

CLINICAL ONCOLOGY SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA, COSA

2014 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM)

COSA held another successful Annual Scientific Meeting in Melbourne 2-4 December 2014.

More than 1200 delegates attended and over 400 abstracts were submitted. The program featured 16 concurrent sessions, 12 best of the best sessions, nine breakfast sessions, five submitted symposia, five plenary sessions and concluded with the one and only 'hot topic'.

The 41st COSA ASM highlighted cancer survivorship, supportive care and palliative care, as well as lung cancer and metastases. The Local Organising Committee, convened by Mei Krishnasamy, worked hard to develop a broad range of multidisciplinary sessions that the COSA membership has come to appreciate.

COSA is proud to have hosted the meeting in conjunction with the Union for International Cancer Control's World Cancer Congress (WCC), with delegates able to attend any COSA ASM or WCC session on our joint day, Thursday 4 December.

The opening plenary highlighted the critical importance of a multidisciplinary approach to key issues in cancer management. Speakers included Bruce Mann, Michael Hofman and Ben Solomon – all well respected Australian clinicians and researchers, and from our international faculty Normand Laperriere and Nathan Cherny. The speakers questioned the traditional polarisation of 'curable' early cancer and 'terminal' advanced cancer, as advanced imaging allows early identification of metastasis at a time where local therapy may influence the disease outcome.

Many high quality plenaries and concurrent sessions were held, with the joint COSA/WCC hot topic panel discussion rounding out the ASM. Adam Spencer chaired the session and provided provocative and challenging questions with his usual charismatic and humorous style. Discussing the topic 'Is the cost of cancer treatment worth the benefits?', panel members included David Grainger, Georgina Long, Donna Milne, Nicola Roxon, Melissa Sheldon and Robyn Ward.

The panellists recognised the high costs of research and targeted therapy expenditure, balanced by the impact these drugs could have on prolonging life. They also discussed the need for research to have freedom to grow and develop, unhindered by government interference. In closing, the panellists rated the Australian health care system – the Hon Nicola Roxon rated the system 10/10. "... not because it is perfect but because if you were diagnosed with cancer you wouldn't want to be treated anywhere else in the world."

2015 Annual Scientific Meeting

Save the date – 17-19 November 2015 at the Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart. The Local Organising Committee, co-convened by Drs Louise Nott and Allison Black, medical oncologists at Royal Hobart Hospital, is already working on the program and has secured a number of invited international experts to present on the rare cancers theme.

To ensure they develop a program of interest to the diverse COSA membership, the committee's interpretation of rare cancers encompasses: truly rare cancers; rare cancer sub types; rare forms of common cancers; rare context of cancer, for example cancer during pregnancy; and rare cancers and the challenges in treatment. We are sure there will be something of interest for everyone.

Changing of the guard

The end of 2014 saw Associate Professor Sandro Porceddu conclude his two-year term as COSA President, and Professor Mei Krishnasamy assume the role.

In handing over the reins, Professor Porceddu thanked COSA members for their support and said he was proud of what had been achieved in the last two years.

Prof Krishnasamy said she was honoured to step into the role of COSA President and thanked Prof Porceddu for his leadership, adding that he left COSA with a strong, embedded governance structure that provided a robust platform for action.

We are also pleased to announce that Professor Phyllis Butow AM takes on the role of President Elect. Prof Butow has been a valued member of COSA for many years, representing the Psycho Oncology Cooperative Research Group on COSA Council. Prof Butow holds a number of senior positions at the University of Sydney and is a world leader in psycho-oncology research. We are honoured to have her accept the role of COSA President Elect.

For more information about COSA activities please visit www.cosa.org.au

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