taskforce Steering Committee. The ALLG will develop Optimal Care

Pathways for the major blood cancer subtypes – Acute Myeloid Leukaemia and Hodgkin and Diffuse large B Cell lymphoma.

ALLG’s Trial Office leaders presented two professional development programs specific to clinical trial site staff, research nurses and trial coordinators.

A session on COVID-19 *Haematology Considerations* provided important information for members to best manage their patients in the pandemic.

Clinical Psychologist Stewart Dunn spoke at a session on *Supporting a Workforce Under Pressure* about the strain on health care and the workforce. This has been particularly important considering pandemic pressures on hospital trial site staff and clinicians.

There was a dedicated session on ALLG’s National Blood Cancer Registry (NBCR). The NBCR holds the largest collection of leukaemia data and samples in Australia and is an integral part of ALLG’s research program. The Registry has now surpassed 2,500 participants, further cementing the NBCR as Australia and New Zealand’s largest collection of real-world data on AML, MDS, ALL, and some uncommon types of lymphoma.

ALLG’s Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) held a special session to engage more with early career clinician researchers. The ALLG will launch an initiative in 2022 to assist more trainees and fellows and increase representation of early career members at the leadership level

– including Associate trainees or full ALLG members or Advanced trainees, fellows and junior consultants.

ALLG’s next Scientific Meeting will be held in Melbourne, 9–13 May 2022

The FY21 year has been an exciting one for blood cancer research and ALLG was pleased to report at the AGM positive results in the number of trials, new trials and increase in patient participation in clinical trials.

See the 2021 ALLG Annual Review available for download at www.allg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/allg-annual-review-2021-final-web.pdf

**Delaine Smith
CEO, ALLG**



Australia and New Zealand Sarcoma Association



The Australia and New Zealand Sarcoma Association (ANZSA) team has had another busy half of the year with many positive developments and results. Here are some of the key updates for the second half of 2021.

ANZSA ASM 2021

While it was unfortunate that we were unable to organise a face-to-face Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) for the second year in a row due to COVID-19, we were grateful that over 180 local and international delegates were able to join us virtually via Zoom Webinar.

The ASM 2021 theme was “Coming together”, and we were honoured to have five esteemed international sarcoma specialists deliver their talks to our delegates.

The ASM kicked off with an excellent presentation by Dr Alda Tam, Professor in the Department of Interventional Radiology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Centre, who presented on interventional techniques for soft tissue and desmoid ablation.

Dr Sebastian Foersch from the Institute of Pathology, University Medical Centre Mainz, gave a very interesting talk on the use of artificial intelligence in pathology for diagnosis and survival prediction in soft tissue sarcoma.

This was followed by an engaging orthopaedic session which featured The Great Debate on “old school vs new technology in orthopaedic surgery” by orthopaedic surgeons Dr Gerard Powell and Dr Richard Boyle.

Our keynote session for Day 1 was delivered by Prof Michiel van de Sande, Professor in Orthopaedic (paediatric) oncology in the Leiden University Medical Centre (LUMC), who spoke about personalised care from an orthopaedic perspective.

Day 2 of our ASM started with “The Professor Martin Tattersall Lecture”, delivered by Dr Jeffrey Toretsky, chief of MedStar Georgetown University Hospital’s Division of Paediatric, Adolescent, and Young Adult Haematology/Oncology. This plenary lecture was named in honour of the late Prof Martin Tattersall AO, whose work and leadership was crucial to ANZSA and the sarcoma community.

Dr Toretsky’s gave a wonderful talk on his lifelong work titled: “From design on a napkin to a clinical trial: a 20-year quest to improve survival for Ewing sarcoma patients”.

Throughout the two ASM days, we had local sarcoma specialists from various disciplines and researchers sharing case studies. We also had robust discussions on patient’s involvement and perspectives when it comes to treatment and life after treatment.

We thank all our ASM sponsors, organising committee, speakers and delegates (local and international) for making this year’s virtual ASM a success.

Successful MRFF Grant for STRASS 2 Trial

ANZSA Director and specialist surgical oncologist at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, A/Prof David Gyorki and his team have successfully received a grant worth almost AUD\$1 million from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) under the Rare Cancers, Rare Diseases and Unmet Need (RCRDUN) scheme.

The grant is to run the international trial in Australia – “A randomised phase III study of neoadjuvant chemotherapy followed by surgery versus surgery alone for patients with High Risk RetroPeritoneal Sarcoma (STRASS 2)”.

Eligible Australian patients with retroperitoneal sarcoma at high risk of recurrence will be able to participate in this randomised controlled trial designed to answer the question of whether preoperative chemotherapy improves outcome for patients.

Milestone Achieved for the SARC032 Trial

We are really pleased to share that the SARC032 clinical trial led by ANZSA Director, Prof Angela Hong, has now recruited 28 patients across Australia. She notes that this is the first randomised trial of combining radiation therapy with immunotherapy for localised soft tissue sarcoma patients. If the combination therapy is proven to be of benefit, it will be a landmark practice-changing trial.

Merry
Christmas

ANZSA Sarcoma Research Grant 2021

We are proud to announce that our annual ANZSA Sarcoma Research Grant has been awarded to the following two recipients:

1. Dr Fernando Guimaraes from The University of Queensland Diamantina Institute on his research to develop a natural killer cell-based immunotherapy for rhabdomyosarcoma (RMS).
2. Dr Vijesh Vaghjiani from the Hudson Institute of Medical Research for his research on targeting oncogenic drivers in therapy-resistant osteosarcoma.

Read more about their research on our website (www.sarcoma.org.au/news/news). The ANZSA Sarcoma Research Grants were funded by the Kicking Goals For Xav Foundation, Stoney's Steps, Hannah's Chance Foundation and ANZSA through our many generous individual donors.

ANZSA Strategic Plan 2022–2024

We are pleased to announce that our ANZSA Strategic Plan 2022–2024 has been launched. You can download it from our website [here](#). We are grateful for the involvement of various internal stakeholders such as ANZSA members, the scientific advisory committee (SAC), the consumer advisory panel (CAP) and the orthopaedic committee for their input.

Sarcoma Awareness Month

ANZSA recognises July as Sarcoma Awareness Month. As the national peak body for the sarcoma community, we want to lead the sarcoma narrative through a nationwide awareness campaign.

This year's theme was "You're not alone. Let's make sarcoma known!"

A highlight of this year's Sarcoma Awareness Month was the continued collaborations with key partners/ stakeholders to promote sarcoma awareness through a series of webinars. We thank Cooper Rice-Brading Foundation, Rare Cancers Australia, Sock it to Sarcoma and the Victorian Cancer Comprehensive Centre for their partnership in delivering these webinars. You can view the webinars [here](#).

Denise Caruso
CEO, ANZSA

Australia New Zealand Gynaecological Oncology Group



Improving life for
women through
cancer research

iPRIME reaches recruitment target

iPRIME is an ovarian cancer clinical trial, part of **ANZGOG's OASIS Initiative**, that tests how safe and effective the combination treatment of durvalumab and tremelimumab with standard chemotherapy can be as a treatment for newly diagnosed patients with ovarian, fallopian tube or peritoneal cancers.

The study has reached its patient participation target, recruiting a total of 75 patients from 10 sites in Australia.

"This important Australian trial is one of the first studies internationally to examine dual immunotherapy with chemotherapy. This sort of research

is not possible without the support and preservation of patients and their support networks. Overall, we hope that the results may increase the knowledge about the role of immunotherapy and help design future clinical trials to build on the knowledge from existing evidence."

– Principal Investigator, Assoc Prof Tarek Meniawy

To find out more about ANZGOG's clinical trials, click [here](#).

ANZGOG's HyNOVA trial opens to recruitment

The HyNOVA study has officially opened to recruitment after activating its first site, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and Royal Women's Hospital. Researchers of the study are seeking 80 participants at five sites across Australia, with Chris O'Brien Lifehouse/ Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Mater Hospital to be activated next.

HyNOVA is a randomised study comparing hyperthermic and normothermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy, following interval cytoreductive surgery for stage III epithelial ovarian, fallopian tube and primary peritoneal cancer. HyNOVA aims to determine the efficacy of heat during ovarian cancer surgery and chemotherapy.

The ANZGOG study is in collaboration with the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre, at the University of Sydney, and funded by the Medical Research Future Fund.

Principal Investigator A/Prof Rhonda Farrell explains the study [in this video](#).

ANZGOG Annual Scientific Meeting 2022

We are 'quietly excited' that for the first time in 2 years we can meet F2F in Melbourne for **ANZGOG's ASM 2022** on 23–26 March 2022. It will be a wonderful time for ANZGOG researchers, many

who have not seen once another since 2019 (excluding virtually).

The theme for this hybrid meeting is “Pathways to Precision Care”. We will explore the pathways from translational research into clinical trials; review how molecular profiles and genetics are shaping the management of ovarian and endometrial cancer; and how we can optimise patient care.

We are pleased to announce our distinguished international speakers:

- **Prof Anna Fagotti** (*Gynaecological Oncologist, Policlinico A. Gemelli Foundation, Rome, Italy*)
- **Prof David Gaffney** (*Radiation Oncologist, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, USA*)
- **Dr Ana Oaknin** (*Medical Oncologist, Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology, Barcelona, Spain*)

ANZGOG's Annual Scientific Meeting brings together national and international experts in gynaecological medicine, radiation and surgical oncology, pathology, basic scientists, translational and quality of life researchers, study coordinators and nurses, as well as our partners in the pharmaceutical industry.

The meeting enables attendees to learn about the latest developments in gynaecological cancer and provides education and capacity building opportunities amongst members and industry personnel. The Pure Science Symposium is the forum for scientists to learn about the cutting-edge research and developments in the pre-clinical and translational space. The meeting is attended by over 300 delegates (close to a third of ANZGOG membership).

