

Medical Oncology Group of Australia

The Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA), the professional organisation for medical oncologists and the profession, plays a leading role in the national oncology sector. Recently, MOGA gave evidence to the Public Hearing of the Senate Select Committee into Funding for Research into Cancers with Low Survival Rates and contributed a major submission to facilitate national discussion around this issue.

Education in medical oncology

MOGA works closely with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians on education for medical oncology trainees and professional development for consultants. Dr Rachel Wong, Deputy Director of Oncology, Eastern Health, is Project Lead for a new educational initiative, ASCO Education Essentials, that is being piloted in 2017. This self-directed learning program for trainees provides access to a range of valuable resources including over 100 e-learning courses.

A new 1.5 day professional development program for young medical oncologists presented in late April provided a unique opportunity to build professional skills in assertiveness and interview communications, as well as all how to be a clinical trials principal investigator. The program was designed in collaboration with human resource management experts and some of the major Australian clinical trials groups.

Plans for MOGA's Annual Scientific Meeting, Real World Oncology: Translating Discovery in to Practice, to be held in Melbourne from 2-4 August, are proceeding well under the leadership of Convenor, A/Prof Linda Mileskin. The program explores many contemporary challenges and advances in research and clinical practice, with a strong focus on breast, colorectal, geriatric oncology, supportive care and genomics. Five international speakers have been secured for the meeting, including Prof Fatima Cardoso, Prof Hyman Muss, Prof Sebastian Stintzing and Prof Matthew Ellis. We will also be joined by Dr Christopher Jackson, Medical Director, Cancer Society of New Zealand and PIPER project (colorectal cancer) clinical lead.

Our members, our workforce

In 2017, MOGA membership has grown to 660. As a medical speciality with a growing and evolving membership, the importance of workforce planning and development is paramount. Our leadership role in this area has attracted strong international interest and Dr Zarnie Lwin will be presenting on the 2016 Workforce Study to the Japanese Society for Medical Oncology in July.

Research and advocacy

MOGA takes a leading role in research and advocacy, focused on oncology drugs, treatments and patient care. We recently developed new position statements on biosimilars and genomics. We are also developing some practical guidelines on chemotherapy dosing and contributed to a submission on the National Digital Health Strategy.

The Association has also supported a submission on Somatic Tumour Gene Panel for Determination of Therapy, including the creation of a new MBS item number. There is a proven clinical utility to predictive gene mutation evaluation and a panel assessment is clearly the most efficient application. This implementation would facilitate BRAF V600 and RAS mutation testing in colorectal cancer, and EGFR and ALK gene rearrangement status testing in lung adenocarcinoma.

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