CENTRE FOR HEALTH ECONOMICS RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

CREST newsletter

MARCH 2026

CHERE CREST
CENTRE FOR HEALTH ECONOMICS RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
CANCER RESEARCH ECONOMICS SUPPORT TEAM

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What matters to society when making decisions about reimbursing drugs for prostate cancer: a discrete choice experiment

The ICECap study demonstrated that 5-year metastasis free survival strongly predicted 8-year overall survival, suggesting it could be a potential surrogate. Using surrogate outcomes shortens the time required to assess benefits from a new treatment; however, it may overestimate benefits or underestimate risks. This adds another level of potential uncertainty into the reimbursement decision-making process.

de Feria Cadet et al. conducted a discrete choice experiment (DCE) among the Australian general population, to identify people's preferences for how decisions are made for new interventions for localised prostate cancer. Participants were presented with hypothetical choice sets. Each choice set required a choice between 2 alternatives describing a reimbursement scenario for localised prostate cancer. The scenarios were described by cost-effectiveness, government cost, adverse events, patients' expected to benefit from treatment, nature of benefits, completeness of data available, and the extent of follow-up. An example choice set is shown in Table 1.

The survey was completed by 1003 participants who were generally representative of the Australian population.

Results showed that participants preferred interventions that produced survival benefits at similar levels to the general population, low rates of adverse events, low cost to the health system, and good value for money compared with usual care. Respondents preferred interventions that were supported by complete studies as opposed to ongoing studies (used as a proxy for surrogate outcomes). Respondents were willing to pay $10,000 for evidence with an extra year of follow-up. This implies a preference for studies that are supported by more mature evidence or an aversion to uncertainty. However, respondents exhibited conditional acceptance of evidence derived from shorter or incomplete studies, if the interventions showed favorable incremental cost-effectiveness ratios. This suggests that there is a willingness to support therapies using surrogate outcomes if acceptable reimbursement arrangements can be agreed. This could be in the form of performance-based contracts or coverage with requirement for further evidence.

Contributed by: Lutfun Hossain

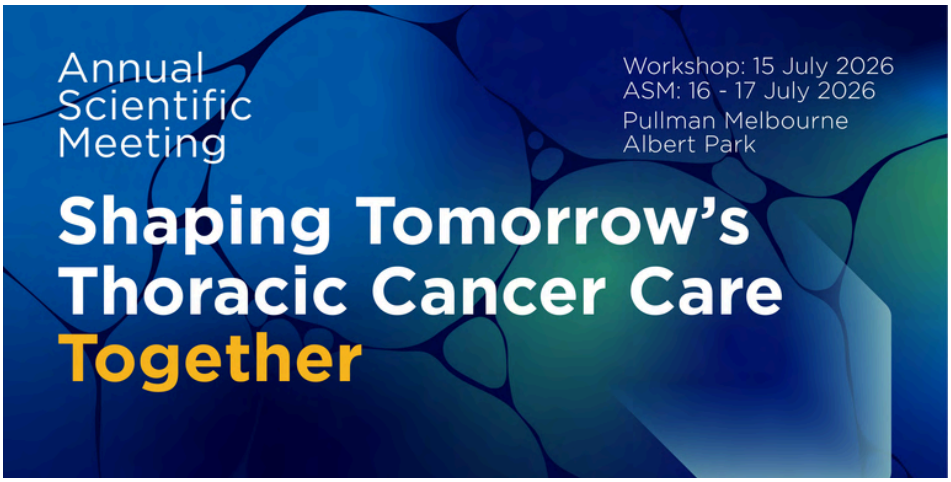
References:
de Feria Cardet, R.E. et al. (2025) 'What matters to society when making decisions about reimbursing drugs for prostate cancer: A discrete choice experiment', JNCI: Journal of the National Cancer Institute, 118(3), pp. 429–436. doi:10.1093/jnci/djaf315.