Early bird registration is now open, closing Friday, 31 December 2021.

Abstract and Concept submissions are now open for presentation at the ASM 2022, deadline – Monday, 31 January 2022.



ANZGOG trial update

ANZGOG currently has more trials in operation, in development and in its pipeline than ever before:

ANZGOG clinical trials open to recruitment:

- 9 ovarian cancer (IGNITE, VIP, ECHO, ICON9, SOLACE2, STICs AND STONES, TIPs, EMBRACE, HyNOVA)
- 1 endometrial cancer (AtTEnd)

ANZGOG clinical trials in start-up:

- 1 ovarian and endometrial cancer (PARAGON II)
- 1 endometrial (ADELE)
- 1 cervical (ITTACc)
- 1 QoL/End of life study (PEACE)

For more information on ANZGOG's trials, [please visit our website](#).

20 Years of Improving Life for Women – Part One (2000–2010)

In celebration of our 20-year anniversary, ANZGOG is pleased to share the commemorative publication: *20 Years Improving Life for Women Through Cancer Research, Part One*.

This first part, representing the first 10 years of our organisation, reflects on the great contributions of many key people around ANZGOG. The document includes stories on the beginnings of ANZGOG, our early local and global collaborations, and clinical trials conducted in this period with investigator commentary.

Part two will tell the story of ANZGOG's second decade, covering the years 2010–2020, and will be released in early 2022.

We hope you enjoy taking a trip down memory lane and reading this reflection of ANZGOG's proud history.

[View the online report here](#)

ANZGOG's Survivors Teaching Students program launches in New Zealand

Survivors Teaching Students® (STS), a consumer-led, ground-breaking education program, has commenced in New Zealand.

STS is a volunteer program that brings the faces and voices of ovarian and other gynaecological cancer survivors and caregivers into the classrooms of health professional students, educating them on women's experiences with the diseases.

A small but passionate team of STS volunteers has assembled in New Zealand to bravely share their stories with the next generation of health professionals with the aim of raising awareness of gynaecological cancer symptoms and the importance of good health communication.

The program is going from strength to strength, with 100+ volunteers delivering 33 education sessions this year to just short of 2,000 students. STS is always looking for more survivors to join the team. Please refer patients to [our website](#) for more information on the program.

'Honour Her' Campaign launched in Gynaecological Cancer Awareness Month

Honour Her brings together Australian artists and the public to raise funds for gynaecological cancer research and honour women affected by these cancers. It is part of ANZGOG's fundraising and outreach activity through **WomenCan**, our fundraising arm.

Artists, both renowned and emerging, were invited to donate works of art inspired by and in support of women impacted by gynaecological cancers. Works were exhibited via a virtual gallery and an online auction alongside the personal artist's story and reason for contributing to the cause. Supporters could purchase a work of art in the virtual gallery, bid on a powerful piece of art in the online auction or make a donation, knowing that a portion of the proceeds would fund pioneering gynaecological cancer research to improve life for women. Of the 46 artists taking part in the virtual gallery 40 per cent had been touched by one of the gynaecological cancers.

Conducted during the COVID-19 lockdown in NSW and Victoria, the campaign achieved very high media penetration and generated considerable

interest. 95 per cent of art works were sold. We are grateful for the community's support and look forward to bigger engagement in 2022's campaign.

Philip Beale
Chair, ANZGOG

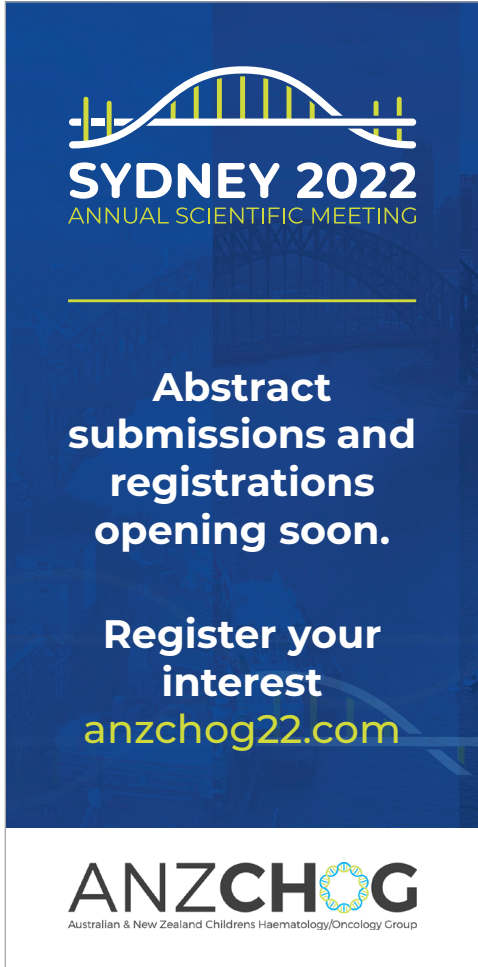
Australian and New Zealand Children's Haematology Oncology Group

ANZCHOG
Australian & New Zealand Childrens Haematology/Oncology Group

ANZCHOG's Annual Scientific Meetings

ANZCHOG held our first-ever virtual Annual Scientific Meeting in June 2021. With a range of international and national speakers, it was a huge success with on-demand streaming available after the conference. It was a great effort from our local organising committee based at Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

We are excited to be returning to an in-person meeting in Sydney in 2022. The local organising committee from Sydney Children's Hospital is developing a diverse program, showcasing the best and latest Australian and New Zealand paediatric oncology research. We are currently finalising the meeting details, with updates available at [anzchog2022.com](#)



SYDNEY 2022
ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

**Abstract
submissions and
registrations
opening soon.**

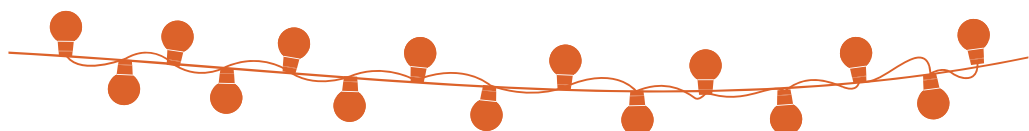
**Register your
interest**
[anzchog22.com](#)

ANZCHOG
Australian & New Zealand Childrens Haematology/Oncology Group

COVID-19 Vaccination Guidance

ANZCHOG has worked in close consultation with paediatric infectious disease experts, paediatric immunologists, cardiologists and consumers to develop guidance for children (12 years and older) undergoing cancer treatment and children with non-cancerous blood disorders.

Our current vaccine recommendations can be found [here](#) on ANZCHOG's website.



ANZCHOG Clinical Trial Highlights:

We continue to grow our clinical trial portfolio, providing more trial options for children diagnosed with cancer. A complete list can be found here on our [ANZCHOG website](#). Here are a few recent highlights:

NORTH Trial: A phase II study of Panobinostat in Paediatric, Adolescent and Young Adults with Solid Tumours including Neuroblastoma, Osteosarcoma, Malignant Rhabdoid Tumour/Atypical Teratoid Rhabdoid Tumours. In an ANZCHOG first, this Australian-developed trial has now opened at an overseas centre, with patients from the Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center (Duke University, North Carolina) eligible for recruitment.

TINT: A phase II study of trametinib in paediatric, adolescent and young adult patients with Neurofibromatosis type 1 associated plexiform neurofibromas or progressive optic pathway gliomas. Developed by Australian and New Zealand clinicians, we have activated this trial at more children's cancer centres to enhance access to trametinib, a promising agent that is not readily available to these children outside the TINT trial.

International brain cancer trial consortia: We continue to build our collaborative relationships with leading international brain cancer clinical trial consortia. This has led to a marked increase in brain cancer trials available to children in Australia and New Zealand, and with a number of trials in development, we anticipate that trial options will continue to rise in the future.

INTER-EWING- 1: INTERNATIONAL scientific program in clinical research to improve outcomes of newly diagnosed EWING sarcoma – trial 1. INTER-EWING-1 is our most recent trial collaboration with the University of Birmingham. This trial will examine

optimising a number of key treatment points for newly-diagnosed Ewing sarcoma patients. We are pleased to collaborate with ANZSA to open this trial in adult cancer centres to enable access for older patients.

FaR-RMS: Frontline and Relapse Study in RhabdomyoSarcoma Study. This overarching trial is open to patients of all ages and stages of diseases, and has been activated at five Australian and ones New Zealand centres. To ensure more Australian and New Zealand patients can access this trial, we are again partnering with ANZSA to open FaR-RMS in adult centres.

Nick Gottardo
Chair, ANZCHOG

Australian and New Zealand Urogenital & Prostate Cancer Trials Group



As 2021 draws to a close, ANZUP reflects on the challenges and achievements we have seen throughout the year. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic still impacting the world, ANZUP trials continue to recruit, and we have a number of trials in development.