Table 1: Example of a choice set

Description	Option A	Option B
The extra cost to the government required to produce an additional year of full health compared with usual care is	$75,000	$100,000
The benefit to men from treatment is	The disease does not progress to their bones or other parts of the body	They have no symptoms of the disease
The proportion of men who are likley to benefit from treatment	20 in 100	30 in 100
The proportion of men who would experience side effects from treatment	60 in 100	30 in 100
The additional cost per year to the national health budget from funding this drug is	$50,000,000	$10,000,000
The evidence for the treatmentis from a	Completed study	Completed study
The evidence available from the study relfects	8 years of experience	4 years of experience

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Thoracic Oncology Group Australia (TOGA)



Save the Date: TOGA ASM 2026

We're excited to announce that the theme for the 2026 TOGA ASM is ***Shaping Tomorrow's Thoracic Cancer Care Together***.

Leading this year's ASM as Convenor is A/Prof Surein Arulananda. Here are a few words from his welcoming message:

"It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the TOGA 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting. As lung cancer diagnostics and therapies continue to evolve at a rapid pace, so too must our ability to harness our collective strengths to deliver the most optimal care for our patients.

The TOGA ASM remains a uniquely valuable forum—bringing together everyone involved in the field of thoracic malignancies across Australia and New Zealand. This opportunity for connection, both professional and collegial, is what drives vital collaborations and advances in our field.

On behalf of the steering Committee, I am thrilled to welcome you to Melbourne. Let us continue to build on our strong momentum in education, scientific research, and collaboration as we work together to improve outcomes for patients with thoracic malignancies."

We hope to see you at the ASM. Registrations coming soon.

- 15-17 July 2026
- Pullman Melbourne Albert Park

More info.

Call for abstracts
We're excited to announce that abstract submissions are now open for the TOGA ASM.

The LOC invites all within the TOGA community to submit abstracts for consideration in this year's program. Don't miss this chance to share your work and contribute to an exciting lineup of discussions and presentations!

Submit Abstract

Beyond the NGS Report: Practical Interpretation for Lung Cancer Care

A webinar designed to support medical oncologists and multidisciplinary teams in confidently interpreting lung cancer molecular pathology reports in real-world clinical practice, particularly in settings without access to a molecular tumour board.

Through real-world reports and case-based discussions, the session will foster evidence-based and guideline-aligned treatment decisions. By enhancing your ability to select appropriate targeted therapies, the webinar directly supports improved quality use of medicines and patient outcomes.

Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2026
Time: 6.30 pm
Register Now

See all TOGA 2026 events.



Conversations in Lung Cancer Podcast

A go-to podcast for in-depth insights into lung cancer. Tune in for conversations with leading experts, inspiring stories, and the latest updates on clinical trials. Stay informed and empowered in the fight against lung cancer.

Lung Cancer Research: 2025 Year in Review

In this episode, hosted by A/Prof Mal Itchins, a multidisciplinary panel delves into the ongoing advancements in lung cancer research in Australia and New Zealand. The panel includes Prof Nick Pavlakis from Royal North Shore Hospital and A/Prof Lauren Troy from Royal Prince Alfred, Sydney.

Key topics discussed include the National Lung Cancer Screening Program (NLCSP), anticipated pharmaceutical benefits scheme (PBS) drug listings for 2026, and the introduction of advanced diagnostic technologies. The conversation highlights the initial impacts of the lung cancer screening program, potential benefits of new ALK inhibitors, and the expanding role of immunotherapy. This episode also explores the future of diagnostic precision with the rise of interventional pulmonology and liquid biopsies.

New and Emerging Practice Standards in ES-SCLC

Hosted by Dr. Rebecca Tay, her fellow oncologists A/Prof Surein Arulananda and Dr. Dasantha Jayamanne (DJ) delve into the latest advances in small cell lung cancer treatment. They explore new first-line treatments, including checkpoint inhibitors and emerging novel agents like lurbinectedin and tarlatamab, highlighting their mechanisms, survival benefits, and toxicity management. This comprehensive discussion aims to inform clinicians and healthcare professionals about the promising advancements reshaping the small cell lung cancer treatment landscape.

Listen on Apple or Spotify

TOGA
Thoracic Oncology Group Australasia

Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group(ALLG)



Save the Date: ALLG's May 2026 Scientific Meeting

Save the Date for ALLG's upcoming Scientific Meeting, from 12-15 May 2026 at the W Hotel in Brisbane. ALLG Scientific Meetings bring together our extensive network of member clinicians, scientists, and clinical trial professionals to advance blood cancer clinical trial research. Delegates have the opportunity to hear from local and international experts in haematology, attend a range of in-depth workshops and enjoy networking opportunities with colleagues and industry partners. Registrations open late March 2026 - stay tuned for further details at allg.org.au.

Become an ALLG Member

Since 1973, the Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group (ALLG) and its members have delivered world-class clinical trials that focus on delivering new treatments and supporting better lives for patients living with blood cancer. As '*Global Leaders with Global Impact*', ALLG members have designed and conducted over 180 clinical trials that have had a significant impact on cancer treatment and care. Together, we are tackling the biggest challenges of blood cancers like leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma.

Membership with the ALLG provides opportunities to collaborate, innovate, and drive advancements in blood cancer research.

Our membership includes two categories:

ALLG Full Membership – This membership is designed to enhance leadership opportunities by fostering collaboration with haematology specialists. Members benefit from conducting impactful clinical trials, accessing funding, and engaging with international networks. Membership provides access to the National Blood Cancer Registry (NBCR), Australia's largest collection of data on acute leukaemia, myelodysplasia and other blood disorders. Members also receive comprehensive support for trial concepts and implementation, and the opportunity to present research on a global stage.

ALLG Associate Membership – This membership is designed for Trial Coordinators, Research Nurses, and Data Managers at accredited hospital sites. Members receive access to resources, networking, mentoring and eligibility for Scholarships & Awards to accelerate your career in haematology clinical research.

Join ALLG today! Apply for your membership here: ALLG Membership Application.

Trial Updates

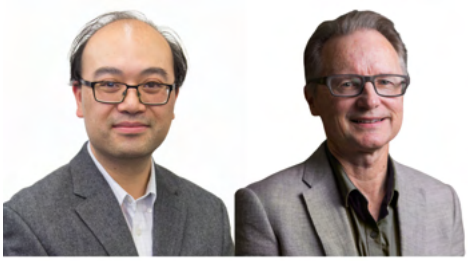
ALLG CML11 PINNACLE Trial Results Published in British Journal of Haematology

ALLG congratulates members Professor David Yeung and Professor Tim Hughes on the publication of the ALLG CML11 PINNACLE trial in the prestigious British Journal of Haematology.

Chronic Myeloid Leukaemia (CML) is a rare, slow-growing blood cancer caused by the bone marrow producing too many abnormal white blood cells. Early treatment for CML is vital to prevent the disease from progressing to more aggressive, harder to treat stages.

The CML11 PINNACLE study found that combining targeted therapy with immune-based therapy treatment could help people with newly diagnosed CML achieve deeper, fast responses. Deeper responses mean better long-term control of CML and help avoid progression of the disease.

Read the full CML11 PINNACLE article in the British Journal of Haematology here.



CML11 Investigators Prof David Yeung & Prof Tim Hughes

CLL12 AETHER

ALLG has recently opened the Australian arm of the international CLL12 AETHER trial to recruitment, led by Chief Investigators Associate Professor Philip Thompson and Professor Stephen Opat.

Better treatments...
Better lives.

CLL12 AETHER is an innovative, randomised phase II clinical trial investigating a combined therapy of venetoclax with immunotherapy epcoritamab for patients with relapsed or refractory Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia (CLL) and Small Lymphocytic Leukaemia (SLL). This international study, led by the Haemto-Oncology Foundation for Adults in the Netherlands (HOVON), aims to deepen molecular response to treatment in CLL/SLL patients and will recruit 12 patients from Australian sites.