We have seen many achievements in the past six months including:

- Our **DASL-HiCaP** (ANZUP 1801) trial has reached close to 350 patients recruited, and over this time activated sites and recruited patients

across the USA, Canada and Ireland, and soon in the UK

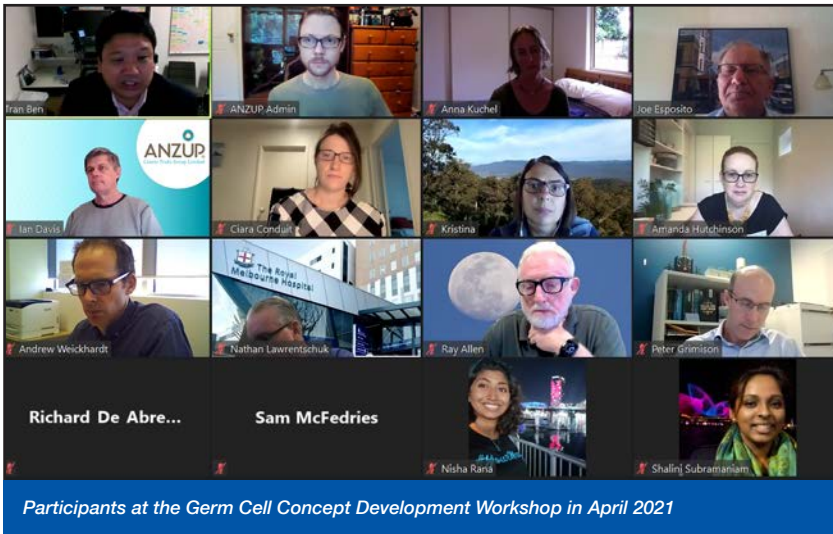
- **BCG+MM** (ANZUP 1301) recruited its first international patient in the UK
- **ENZA-p** (ANZUP 1901) recruited their 100th patient, well over 50% recruitment
- **UNICAB** (ANZUP 1802) reached 50% recruitment

As well as our pipeline of trials, we also have a number soon to open including:

- **GUIDE** (ANZUP 1903): A randomised non-comparative phase II study (with feasibility run-in) will assess the utility of plasma mGSTP1 to guide intermittent docetaxel treatment versus continuous (standard of care) docetaxel (Kate Mahon)
- **RAMPART** (ANZUP 1606): An international investigator-led phase III multi-arm multi-stage multi-centre randomised-controlled platform trial of adjuvant therapy in patients with resected primary renal cell carcinoma (RCC) at high or intermediate risk of relapse (Ian Davis)
- **CLIMATE** (ANZUP 1906): Assessing the Clinical utility of miRNA-371 as a marker of residual disease in Stage 1 Testicular Germ Cell Tumour, following orchidectomy (Ben Tran)
- **EVOLUTION** (ANZUP 2001): Evaluating niVolumab LUTetium and Ipilimumab in prOstate carcinoma (Shahneen Sandhu)

During 2021 we continued with our Concept Development Workshops (CDW), albeit virtually. We held six CDW's in 2021, and this is where many of the seeds for ANZUP clinical trials are first sown.





Participants at the Germ Cell Concept Development Workshop in April 2021

Once again, in view of COVID-19, our #ANZUP21 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) took the format of a two-day hybrid event working with local hubs and an interactive virtual meeting platform. With a superb international and national faculty, over 400 delegates heard the latest in GU cancer treatment and research, as well as an update on existing and planned ANZUP trials.

Our stellar international faculty included Alison Birtle, Chris Sweeney, Chris Parker, Heather Payne, Sima Porten, Eli Van Allen, Matt Galsky and Bertrand Tombal.

The program kicked off with our **Nurses and Allied Health session** chaired by Kath Schubach and Natasha Roberts, and this virtual workshop included updates on nurse-led research and explored the challenges faced when undertaking nursing research.

We saw the return of the ever-popular **Multidisciplinary (MDT) Masterclass** featuring short, sharp cases across prostate, kidney, penile and testicular cancer. These sessions stimulated excellent discussion and “chat” between the expert panellists and attendees.

The first international session themed **‘Clearer Vision’** was chaired by Bertrand Tombal and saw outstanding



presentations and discussions from Chris Parker, Heather Payne and Alison Birtle.

Day two of the ASM began with another stellar line up of international guests. Led by Professor Chris Sweeney, together with Eli Van Allen, Matt Galsky and Sima Porten, they discussed personalised medicine and their vision for the future of genitourinary oncology.

The **ANZUP Symposium** chaired by Haryana Dhillon brought together a panel who shared work they are undertaking to address **‘Disparities in Cancer Care’** – with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Gail Garvey, presented on “What do we know about survivorship

needs of Indigenous people in Australia?” This gave a marvellous insight into how Indigenous people in Australia experience cancer care. Daniel Lindsay followed with an update on his research, “Out of pocket costs of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people with prostate cancer,” generating much discussion about potential causes of these differences. Finally, Dorothy Keefe shared with us “What Cancer Australia is doing to improve cancer outcomes in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people.” She showcased a range of resources now available to support cancer care health

professionals working with Indigenous people. Dorothy encouraged the audience to consider what they could do to help address these disparities, suggesting that we start by asking people if they are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in our daily practice. Only then can we connect people to culturally appropriate health support services that may better meet their needs.

The event also featured summaries of current ANZUP trials as well as ‘what’s next’, a virtual poster discussant room, Below the Belt Research Fund Awards, Best of the Best awards and closed with an entertaining crossfire debate, ‘No time to lose: to improve survival we can’t wait for data on overall survival’, given by David Pryor and Dave Pook.

Our 2022 ASM is being held in Adelaide from 10–12 July, with the convening committee, ably led by Andrew Weickhardt, already hard at work pulling together an exciting world-class program. Our theme for 2022 is **“No Longer On Mute”**. Save the date and we look forward to seeing you there in person!

ANZUP's trial portfolio continues to grow. We currently have eight ANZUP-led and two co-badged trials in recruitment, and we have another four trials due to open for recruitment shortly.

Due to COVID-19 we had to again cancel both our Melbourne and Sydney Pedalthon events for 2021, and we held our second virtual Below the Belt #YourWay Challenge during the month of May. We saw 146 challengers and 31 teams run, walk, cycle and swim 18,976kms and 638 hours across Australia, New Zealand, UK and beyond, and raise \$75,000 for ANZUP's clinical trial research via the Below the Belt Research Fund, to support the important work of ANZUP's clinicians and researchers.

Our ANZUP 2021 Annual Report was released in June, reflecting on our activities and achievements over the past year. The report is a great showcase of the tireless commitment our members, supporters and wider ANZUP community to improve outcomes for below the belt cancer patients. You can read the report online here: anzup.org.au/annual-reports/.

We continue to publish biannually our consumer magazine A little below the belt. This magazine is full of information about what ANZUP does, how we do it, and how the community supports us. The latest edition is available online: anzup.org.au/a-little-below-the-belt/.

Our membership base is now close to 2,000, and these people all take time out of their busy work and personal lives to help support ANZUP and make a difference to the lives of people affected by GU cancers.

As always, we are grateful to our dedicated and committed membership for their ongoing support and contributions to ANZUP, despite the many personal and professional challenges that we have all faced this year.

Ian Davis
Chair, ANZUP

Breast Cancer Trials



New Board Chair



New Board Chair, Professor Sunil Lakhani

Professor Sunil Lakhani has been elected to the position of Chair of the Breast Cancer Trials (BCT) Board of Directors. Professor Lakhani was elected to the Board in July 2017. He is the Executive Director of Research and Senior Staff Specialist at Pathology Queensland and Head of the Breast Group, Centre for Clinical Research, University of Queensland, Brisbane.

43rd Annual Scientific Meeting

The Breast Cancer Trials 43rd Annual Scientific Meeting will be held from 27–29 July 2022 in Melbourne, Australia.

As a result of COVID-19 we were unable to host a meeting in 2020 and held the first virtual ASM in 2021. So in 2022, we look forward to an in person meeting, offering the opportunity for researchers, BCT members and staff from participating institutions to re-connect.

The 2022 ASM will host several internationally renowned guest speakers, including Professor Ann Partridge from Harvard Medical School and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in the United States, and key BCT researchers. Delegates include leading Australian and New Zealand medical practitioners and clinicians, and clinical trials management personnel.

The program will include two days of scientific sessions covering timely reviews of breast cancer clinical trials, discussion of new protocols, future clinical trials research and other research developments.

To find out more, visit www.breastcancertrials.org.au.

Inclusion & Diversity in Clinical Trials

BCT has a range of resources in different languages, and for First Nations and Maori communities, to help explain the role of clinical trials and the benefits of participating in this research. Copies of these brochures are available on the [BCT website](https://www.breastcancertrials.org.au) and free copies can be ordered through media@bctrails.org.au. We have also created a number of animations to explain clinical trials and participating in trials, available on the BCT [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).

Sunil Lakhani
Chair, Breast Cancer Trials



PaCCSC & CST Annual Research Forum 2022 | Clinical trials: new priorities

17 & 18 March 2022 | uts.edu.au/paccsc-cst-forum-2022

Cancer Symptom Trials & Palliative Care Clinical Studies Collaborative



Cancer
Symptom
Trials (CST)



Palliative Care
Clinical Studies
Collaborative (PaCCSC)

Overview

I am pleased to report that CST has received an additional 6 months of funding from Cancer Australia, so we are well into implementing our deliverables up to the end of the year. In addition to this funding support, Cancer Australia have advised that CST will be invited to apply through the Support for Cancer Clinical Trials grant round for 2.5 years of funding commencing 1 January 2022, bringing CST in line with the funding provided to all the Cancer Cooperative Trials Groups (CCTG) supported by Cancer Australia. We are pleased to join as the 14th CCTG and grateful for

this recognition from our funding partner and the support shown by our governance and members in general, the other CCTGs, along with all the staff on the CST team.

The PaCCSC and CST Annual Research Forum is scheduled for 17 and 18 March 2022. We are pleased to announce that our keynote speaker is Associate Professor Hsien Seow, the Canada Research Chair in Palliative Care and Health System Innovation at McMaster University and Director of the ICES-McMaster site. Associate Professor Seow was a plenary speaker at OPCC 2021, and we are delighted to give our members this opportunity to hear from him directly at the Forum.

Delphi study

We have reached the third phase of our Delphi study for cancer symptoms and treatment research priority setting. We are thankful for the participation of the consumers who responded to the surveys and attended our focus groups. Their generosity in sharing their experience as people with cancer and their carers is essential in ensuring the research we conduct is focussed on treating the symptoms that are most troublesome.

We are in the process of scheduling a focus group for healthcare professionals who responded to the surveys. We look forward to sharing the results of this important work in 2022.