For more information on the CLL12 trial, visit https://www.allg.org.au/clinical-trials-research/current-clinical-trials/.

WEBINAR SERIES
CALL FOR IDEAS

Tell us what you want to know!

Each year, CREST runs a 3-part webinar series to help answer health economics questions and build the skills that matter most to you.

In the past, we've run webinars on:

- Using Medicare data in cancer trials
- Health Technology Assessment
- Modelling and Economic Evaluations

Click here to watch our webinars.

We will be hosting another series later this year, but we want to know what topic would most benefit you.

To submit your ideas, suggestions, collaborations, please get in contact with the team: crest@uts.edu.au

The Trans-Tasman Radiation Oncology Group (TROG)

TROG ASM focuses on driving intelligent trials

More than 320 delegates gathered for TROG's 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting in Melbourne this month, to connect, collaborate and focus on future opportunities to drive intelligent clinical trials to advance radiation oncology.

The meeting, held at the Pullman Albert Park, drew delegates from every Australian state and territory, New Zealand and further afield.

The program centred on three sub-themes:

- **Precision & Performance:** Driving smarter, AI-enabled, and efficient trial designs that deliver real-world outcomes.
- **Equity in Motion:** Pushing forward with research that includes consumers, underserved populations, rural communities and First Nations people.
- **Fuelling the Future:** Sustaining a strong, skilled research workforce and embedding research into everyday clinical care.

There was a strong focus on fostering collaboration between consumers and researchers, with consumer insights a highlight of sessions on each of TROG's sub-specialties: central nervous system; head, neck and skin; genitourinary; breast; and lung cancer.

Read more about the 2026 ASM and the TROG Research Excellence Award winners in the next newsletter.



The TROG 2026 ASM Equity in Motion session, focusing on building equity through consumer collaboration

First participant recruited to VITaL lung cancer trial

The first Australian participant has been recruited for an innovative trial that could mark a shift in how radiation therapy is delivered in lung cancer.

Led by Professor Paul Keall, Director of the Image X Institute at the University of Sydney, the USyd/TROG 21.08 VITaL (Ventilation Imaging for Thoracic Lung cancer radiation therapy) trial is investigating a novel imaging modality called CT ventilation imaging, that aims to reduce side effects from radiation therapy.

CT ventilation imaging gives a picture of high- and low-functioning lung regions overlaid on the CT image. When clinicians plan for a patient's radiation therapy, this image enables them to avoid delivering radiation doses to healthy, high-functioning areas of the lung, and to instead redirect radiation through lower-functioning areas.

The randomised controlled trial, which will involve 165 participants with lung cancer, was launched



TROG PRSIDENT A/Prof Puma Sundaresan

after receiving a $1.86m National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grant last year.

Associate investigator Prof Shalini Vinod recruited the first trial participant from Liverpool Hospital in Sydney in January 2026. It is one of more than 15 sites that are set to recruit participants for the trial.

The VITaL trial was developed through the TROG Cancer Research trial pipeline, and TROG is collaborating with the trial sponsor, University of Sydney, to lead the trial radiation therapy quality assurance (RTQA) program.

TROG Concept Development Workshop sows seeds for innovative new research

TROG provided a kick-start for a number of exciting new trial research ideas, through a Concept Development Workshop held in December 2025.

The workshops explored 11 research concepts submitted by TROG members, covering a variety of disciplines and subspecialities, including breast cancer, salivary gland carcinoma, gioblastoma, endometrial cancer, adverse reactions and data collection.

The online workshop was convened by TROG President A/Prof Puma Sundaresan and TROG Scientific Committee Chair A/Prof Hien Le (pictured addressing the workshop).