ASPERT launches pancreatic cancer survey



Cancer Symptom Trials (CST), the University of Otago Department of Medicine and Nurse Maude Hospice are working in collaboration as the ASPERT Research Group to address the perceived lack of access to Pancreatic Enzyme Replacement Therapy (PERT) by people with pancreatic cancer in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia.

We want to understand the prescribing of and compliance with PERT by investigating current practices in both countries with a view to highlighting the current gaps.

We have launched a survey of people with pancreatic cancer in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. The goal of the survey is to help us identify better access to treatments for all New Zealanders and Australians with pancreatic cancer. Find out more about ASPERT and get the link to the survey at www.uts.edu.au/asper.

New leadership for PaCCSC

In September, we farewelled the PaCCSC founding Chief Investigator, Professor David Currow. Under David's leadership, PaCCSC commenced in

2006 in response to a request from the Department of Health and Ageing for the research needed to support the continued development of evidence-based clinical practice in palliative care. PaCCSC was the world's first and remains the largest palliative care clinical research collaborative.

Under David's leadership, the PaCCSC national and international membership has continued to grow to over 250 members, who have developed a strong program of clinical research, including a number of new trials currently in start-up. We wish David all the best for his new role as Deputy Vice Chancellor (Health and Sustainable Futures) at the University of Wollongong.

Our new Co-Chairs, Associate Professor Brian Le and Dr Tim Lockett, will bring fresh ideas and a new vision for PaCCSC, while building on our track record of conducting high-quality clinical research to achieve better outcomes for our patient population. Brian and Tim bring valuable experience and insights that complement the collaborative nature of our work. We look forward to working with Brian and Tim in a new phase for PaCCSC.

Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Fellow success for health

PaCCSC Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Dr Mariana de Souza e Sousa, is one of thirteen early-career researchers to have been awarded the UTS **Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship**.

Recipients of the scheme have a four-year appointment, project funding of \$50,000 and a range of other benefits.

Mariana's project, *Building multidisciplinary capacity to deliver quality cancer cachexia care*, will deliver a competency-based education and training framework (CAXcare), to support health care professionals to make timely diagnoses and provide best-practice cancer cachexia care in Australia.

Congratulations to Mariana and to the all the award recipients.

IMPACCT Rapid Program

Welcome to new Rapid Chair, Dr Caitlin Sheehan

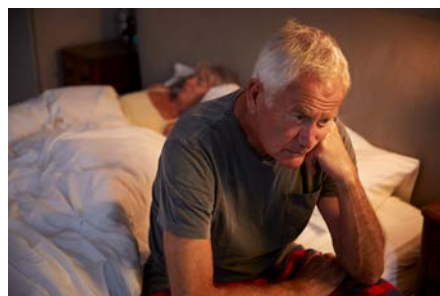
We are pleased to introduce Dr Caitlin Sheehan as the new Chair of the UTS Rapid Program Management Team.

Caitlin is a clinician and researcher at Calvary Kogarah in New South Wales. She has been part of the Rapid management team for the last two years and continues to contribute to important opportunities to further develop this international interdisciplinary quality improvement program.

Caitlin will bring her energy and vision to this role and Rapid will continue to grow under her leadership along with the support from clinicians across the world in leading this large program of work.

Palliative care and sleep – launch of the first two sleep series

For lots of people, sleep doesn't come easily, or if they do get to sleep, they wake during the night. Particularly in palliative care, this can be incredibly problematic. Working to understand sleep, how we sleep, and how we can improve sleep is really important for the quality of care that we offer people.



We are pleased to announce our first two sleep series, *Melatonin for insomnia*, and *Temazepam for insomnia*, both led by Dr Ruwani Mendis, Palliative Care Physician at Western Health in Melbourne.

Insomnia impacts physical, psychological, and social aspects of life. Improving sleep using safe, effective, and accessible pharmacotherapy is a tangible way to improve quality of life for people receiving palliative care.

In these two new series, we will examine the use, efficacy, and safety of temazepam and prescription melatonin in people receiving palliative care.

We invite clinicians who are prescribing or administering temazepam or melatonin to collect data for these series. To find out more and get involved, email rapid@uts.edu.au.

Linda Brown

National Manager, CST/PaCCSC

Faculty of Radiation Oncology



The Royal Australian and New Zealand
College of Radiologists*

The Faculty of Radiation Oncology

Medical Benefits Schedule Review

The MBS Review Taskforce final report was released in December 2020 documenting work by the many Clinical Committees between 2015–2020. The Radiation Oncology component was undertaken under the auspices of the Oncology Clinical Committee that was published in 2017. The Faculty of Radiation Oncology (FRO) first started considering the MBS review in 2012 not long after it was first mooted. The re-writing of the MBS radiation therapy descriptors occurred in 2015–2016 and was available for consultation in 2018 before some changes were made.

The FRO MBS Review Working Group has continued to work with the Department of Health of Australia (DoHA) assisting in the development of the data collection metrics as a mapping exercise of the proposed new MBS descriptors. The College has provided two experts to the DoHA to guide the development of the methodology for the analyses of that data in a cost-neutral way to price the proposed new descriptors. Throughout these years, FRO has been proactively collaborative. However, there is increasing disquiet over the lack of feedback on the methodology, pricing and timeline of implementation. FRO is very concerned that the proposed implementation of the new descriptors scheduled for November 2022 is now much more challenging given the need to fit in with Australian federal budget timelines. The expected Implementation Liaison Group (ILG) that precedes implementation has not been announced; with the possibility that this may not occur until 2022 leaving very little time for FRO and other disciplines involved in radiation oncology to assess and manage the changes. There may be significant impacts on patient access and the whole of industry.

Training and Assessment Reform (TAR)

Work on Training and Assessment Reform (TAR) for the enhanced program commencing in 2022 is continuing well. TAR has had a long journey that started in 2015 with the Australian Council for Education Research review of the RANZCR training, assessment, and examination processes. Many individuals have been involved in this over the years, especially the Chief Censors and members of College committees. Webinars have been held highlighting the changes brought on by the TAR. They have been very well delivered and received.

In preparation for the February launch of the 2022 Training Program, the

electronic versions of the Learning Outcomes and Training Program Handbook have been made available under the TAR section of the College website. These documents have been compiled as resource guides for College trainees and members involved in the new Training Program.

As we come towards the end of the year, the TAR webinar series for 2021 draws to a close. The webinars provided critical information to trainees, Clinical Supervisors, Directors of Training, and Networks about the key changes to the Radiation Oncology Training Programs ahead of the February launch. For those who missed previous webinars, recordings and presentations are available on the TAR webinar page. For further information please visit www.ranzcr.com/college/tar/webinars.

During the months of October and November, the TAR team undertook the mammoth task of migrating data from TIMS into the new e-Portfolio system. The migration was a success, with all trainee information having been migrated across to the new system in preparation for quality checks of the training profile data over the upcoming weeks for the launch in January 2022.

RANZCR Strategic Plan 2022–24

RANZCR has recently launched our Strategic Plan for 2022–24. It is important to revise the plan so our College can take account of changes in our environment and new challenges.

We are building on the strong foundations of our existing plan as well as shifting focus on some matters through specific goals and specifying some new key initiatives. The values of our College are Integrity, Accountability, Inclusivity and Innovation. The strategic priorities that we will focus on are: Member Experience, Advocacy, Education, Workforce,

Clinical Excellence and Organisational Resilience. Incorporated within the goals of these priorities are measures to address the imbalances of Indigenous health outcomes in the fields of clinical radiology and radiation oncology.

The RANZCR Board feels the plan is an accurate reflection of our major and important objectives for the immediate future and the actions required to enable safe and appropriate use of clinical radiology and radiation oncology to optimise health outcomes for our patients and society.

Keen Hun Tai
Dean, Faculty of Radiation Oncology

MASC Trials



Organisational growth

The MASC trials team has grown significantly in the past six months to meet our increased trial activity. Gabrielle Byars was promoted to Research Manager, a role in which she leads MASC Trials clinical operations. Our new Research Development Manager, Dr Sanja Coso, contributes trial project and grant development expertise and is supported by a new Research Grant Coordinator, Paige Druce. Dr Lea-Anne Harrison is our new Senior Clinical Research Associate, and Nila Khalkhali and Louise Gonzales commenced as Clinical Research Associates. Lucas Skewis and Daniel Ariza Ospino joined as Clinical Data Managers and Merrin Morrison, our first Marketing and Communications Manager, is tasked with informing our stakeholders and the wider community about the activities of and opportunities provided by MASC Trials in supporting melanoma and skin cancer research and trials.

New Board members

To broaden the skillset of our Board, we welcomed two new members, Prof Michael Kimlin and Mary Tsouvalakis. Prof Kimlin is an internationally renowned leader in cancer research and cancer control and is trained as a Cancer Epidemiologist. Ms Tsouvalakis is a Managing Principal Solicitor at the Victorian Department of Health and she brings to the Board considerable knowledge and experience in government legal frameworks and governance. With eight Board members located across Australia and New Zealand, and further recruitment planned, MASC Trials is increasingly benefitting from the wealth and breadth of experience within its Board.

Discipline Specific Advisories

Quarterly Discipline Specific Advisory (DSA) meetings, supported by Dr Sanja Coso and Paige Druce, are essential to generate new research concepts and to support MASC Trials to turn these ideas into funded studies. A new keratinocyte cancer DSA, led by Prof Kiarash Khosrotehrani, has been formed and a new Consumer Advisory Panel is also planned.

Annual Scientific Meeting

Our Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) held virtually in November, attracted international delegates and leading clinician researchers. Featuring 14 speakers, the ASM provided updates on MASC Trials research and activities. An evolving concepts session facilitated discussion about future research opportunities within different fields of melanoma and skin cancer research.

I am now delighted to share with you some of our other recent achievements.