"The goal of today is to produce a one-page concept, so you can then take this onto the next step in terms of trial development," A/Prof Le told the workshop. "At TROG, we understand this whole process is about sowing as many seeds as possible so that some will germinate, grow and develop into something significant."
He gave the example of the TROG 23.02 SMART trial, which was first proposed at TROG's 2023 Concept Development Workshop, went on to gain grant funding this year, and will open in 2026.

The 11 research proponents each developed a one-page outline of their concept for further development into a trial protocol, proposal or grant proposal.

To find out more about submitting a trial concept or proposal, email: TSC@trog.com.au.


TROG Scientific Committee Chair A/Prof Hien Le

SAVE THE DATE:
CREST Health Economics Symposium

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CREST Health Economics Symposium

We're excited to invite all CTG members to the first-ever CREST Health Economics Symposium. We're bringing together researchers, clinicians, consumers and health economists to talk about our favourite topic, you guessed it - *health economics in cancer clinical trials*.

This event seeks to highlight the important role of health economics in cancer research and its influence in guiding funding decisions. Speakers from across the research spectrum and CTGs will showcase cancer trials research and highlight the approaches, successes and challenges of incorporating health economics into cancer research.

Date: Friday, 4 September 2026
Time: 9 AM - 4 PM
Location: Aerial Function Centre, UTS, Sydney

Speakers and program to be released soon - stay tuned!



Cancer Quality of Life Expert Service Team (CQUEST)

CQUEST Upcoming workshops

CQUEST is excited to invite you and your members to the following workshops!

CQUEST Seminar: a core PRO set for Australian cancer care - Findings from the Movember Pan Cancer Initiative

Join CQUEST for a lunchtime seminar to learn about the core outcome set developed through the Movember Pan Cancer Initiative. Hear insights from multiple perspectives, including what it means for clinical trials in Australia.

Date: Wednesday, 15 April
Time: 12 PM - 1.30 PM AEST
Location: Online - Zoom link will be emailed to all registered participants

This seminar is free and open to all cooperative clinical trial groups (CTG) members.

For more information or to register, click here.

UTS Cancer Quality of Life Expert Service Team (CQUEST)

CQUEST Co-design workshop: Shaping quality of life strategies in clinical research together

CQUEST is inviting consumers to join our first co-design workshop - an interactive session dedicated to improving the next iteration of our consumer learning.

CQUEST strongly supports the inclusion of the consumer voice in study design and recognises that their input is critical to shaping the quality of life (QoL) aspects of clinical trials.
This opportunity aims to explore a co-designed model to make the best use of consumer expertise when deciding on QoL and patient-reported outcome measure (PROM) strategies for cancer clinical trials.

Date: Wednesday, 27 May
Time: 1-4 PM AEST
Location: Online - Zoom link will be emailed to all registered participants.

Please note: this workshop is only for consumers – individuals who have experienced cancer, either as a patient, or as a family member or carer for someone with cancer -- who are involved in a consumer advisory group or panel within one of the CTGs.

For more information or to register, click here.





Australia and New Zealand Sarcoma Association (ANZSA)



Sarcoma Research Grants

ANZSA is offering two Sarcoma Research Grants (SRG) with support from our generous donors. The grants of up to $50,000 each are to fund direct research costs to improve early detection and therapy for sarcoma.

Grants will commence on 1 July 2026 and are offered for 12 months at the end of which, the proposed work must be completed.

While the objective is to support the best possible research into sarcomas, there are some areas of priority that the ANZSA encourages for this grant such as translational studies and projects that can leverage results into successful large grant applications.

Grants are awarded for direct research costs – salary support is not allowed. All applicants should include a budget with their application.

Expectations
Grant recipients must:

- become a member of ANZSA at the time of application submission
- report at regular intervals (6 months, 12 months and at completion of the project) to ANZSA
- present findings at ANZSA scientific meetings
- acknowledge ANZSA and our supporters in all presentations and publications.