Active trials (recruiting)

For ethics approved and recruiting trials, visit www.masc.org.au/recruiting-trials/.

02.12 RADICAL I A/Prof Pascale Guitera

A randomised controlled multicentre trial of imiquimod versus radiotherapy for lentigo maligna when staged surgical excision with 5mm margins is not possible, is refused, or fails.

Trial updates:

- Recruitment on hold with 126 participants enrolled; an interim analysis and independent DSMB review planned this month.

01.15 CHARLI I A/Prof Shahneen Sandhu

A Phase Ib/II Trial of Ipilimumab-Nivolumab-Denosumab and Nivolumab-Denosumab in patients with unresectable Stage III and IV melanoma.

Trial updates:

- Fifty participants accrued to date; new sites opened at Alfred Hospital and Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital, in February and April 2021 respectively.

10.17 GoTHAM I A/Prof Shahneen Sandhu

A Phase Ib/II study of combination Avelumab with peptide receptor radionuclide therapy or conventional fractionated radiotherapy in patients with metastatic Merkel cell carcinoma.

Trial updates:

- Six participants enrolled across six sites including Royal North Shore Hospital, opened in May 2021; update planned for Australian Melanoma Conference 2021.

02.18 MelMarT-II I Prof Michael Henderson & Prof Marc Moncrieff

A Phase III, multicentre, multinational randomised control trial investigating 1cm v 2cm wide excision margins for primary cutaneous melanoma.

Trial updates:

- Recruited 483 participants (including 182 pilot participants) across 24 sites in Australia, UK, Canada, USA, New Zealand, Sweden and the Netherlands.
- Formal national collaborative group agreements established with European and Canadian Surgical Groups Collaborations underway with collaborators in Ireland and USA, and start-ups progressing in Australia and Slovenia.

03.18 I-MAT I Dr Wen Xu

A randomised, placebo-controlled, phase II trial of adjuvant Avelumab in patients with stage I-III Merkel cell carcinoma.

Trial updates:

- 28 participants enrolled from 11 primary sites across VIC, QLD, and NSW; two satellite sites opened in Cairns and Mackay with plans for additional teletrial sites in regional Australia.

02.19 IMAGE I A/Prof Victoria Mar

Melanoma Surveillance Photography (MSP) to improve early detection of melanoma in very high risk (or high risk) patients.

Trial updates:

- Close to 100 enrolled participants across six sites in VIC, NSW and QLD. Patient referrals commenced via the Victorian Cancer Registry and additional sites planned in regional Australia. A/Prof Victoria Mar featured in the Autumn issue of The Mole magazine and an interview with Prof H Peter Soyer, University of Queensland, is available at www.masc.org.au/news/



Uveal Melanoma Registry | Prof Anthony Joshua

The Global Uveal Melanoma Registry aims to illustrate variations in care patterns in USA, European and Canadian sites to facilitate new treatment approaches for this aggressive form of melanoma which affects the eye.

Trial updates:

- First Australian sites, Royal Adelaide Hospital and Perth Retina, opened in April and May 2021 respectively, with additional sites planned beyond these.

Supporting People with Cancer | A/Prof Victoria Mar

This Cancer Australia funded study aims to identify gaps in support materials for people at melanoma or skin cancer diagnosis in regional and rural Australia.

Study updates:

- Steering Committee to assist collaborators, Melanoma Patients Australia and University of Queensland, with media campaign and development of patient evidence-based education resources.

Closed to recruitment

02.14 Combi-RT | Dr Tim Wang

Combi-RT research study evaluated safety and efficacy of dabrafenib, trametinib, and palliative radiation therapy in patients with stage IIIc and IV BRAF V600E/K melanoma – publication submitted.

04.17 SMART1 | A/Prof Victoria Mar

A pilot study of an artificial intelligence system as a diagnostic aide for better skin cancer management.

Trial updates:

- Recruitment closed May 2021, meeting target of 224 participants. Data analysis near completion with publication submitted and presentation at Australian Melanoma Conference 2021.

02.17 MEL-SELF Pilot | Dr Katy Bell

MEL-SELF pilot investigated if patient-led surveillance detects more early stage recurrent or new primary melanoma than clinician-led surveillance with publication in final stages.

Become a MASC Trials member

Researchers, health professionals and consumers from Australia around the world are invited to become MASC Trials members. Member benefits include access to professional melanoma research networks, including clinicians, nurses, industry affiliates and consumers, as well as competitive grant support to develop investigator-initiated proposals.

For more information email hello@masc.org.au or visit www.masc.org.au/

Subscribe to our eNews for trial updates and publications at www.masc.org.au/e-news/

Mark Shackleton
Chair, MASC Trials

Medical Oncology Group of Australia



The Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA), has enjoyed a rewarding 2021 despite the continuing challenges and circumstances posed by COVID-19.

Cancer Achievement Award



Professor Clare Scott was announced as the recipient of the MOGA – Novartis Oncology Cancer Achievement Award at our Annual Scientific Meeting on 5 August. The Award recognises outstanding contributions to medical oncology and since 1999 has been presented to 21 leaders in the field of Australian Oncology. Professor Scott received the Award for her contribution as a medical oncology clinician, clinician-researcher, leader and mentor. Clare Scott is Professor of Gynaecological Cancer Obstetrics and Gynaecology Royal Women’s Hospital/ Mercy, University of Melbourne and Joint Division Head Division Clinical Translation, ACRF Cancer Biology and Stem Cells at The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne. Her dedication to rare and ovarian cancers research over the last



decade has contributed significantly to the establishment of platforms whereby clinical, research and consumer organisations can collaborate to impact on rare cancer survivorship. Professor Scott's skills in clinical oncology, evidence-based medicine and research have resulted in the leadership of numerous, influential clinical trials.

Inaugural Professor Martin H Tattersall AO Heroes Award 2021



Professor Anna Nowak was awarded the inaugural Professor M Tattersall Heroes Award in 2021 at MOGA's Online Annual Scientific Meeting on 5 August. Professor Nowak is a Medical Oncologist at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Pro Vice Chancellor (Health and Medical Research) at The University of Western Australia (UWA) and a Clinical Academic in the UWA Medical School.

This new award recognises contributions by Australian medical oncologists that honour the spirit, courage and commitment of the late Professor Martin H Tattersall AO, and his significant contributions to Medical Oncology in Australia. Professor Martin Tattersall AO was a giant of medical oncology, a founding member and the first Chair of MOGA. He was responsible for the establishment and development of medical oncology in Australia. Professor Anna Nowak is an outstanding colleague who embodies the very spirit and intent of this new Award in all her endeavours.

Professor Nowak has made a significant and lasting impact on the practice of medical oncology worldwide, leading transformative research in mesothelioma with profound and far-reaching impacts on people with this fatal condition. Experimental work from her PhD showed that chemotherapy and immunotherapy were synergistic, which has ultimately led to the development of three clinical trials of chemo-immunotherapy in mesothelioma, including the positive DREAM clinical trial and the international DREAM3R trial. She also championed the practice changing CheckMate- 743 trial. She was instrumental in establishing a cross-disciplinary state-wide Western Australian neuro-oncology service. Trainee Dr Piyush Grover commented: "Her approach to patient care embodies respect, transparency, and inclusiveness. She is also a skilled lay language communicator with the ability to inspire consumers about medical research and clinical trials. Professor Nowak is a stand-out mentor and inspires us by her commitment to our profession and patients. She encourages us to collaborate, challenge status-quo and strive for excellence...and offers her unflinching commitment to medical oncology to the best of her capacity".

Oncology drugs and treatments advocacy

Dr Christopher Steer has taken over as Chair of our Oncology Drugs Working Group and convened the 2021 Oncology Drugs Roundtable Meeting on 3 December. The meeting provided a focus for oncology sector stakeholders to collectively review, improve and expand on key issues around oncology drugs, treatment access, advocacy and lobbying to improve the patient experience. Some of the key items considered included MOGA's contributions to the National Medicines Policy Review, the Department of Health's Repurposing

of Medicines initiatives, developments around testing for dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD) enzyme deficiency in patients receiving fluoropyrimidines and a proposed MSAC application for the listing of the new oral chemotherapy item that was recommended as part of the MBS Review Taskforce Review findings.

Online 2021 – Annual Scientific Meeting

MOGA delivered the first fully online, virtual Annual Scientific Meeting **Future of Oncology: Improving Outcomes through Innovation** in early August. The Scientific Program was thoughtfully redesigned by Co-Convenors Dr Florian Honeyball and Dr Felicia Roncolato, to take into consideration the requirements of the virtual environment with sessions designed to share best practice standards of care for oncology patients and opportunities for a fruitful learning and networking experience.

COVID-19 and cancer care

Now well into its second year, the pandemic continues to impact on global cancer care and management requiring oncology clinicians to review, innovate and adapt our clinical and work practices. Dr Yada Kanjanapan, Prof Desmond Yip and other MOGA members developed a living guideline **COVID-19 vaccination in patients with solid tumour** for cancer clinicians and other healthcare professionals caring for people with cancer. As the pandemic and new evidence has evolved, this position statement has been updated and has proved a valuable resource for Australian medical oncologists.

Recently, I joined oncology experts to discuss the future of cancer care across the Asia Pacific and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I highlighted that the four critical factors in improving cancer outcomes across the Asia Pacific are education,

investment, partnerships and the process of assessing value. Assessing the value of treatments requires decision-makers to consider their broad impact. This is particularly important in low and middle-income countries that may not have reliable access to even older treatments. The proper assessment of value requires input from all stakeholders, including clinicians, industry through clinical trials, and payers with a commitment to resourcing healthcare.

MOGA has also recently re-activated its Workforce sub-committee to address current and immediate future demands on Australian medical oncologists, including the impacts of the so called “cancer tsunami” caused by COVID-19 disruption to cancer care, services, screening and treatment. As part of this work we have initiated discussions with the Department of Health and Cancer Australia to seek to develop a holistic national approach.