Eligibility

- Applications are open to highly motivated Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens and Australian permanent residents
- Research must be conducted in Australia and New Zealand
- ANZSA will only fund high quality research on the basis that all local and national regulations are adhered to
- Applicants must be appointed at a suitable organisation where the work will take place.

Award Selection
The ANZSA Grant Review Committee (comprising representatives of the ANZSA Board and members of the ANZSA Scientific Advisory Committee) will assess applications.

Grants will be awarded based on the applicant's:

- excellent academic and/or research track record
- strong desire to be trained in the discipline of sarcoma research
- project feasibility, innovation and excellence
- how the project relates to sarcoma and ANZSA's research activities

How to apply?
Applications for a 2026 ANZSA Sarcoma Research Grant must be submitted by 5pm Monday 4 May 2026.

Please email any questions to jasmine.mar@petermac.org

Annual Scientific Meeting

The ANZSA 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting will be held on 9–10 October at the Cairns Convention Centre, Queensland. Please save the date!

We are delighted to welcome our two international guest speakers for 2026:

- **Professor B. Ashleigh Guadagnolo** (Texas, USA)- Professor and Section Chief, Sarcoma/Melanoma Radiation Oncology, MD Anderson Cancer Center. Dual appointment in Health Services Research. Specialises in rare tumors, including bone and soft tissue sarcoma, melanoma, and non-melanoma skin cancers.
- **Professor Craig Gerrand** (London, UK)- Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH). Qualified University of Edinburgh, 1989. Fellowships in Orthopaedic Oncology and Lower Limb Reconstruction (Toronto). Joined RNOH sarcoma team in 2018.

Call for abstracts
We're excited to announce that abstract submissions will open on **1 June 2026**!
This year, all accepted abstracts will be published in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology, providing a fantastic opportunity to share your work with the regional oncology community.

Stay tuned for submission guidelines and more details will be available soon on the ANZSA website



Great Sarcoma Plank-A-Thon 2026 is here!

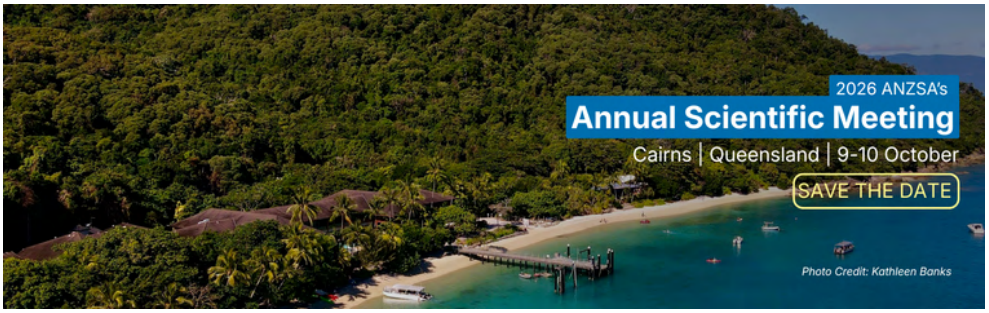
The Australia and New Zealand Sarcoma Association (ANZSA) is hosting the second Great Sarcoma Plank-A-Thon to raise vital funds for sarcoma research! Join the community as a Plank Hero, raising a sweat—and crucial funds—for those affected by this rare cancer.

Sarcoma affects bone and soft tissues, making up only 1% of adult cancers but around 20% of childhood cancers, yet it receives limited research funding.

Register as an individual or team, host your own Plank-A-Thon, or join our Melbourne event. Every plank supports research into early detection, better therapies, and improved outcomes.

Learn more or register:
www.sarcomaplankathon.com

ANZSA
Australia and New Zealand
Sarcoma Association



Australia New Zealand Gynaecological Oncology Group (ANZGOG)



We look forward to welcoming you: ANZGOG's 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting

"On the Edge: Translating Innovation into Action"

Dates: Wednesday 25 March - Friday 27 March 2026
Location: Gold Coast, QLD

We look forward to seeing you at this year's ANZGOG Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), our largest ASM on record, kicking off on 25 March on the Gold Coast.