Educational programs for 2022

MOGA’s plan for next year’s educational activities are well advanced including Communications Skills Training, an Annual Scientific Meeting, the Sciences of Oncology trainees program, an ACORD22 Protocol Development Workshop and an Immuno-Oncology Symposium.

Deme Karikios
Chair, MOGA



Oncology Social Work Australia New Zealand



Throughout 2021, the activities of OSWANZ have once again been impacted by the ongoing pandemic. With the annual conference still on hold, along with all in-person state-based educational activities, an enforced transition to virtual events has proved surprisingly successful. Lunchtime Zoom webinars have proved popular. They are well subscribed and positively evaluated. The strategy of offering them free of charge to members has also seen a significant increase in membership. The plan for 2022 is to keep offering webinars and there is also a one day virtual conference in the planning stages. The Committee decision in 2019 to invest in a significant revamp and upgrade of the OSWANZ website has proven to be fortuitous. The new website operates seamlessly and all presentations are uploaded to the members only section of the OSWANZ website (www.oswanz.com).

In a new initiative, OSWANZ also partnered with Palliative Care Social Work Australia (PCSWA) to present a one day virtual conference entitled “Voluntary Assisted Dying and the Emerging Social Work Role” on 20 October. More than 400 delegates from Australia and New Zealand participated. The Keynote Speaker was Dr Sheri Milson Gerson who is a clinical social worker in the US state of Washington with strong research and practice experience in this field. Following the keynote address, Australian and New Zealand social workers, both practitioners and academics, provided insights into the research and local real

world experience of working in the area of assisted dying. The success of this day has certainly increased our enthusiasm in considering future collaborative work with like-minded organisations.

OSWANZ has continued to work productively with COSA and Kim Hobbs is our representative on the recently formed Financial Toxicity Working Group which is affiliated with the Survivorship Group and is chaired by Prof Ray Chan. Comprising a truly multidisciplinary membership of clinicians, representatives from stakeholder organisations and consumers, this dynamic group is powering through important work to increase the awareness amongst health professionals of the various domains in which people with cancer may experience financial distress and toxicity, as well as identifying strategies to identify and ameliorate where possible the concerns of patients. A survey of health professionals has recently been completed, with results to be available soon and a manuscript to articulate a comprehensive definition of financial toxicity has been submitted to a journal. Next steps include a consensus study to develop a care pathway for addressing financial toxicity and a webinar which is planned for 7 December.

Once again OSWANZ has partnered with Cancer Council Australia to lodge a co-badged submission to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee inquiry into the Disability Support Pension (DSP). Specifically this inquiry is investigating and reviewing the adequacy and ‘fit for purpose’ of the Impairment Tables which are used by the Department of Social Services to assess claims for the Disability Support Pension. There is widespread concern amongst oncologists and other health professionals that the changing nature of cancer treatments does not fit well with the Department’s definition of “impairment”. People with cancer who are found to be ineligible for the disability pension but can’t yet return to work due

to ongoing treatment, are left on the much lower pay rate of JobSeeker (previously Newstart and Unemployment Benefit) for extended periods of time while they complete complex treatment programs that may include immunotherapy and clinical trials.

The Senate Reference Committee responded to our submission by inviting OSWANZ and Cancer Council Australia to give evidence to the Senate hearing. This invitation was accepted by Megan Varlow from Cancer Council Australia and Kim Hobbs from OSWANZ. The issues were then taken up by the social affairs and inequality editor from *The Guardian* (Luke Henriques-Gomes) who published some specific case studies to highlight the difficulties of people with cancer in accessing the Disability Support Pension. Finally, we were able to have a further Zoom meeting with the disability payments policy officers of the Department of Human Services to address specifically our suggestions about the way in which the impairment tables could be improved to be more equitable and accessible for people with cancer. This series of activities was a wonderful example of the power of partnerships between health professionals, policy makers and stakeholder organisations.

On the research front, the completed study which audited the interventions of oncology social workers at six health sites in three states has resulted in four journal publications. OSWANZ members are now contributing to a Special Issue of *Australian Social Work*, co-edited by Dr Rosalie Pockett from the University of Sydney and Kim Hobbs, with a theme of Oncology Social Work which will be ready for the second edition of the journal in 2022.

Our final activity for the year was the AGM which was held on 9 November and was very well attended. There is overall strong enthusiasm for participating in planned activities.

The membership owes a debt of gratitude to outgoing President Nick Hobbs from Royal Hobart Hospital and welcomes as our new President Justin Gulliver, Professional Lead for Social Work, Kaiarataki Ngaio Mahi Toko i Te Ora, who is based in Wellington, New Zealand. Fortunately, Nick's wisdom will remain with us, as he continues on the Committee as Treasurer. As always, we are grateful to our tireless and long-serving Secretary, Olga Gountras from Slater and Gordon. With our inaugural New Zealand President coming to the helm, there is excitement for the prospect of a conference in New Zealand. Dare we hope for 2023?

Kim Hobbs
Council Representative, OSWANZ

Psycho- oncology Co-operative Research Group



Despite the disruptions caused by COVID-19, we have focussed on maintaining connection with our membership and have continued with our program of capacity building activities over the last six months.

This effort culminates with the PoCoG Scientific meeting, which we have reimagined as a series of lunchtime seminars in the first two weeks of December.



2021 Scientific Meeting

We were very much hoping to hold a face-to-face scientific meeting this year, and, in making the decision to move the event online, focussed on developing an event which would add value and benefit, without contributing to Zoom exhaustion.

Based on the success of our ongoing lunchtime webinar series, which has been hosted by our Special Interest Groups, we have used the same model for the Scientific Meeting which offers members and other interested parties a varied program of presentations and includes invited speakers as well as member abstracts chosen following peer review.

The program includes sessions on the ADAPT Clinical Pathway, Clinician Self-Care, Fear of Cancer Recurrence, Survivorship, Prevention and Implementation Science, Studies in COVID-19, Brain cancer and more!

Each session has been structured slightly differently and may include a panel discussion, invited speakers, questions from the floor and abstract presentations. Members have also contributed e-posters highlighting the scope of psycho-oncology research in Australia which are hosted on the PoCoG website.

We are delighted to be able to offer our members a forum for presenting their work and will record all the sessions and make them available on the **PoCoG YouTube channel** shortly after the scientific meeting concludes.

Scientific Advisory Committee

Following a competitive selection, we recently welcomed two new members, A/Professor Georgia Halkett and Dr Joanna Fardell, and two early career researcher members, Dr Emma Kemp and Dr Abbey Diaz, to the PoCoG Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and look forward to introducing these new

members to the wider membership and value their contribution to the scientific direction of PoCoG.

Research priorities

Early in 2022 we will hold a strategic planning day with the PoCoG Scientific Advisory Committee, Consumer Advisory Panel representatives and Special Interest Group leads to prioritise PoCoG's psycho-oncology research agenda for the next three years to align our strategy to emerging psycho-oncology research areas.

In line with Cancer Australia priorities of increasing engagement with priority groups through greater inclusivity of groups such as rural/regional, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those with poor prognosis tumours, older Australians, and adolescents and young adults in our research, PoCoG will hold a concept development workshop with a specific focus on developing strategies to address disparities in cancer outcomes in the first quarter of next year and encourages members to submit their ideas for consideration. PoCoG CDWs provide a unique opportunity for members to receive expert feedback and we look forward to returning to a face-to-face format in 2022.

In line with PoCoG's focus on increasing inclusivity in our research to improve outcomes for all people with an experience of cancer, PoCoG has an ongoing collaboration with the First Nations Cancer and Wellbeing Research, The University of Queensland, led by PoCoG member Prof Gail Garvey, to develop our second online learning module, which will outline best practice research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This second module will complement our first e-learning module Improving Cancer Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which can be [YouTube channel](#).

To learn more about PoCoG activities and to join visit www.pocog.org.au.

To view the latest psycho-oncology research presented by our Special Interest Groups in 2021 visit our YouTube channel.

Joanne Shaw
Executive Director, PoCoG

Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia



The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) principal objectives are to train and support pathologists and senior scientists to improve the use of pathology testing utilising the highest quality evidence and expert collaboration. The RCPA continues to progress pathology in Australasia with action and education in the areas of genomics, health data standardisation and promoting evidence-based best practice.

International Pathology Day – COVID-19 Where are we now?

Recently, the RCPA celebrated the importance of pathology at International Pathology Day (IPD), and recognised the prodigious work of pathology trainees, Fellows and scientists. All over Australasia and the world, IPD activities were held to celebrate the important role of pathology.

This year's RCPA IPD event was live-streamed at the RCPA headquarters on 10 November 2021, and was hosted by Sophie Scott, National Health Reporter for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). This year's topic was "COVID-19: Where are we now?" The RCPA invited the previous IPD spokespeople to return to reflect on the past year, which was heavily impacted by the delta variant of COVID-19. Speakers included RCPA Fellows: Prof Deborah Williamson, Prof Bill Rawlinson, A/Prof Paul Griffin and Prof Peter Collignon. Also joining the 2021 IPD event were RCPA Fellows: Prof Sandra O'Toole and Dr Robert Norton.

This year's IPD event reflected on the past year, including the predictions that were made and the road ahead. Pathology testing has been central to the public health response to COVID-19. Pathologists performed an amazing job under immense pressure, to complete high volumes of consistently reliable and accurate results within rapid timeframes. It has never been clearer to see how the efforts of pathologists have been invaluable for the wellbeing of the community.

To watch the event, please visit our [website](#).



Winner of RCPA Media Award

The RCPA announced the winner of its 8th annual media awards for excellence in journalism relating to pathology. The winner was decided during the RCPA's annual Pathology Update Conference, Pathology Update 2021 – Re-Cracking the Code, which was held in July.