Under the theme On the Edge: Translating Innovation into Action, the 2026 ASM brings together leading national and international experts to explore the latest advances in gynaecological cancer research and clinical practice.

Across the program, attendees will engage with cutting-edge science, collaborative discussion and practical insights, all focused on accelerating the translation of research into improved outcomes for people with a lived experience of gynaecological cancer.

For more information, visit:
www.anzgogasm.org.au

ANZGOG trial update: STRIVE now open to recruitment

ANZGOG's **STRIVE clinical trial** is now open to recruitment.

STRIVE (Stratification of Vulvar Squamous Cell Carcinoma by HPV and p53 status to Guide Excision) is an international study evaluating a biomarker-guided approach to surgical management for **vulvar squamous cell carcinoma (VSCC)**.

The trial is led in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand by ANZGOG, with **Professor Paul Cohen** and **Dr Lois Eva** as ANZ Co-Study Chairs. The first Australasian site at **Auckland City Hospital** is now open and recruiting participants.

ANZ GOG | Advancing research saving lives



STRIVE aims to strengthen the evidence base for surgical decision-making and improve outcomes for people diagnosed with VSCC.

Learn more about all ANZGOG clinical trials:
https://www.anzgog.org.au/research/trials/

ANZGOG appoints three new Board Directors

ANZGOG has appointed **Beth Slatyer, Catherine Whitby GAICD and Grace Chu GAICD** to its Board of Directors.

They join ANZGOG's existing esteemed Board, bringing additional expertise across **regulatory law, health policy, lived experience advocacy, digital innovation and organisational leadership** to support the organisation's strategic direction and governance.

ANZGOG Chair **Professor Clare Scott AM** welcomed the appointments:

"We are delighted to welcome Beth, Catherine and Grace to the ANZGOG Board. Their diverse expertise complements the strong clinical and scientific leadership already represented and will help guide ANZGOG as we continue to advance impactful research in gynaecological cancers."

More information:
https://www.anzgog.org.au/about/board-of-directors/

Stay connected
Follow ANZGOG on LinkedIn or X for the latest updates in gynaecological cancer research.



DID YOU KNOW?
CREST RESOURCES

Did you know we have a dedicated section on our website full of resources to help investigators incorporate health economics and pharmacoeconomic analyses into trial protocols?

In our online suite of resources we have:

- Proforma documents for conducting an economic evaluation
- How to collect data
- How to estimate QoL scores
- Various factsheets and templates
- Video recordings of past workshops and webinars such as using Medicare data and HTA
- Podcasts and workshop collaborations
- A number of useful links
- ...and more

If you have any suggestions for resources, please feel free to discuss with us by emailing crest@uts.edu.au

Psycho-Oncology Co-operative Research Group (PoCoG)

The Psycho-Oncology Co-operative Research Group (PoCoG) is a multidisciplinary research network dedicated to improving the psychological and social outcomes of people affected by cancer. We support research across all cancer types, including tumour-agnostic interventions that address shared psychosocial challenges experienced throughout the cancer trajectory. Our mission is to generate high-quality, collaborative research that bridges the gap between clinical evidence and real-world supportive care, ensuring that all people living with and beyond cancer, and their families, receive evidence-based psychosocial support.

PoCoG brings together researchers, clinicians, allied health professionals, and community members to design and deliver large-scale, practice-changing studies. Through strong national and international partnerships, digital innovation, and a culture of mentorship and collaboration, we translate research into meaningful improvements in cancer care. Find out more about us and the research we administer and support at www.pocog.org.