This year, the judges presented Bianca Nogrady with the award for her article written for the *Medical Republic*, **“So you think you’ve had COVID-19”**. In her article, Bianca interviewed RCPA Fellow, Dr Jenny Robson, Pathologist-in-Charge of Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology's Department of Microbiology and Molecular Pathology. President of the RCPA, Dr Michael Dray said the article provided clear information regarding COVID-19 testing when there was a lot of mixed messaging circulating in the community.

Successful applications for Medicare Benefits Schedule listings

Since July 2016, the College has submitted at least 28 Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) applications, the majority of which have been for genetic tests (79 per cent). With the help of the College's various working parties, 75 per cent of these applications have been successful, which is a wonderful outcome for patients.

Recent applications approved for listing on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) include characterisation of mutations in *JAK2* or *MPL* genes in patients with myeloproliferative neoplasms; genome-wide microarray testing for people with multiple myeloma and chronic lymphocytic leukaemia; and genetic testing for diagnosis of neuromuscular disorders. Public funding of these tests supports one of the key tenets of the College by

ensuring equity of access to testing for all Australians, not just those who can afford to pay out of pocket.

RCPA podcast – The Pathologists Cut

The RCPA now produces a podcast, *The Pathologists Cut*. This regular podcast explores the critical work of pathologists, and the integral part pathology plays in medicine and healthcare. Recent times have placed pathology in the spotlight, as pathology testing has been critical to the health of the community, during this COVID-19 pandemic. Listen on Apple Podcasts, Spotify or our [website](#).

Pathology Update Conference & Exhibition 2022

The next RCPA annual scientific meeting, **Pathology Update 2022**, will be a hybrid format, combining an onsite component at the International Convention Centre, Sydney, as well as a live-streamed event on 4–6 March 2022. The conference will feature extraordinary international and Australian speakers who are leaders in their fields, in the disciplines of Anatomical, Chemical, Forensic, Genetic, General, Haematology, Immunopathology and Microbiology.

Structured Pathology Reporting of Cancer Project

The principal aim of the Structured Pathology Reporting of Cancer (SPRC) Project is to build on internationally standardised evidence-based consensus standards and guidelines in cancer reporting – reviewed by local experts – adapted to meet local needs.

In support of this initiative, the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) has recently published *Requirements for Information Communication and Reporting* (fourth edition 2020) which includes as a standard (mandatory requirement) the use of RCPA Structured Pathology Reporting of Cancer Protocols, where published protocols exist. This is a prominent milestone, and a fantastic achievement by all in the pathology community who have worked towards this goal for over a decade. The requirement comes into effect 1 August 2022.

Representative expert-panels of anatomical pathologists and clinical specialists are currently expanding the collection of open-access best-practice RCPA protocols for pathologists and trainees. The current resources can be accessed on the [RCPA website](#).



In Our Hands
Pathology Update 2022
 Friday 4 - Sunday 6 March 2022
 International Convention Centre, Sydney

Similar to Australia, countries such as the Netherlands, United States, Norway and Canada, all have national structured reporting programs. These countries have utilised digital structured pathology reporting software tools to improve pathology reporting data output. To allow Australasian pathologists to help evaluate the latest digital reporting tools, the SPRC Project is coordinating a Software Pilot, with national and state registries also taking part.

The trial will provide participants with the ability to trial software. The Project team will capture qualitative and quantitative performance data to independently evaluate productivity improvements.

International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting

The International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting (ICCR) project has produced standardised reporting templates for cancers available to all countries of the world. New ICCR Datasets for female reproductive organs and breast specimens have recently been published and are available to download on the [ICCR website](#).

Kenneth Lee
Council representative, RCPA

Thoracic Oncology Group of Australasia



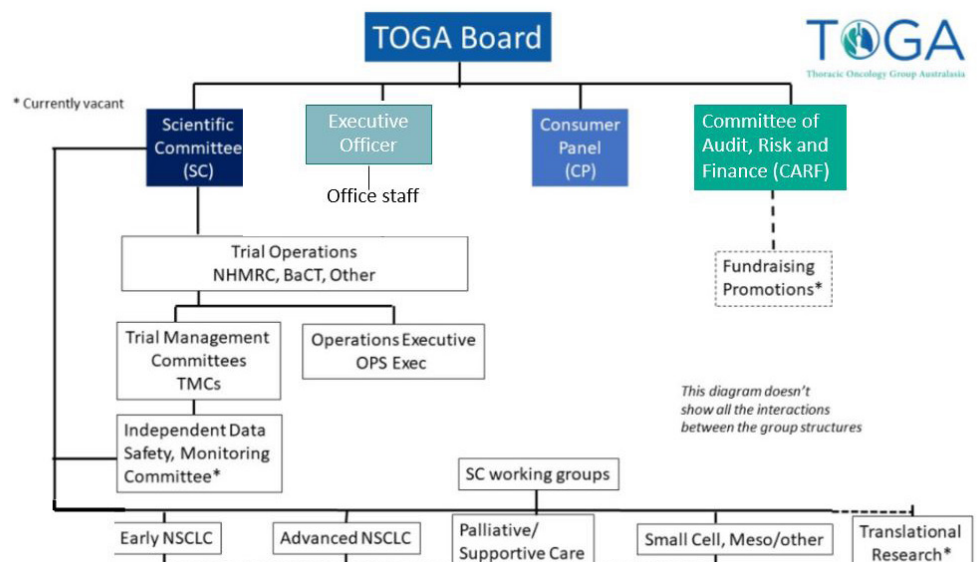
In July 2021, the Thoracic Oncology Group of Australasia (TOGA) celebrated its first birthday, having evolved from the Australasian Lung Cancer Trials Group (ALTG) a year earlier. TOGA is ably led by Chair Prof Nick Pavlakis, and governed by a Board of Directors, each responsible for a particular portfolio. Committees and working groups have been established in speciality areas.

What is on the horizon for local thoracic cancer care?

Cancer Australia has commenced early scoping work of a potential national lung cancer screening program, including mapping of key stakeholders, discussions around co-design with

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and early scoping work around workforce, screening infrastructure, data governance and quality assurance, and information and communications requirements. Dr Nicole Rankin is leading a team that has successfully gained MRFF funding to investigate ways of educating about, and inviting people to participate in, a lung cancer screening program.

At the start of 2021, Christopher Cao, Cardiothoracic surgeon at RPAH led a team in the publication of a systematic review showing the paucity of clinical evidence for the role of neoadjuvant immunotherapy in treatment of resectable NSCLC ([www.semthorcardiovascsurg.com/article/S1043-0679\(21\)00006-X/fulltext](http://www.semthorcardiovascsurg.com/article/S1043-0679(21)00006-X/fulltext)). This was accompanied by a year of sequential updates in the international Checkmate 816 trial demonstrating the benefit of neoadjuvant immunotherapy when delivered with chemotherapy in early stage disease. In early-stage oncogene-driven NSCLC, the ADAURA trial results, presented by A/Prof Tom John at ESMO 2020, demonstrated the utility of adjuvant targeted therapy in resected EGFR+ NSCLC patients. In light of the flurry of evidence for targeted or immune-therapies in early stage NSCLC, TOGA held a microsatellite symposium with Dr Malinda Itchins



discussing evidence and future directions in treatment of resectable disease. While no firm standard of care has emerged in Australia, the emerging benefits described in international trials create appeal for accessing these therapies through clinical trials.

Genomic profiling continues to be a hot topic in lung cancer as new targets and new therapies are discovered annually. TOGA's ASPIRATION study is evaluating routine upfront comprehensive genomic profiling to newly diagnosed NSCLC patients with non-squamous histology. The goal is to compare this to standard of care testing in the same cohort of patients to determine the overall clinical value, hopefully leading to practice change. See more information for referral at thoraciconcology.org.au/aspiration/. Patients with oncogene targets can be enrolled in MOST or ASPIRATION specific basket studies, or industry sponsored trials or compassionate access programs.

For those metastatic NSCLC patients where no therapeutic pathway targeting an oncogenic driver mutation exists, a recent commentary has been published on the evidence supporting the use of immunotherapy in NSCLC and the challenges that lie ahead ascopubs.org/doi/pdf/10.1200/OP.21.00506. The overall survival outcome with immunotherapies is a significant leap ahead from the outcomes expected with chemotherapy alone and, for some patients, can be durable long term. However, to continue to make gains in durable survival, we need to identify better predictive biomarkers when selecting treatment for patients and/or in identifying resistance. Incorporation of new immunotherapies and other agents, and the use of existing modalities of treatment such as radiotherapy and reintroduction of chemotherapy also require further exploration.

In mesothelioma, the PBS approval of ipilimumab/nivolumab combination immunotherapy has provided early access to patients. The Checkmate 743 studies convincingly showed superiority to chemotherapy in patients with non-epithelioid histology. However, in patients with epithelioid histology, it remains unknown if adding immunotherapy to chemotherapy is better as an alternative option, as shown in NSCLC. TOGA's Phase III DREAM3R trial investigates the combination of immunotherapy (durvalumab) and chemotherapy in first line treatment of mesothelioma. Effective options for second line treatment of mesothelioma are an increasing need and the subject of discussion at TOGA workshops.

Many of these trends influencing thoracic cancer are discussed in the monthly TOGA podcasts that can be accessed here: <https://thoraciconcology.org.au/education/podcasts/>

For your diary

Following on from the success of the TOGA 2021 Annual Scientific Meeting with a theme of 'Equity and Innovation in Multidisciplinary Lung Cancer Care', the 2022 ASM will be held in Sydney on 21–22 July. TOGA will again conduct virtual post international conference highlights symposia following the 2022 ASCO and WCLC meetings.

Michael Millward
Council Representative, TOGA



TROG Cancer Research



TROG welcomes new Scientific Committee member

TROG Cancer Research proudly welcomed **Dr Yoo Young (Dominique) Lee** to the TROG Scientific Committee (TSC) in August 2021.

As part of the TSC, Dr Lee plays a crucial role in the approval and activation of TROG trials, alongside other **key committee members**.

Dr Lee is currently a Consultant Radiation Oncologist at Princess Alexandra Hospital and Icon Cancer Centre, Greenslopes in Queensland.

She completed her Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) at the University of Otago before commencing specialist radiation oncology training at Auckland City Hospital and Sydney's Liverpool Hospital.

Dr Lee maintains a strong interest in clinical research with a particular focus on stereotactic ablative radiation therapy (SABR). Her clinical experience covers a broad range of solid tumour malignancies with special clinical interest in lymphoma, gastrointestinal, hepatobiliary, skin cancers and palliative care.

She is an active member of several leading cancer trial groups including TROG and the Australasian Gastro-

Intestinal Cancer Trials Group (AGITG). Dr Lee represents the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) in Cancer Australia's National Pancreatic Cancer Roadmap Steering Group.

In collaboration with TROG, Dr Lee is the Trial Chair of the international clinical study **TROG 17.03 (LARK)**. This study aims to show that incorporating Kilovoltage Intrafraction Monitoring (KIM) into liver SABR improves: treatment accuracy, patient treatment outcomes, and treatment efficiency.

An update on TROG's key prostate cancer trials

A key speciality area for TROG Cancer Research for over 30 years has been prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer diagnosed in men in Australia and the third most common cause of cancer death.

Current TROG prostate cancer trials aim to integrate new and unique methods of treatment for prostate cancer patients, improving quality of life and lessening the likelihood of recurrence.

Among these key prostate cancer trials are **TROG 18.01 NINJA** and TROG 19.06 DECREASE.

TROG 18.01 NINJA – Novel Integration of new prostate radiation therapy schedules with adjuvant androgen deprivation

The TROG 18.01 NINJA Trial is comparing two emerging, potentially practice-changing radiation therapy schedules for prostate cancer, delivered in as little as five outpatient visits.

Leveraging state-of-the-art technology, we aim to use existing equipment throughout Australia to achieve

high rates of disease control while also improving patient safety and convenience.

NINJA randomises between two Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy (SBRT) regimens for unfavourable risk prostate cancer and is now commencing the expansion to phase III.

The trial is co-badged with the Australian and New Zealand Urogenital and Prostate Cancer Trials Group (ANZUP) and has so far accrued 139 men at 17 centres in Australia and New Zealand, which is ahead of schedule at a rate of around eight men per month.

A total of 472 participants is required, and it is expected complete accrual will occur in late 2024.

TROG 19.06 DECREASE – Darolutamide + consolidation radiotherapy in advanced prostate cancer detected by PSMA

In the era of PET imaging, many sites of disease that are occult on conventional imaging will be found on PSMA (prostate specific membrane antigen) PET.

TROG 19.06 DECREASE, a phase II trial, aims to assess the efficacy of Darolutamide, with or without local consolidation radiation therapy after 12 weeks of therapy, in men with castration-resistant prostate cancer with no evidence of metastases on conventional imaging but detectable disease on Prostate Specific Membrane Antigen (PSMA)-PET/CT scan.

The trial aims to recruit 87 participants from 15 trial sites and opened in June 2021.

The study has already recruited 8 participants and is now open at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Victoria, Townsville University Hospital in Queensland and Calvary Mater Hospital in NSW.

To learn more about TROG's previous prostate cancer trials, click [here](#).

JAMA Oncology highlights TROG's SAFRON II Trial

TROG Cancer Research would like to acknowledge the amazing efforts of the SAFRON II Trial team and congratulate them on their recent publication in [JAMA Oncology \(August 2021\)](#).

Trial Chair, [Associate Professor Shankar Siva](#) led the trial, which examined the safety of Stereotactic Ablative Body Radiotherapy (SABR) single session and multi session techniques to treat metastatic disease to the lung.

The trial evaluated the safety and efficacy of the techniques and was completed in 2021. The results of this trial will inform future research to guide optimal outcomes for patients with lung metastasis.

See the comprehensive infographic on the following page which outlines the SAFRON II trial results!

Gold Coast on the horizon for TROG's 2022 Annual Scientific Meeting

TROG Cancer Research are hosting their [Annual Scientific Meeting \(ASM\)](#), as an in-person event from 14–17 March 2022.

The theme of the 2022 ASM is *Emerging and Evolving*, which looks to new ways of thinking about research methodologies, emerging clinical trial concepts, and continued enhancement of collaborative research capabilities.

Next year's event is expected to be unlike others before – with the ASM set to be held at the RACV Royal Pines Resort on the sunny Gold Coast in Queensland!

Trans Tasman Radiation Oncology Group (TROG) 13.01 - **Randomized Phase II Trial Stereotactic Ablative Fractionated radiotherapy versus Radiosurgery for Oligometastatic Neoplasia to the lung (SAFRON II)**



What is the optimal radiation approach for oligometastatic disease?

There is currently no evidence to guide an optimal approach for Stereotactic Ablative Body Radiotherapy (SABR) in patients with pulmonary oligometastases.

90 patients recruited between 2015 and 2018
13 sites across Australia and New Zealand

1 to 3 metastases of less than 5 cm that originated from a non-hematological malignancy

Randomization

balanced by number of metastases and tumour histology

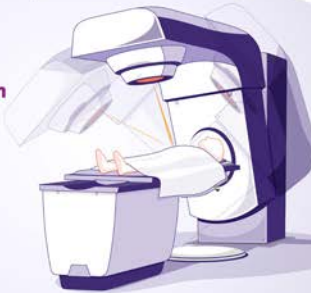
133 metastases treated

Median follow-up: 3 years



Multiple Fraction (MF) SABR

4 x 12Gy over 2 weeks
Total of 48 Gy



Single Fraction (SF) SABR

1 x 28Gy



Primary endpoint SAFETY

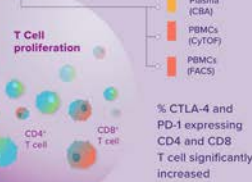
Adverse Events Grade ≥3



No significant differences were found between SF and MF SABR.

Translational outcomes

Peripheral blood was collected in subset of 18 participants



Both SF and MF SABR induced systemic immune activation.

Secondary endpoints EFFICACY

	Overall Survival (2 years)	Local Control
MF	85%	83%
SF	88%	73%

	Median Disease Free Survival	Mean Time to Start of Systemic Therapy
MF	13.2 months	29.1 months
SF	14.3 months	28.9 months

Quality of Life - Patient reported outcomes
No detriment observed throughout assessment period

No significant difference was found between SF and MF SABR for any efficacy outcome. Both are safe, effective and do not impact quality of life.

Resource use

Per patient costs of SABR care (incl. planning, simulation, delivery, HCP and patient time)

MF	AUD \$4,827
SF	AUD \$3,706

Shorter duration SF SABR may be preferred from a resource and patient's perspective.

The 2022 ASM will host several keynote speakers, as they look at emerging topics in radiation medicine research. The TROG membership has grown to over 1,500 people, and the ASM will host more than 300 delegates from Australia and New Zealand, making for an excellent networking and engagement opportunity.

The ASM Program Committee is developing a diverse and innovative program, which will include four days of collaborative workshops, scientific sessions showcasing ongoing clinical trials, discussion of new clinical trials and future research strategies.

Registration for the ASM is **now open!**

Puma Sundaresan
Council representative, TROG Cancer Research



Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Venue
2022		
22-23 January	SIOG Advanced Course in Geriatric Oncology – Canberra	Virtual
10-12 February	Lorne Cancer 2022	Lorne, VIC, and online
4-6 March	Pathology Update 2022	Sydney, NSW
14-17 March	TROG 2022 ASM	Gold Coast, QLD
17-18 March	PaCCSC & CST Annual Research Forum 2022	Virtual
23-26 March	ANZGOG ASM 2022	Melbourne, VIC
24-25 March	4th Victorian Cancer Survivorship Conference	Melbourne, VIC
10-13 April	2022 Australian Pain Society 42nd ASM	Hobart, TAS
10-13 May	ALLG Scientific Meeting	Melbourne, VIC
3-7 June	2022 ASCO Annual Meeting	Chicago, USA, and online
8-10 June	ANZSGM Annual Scientific Meeting 2022	Perth, WA
16-18 June	CNSA 24th Annual Congress	Brisbane, QLD
23-25 June	MASCC/ISOO Annual Meeting	Toronto, Canada, and online
10-12 July	ANZUP Annual Scientific Meeting 2022	Adelaide, SA
27-29 July	Breast Cancer Trials 43rd Annual Scientific Meeting	Melbourne, VIC
28-30 July	ANZCHOG Annual Scientific Meeting 2022	Sydney, NSW
6-9 August	HGSA 45th Annual Scientific Meeting	Perth, WA
25-27 August	2022 ASCO Breakthrough Summit	Yokohama, Japan, and online
29 August-1 September	IPOS 2022 World Congress	Toronto, Canada, and online
9-13 September	ESMO Congress 2022	Paris, France
13-15 October	Australasian International Breast Congress (AIBC)	Brisbane, QLD
16-18 October	14th COGNO Annual Scientific Meeting	Brisbane, QLD
19-21 October	ESSO 41	Bordeaux, France
23-26 October	ASTRO's 64th Annual Meeting	San Antonio, USA
26-29 October	18th World Congress on Cancers of the Skin	Buenos Aires, Argentina
27-30 October	RANZCR Annual Scientific Meeting 2022	Adelaide, SA
2-4 November	COSA's 49th Annual Scientific Meeting Save the date!	Brisbane, QLD
6-10 December	San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium 2022	San Antonio, USA

For additional events please see the COSA website.