Concept Development Workshops (CDWs)

A cornerstone of PoCoG's work is our Concept Development Workshops (CDWs), held twice each year. CDWs provide a unique, supportive, multidisciplinary forum for researchers to develop and refine new study concepts. Participants receive structured feedback from experienced clinicians, researchers, community representatives, and national technical services, strengthening study design, feasibility, and potential impact.

These workshops are central to PoCoG's mission of fostering large-scale, multi-centre psycho-oncology research and mentoring the next generation of investigators to develop clinically significant projects.

Our next CDW will be held on 4 June 2026. Each workshop is an all-day, in-person event hosted at the University of Sydney, Camperdown Campus. Researchers based in Australia or New Zealand are invited to apply to present their concept at the June CDW by completing the application form and submitting by 23 April 2026. Further details and the application form are available here.



Participants at the December 2025 PoCoG CDW

Carers Conquer Fear is Recruiting!

Recruitment commenced in February 2026 for the *Carers Conquer* Fear pilot study. This innovative research is testing the feasibility and acceptability of a four week online intervention designed to address carer fears and worries about cancer recurrence or progression. Adapted from the evidence -based Conquer Fear intervention for patients, the program includes four structured lessons delivered over 4 weeks. The pilot aims to recruit carers (n= 40) to complete and evaluate the online intervention and questionnaires. Data will be collected on program uptake, engagement, satisfaction as well as changes in carer fear of cancer recurrence levels. Please contact Dr Kyra Webb for more details.



CarersCanADAPT Recruitment Completed!

The CarersCanADAPT study, led by PoCoG Cancer Carers Special Interest Group (SIG) chair Dr Rebekah Laidsaar-Powell, reached a significant milestone last month, achieving its recruitment target of n=300 cancer carers completing baseline measures. The study is evaluating a stepped care pathway for providing mental health support to cancer carers' and investigating the efficacy of the CarersCanADAPT online cognitive behavioural therapy program in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression in this vulnerable and often overlooked population.

With recruitment completed, the research team will finalise follow up data collection and analysis by the end of 2026.

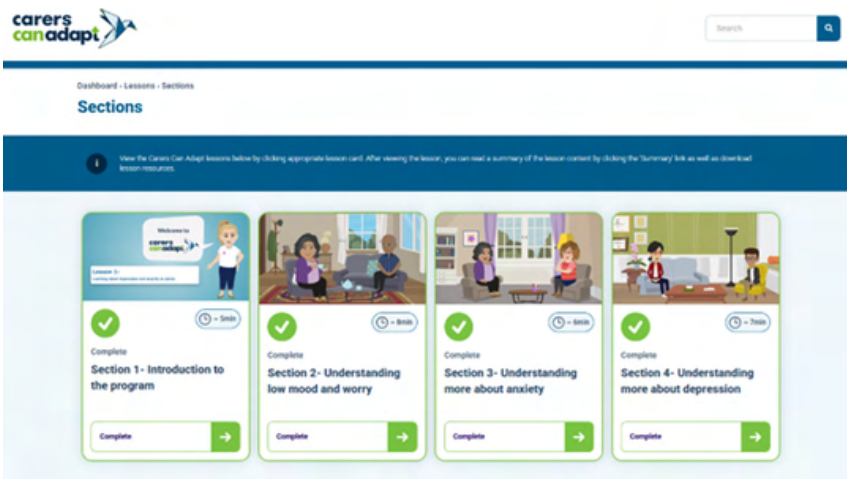
Please contact Dr Rebekah Laidsaar-Powell for more details.

First Nations Cancer Care eLearning Modules

PoCoG offers a suite of free First Nations eLearning Modules to support culturally safe and responsive cancer care. Developed with the TACTICS Centre of Research Excellence, the modules cover key topics including understanding cancer experiences among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communicating effectively with First Nations patients and families, and supporting participation in clinical trials.

These evidence-based, flexible modules can be integrated into everyday practice, helping health professionals deliver more respectful, equitable, and effective care. Access the modules at www.pocog.org.au/first-nations-resources.

PoCoG
Psycho-oncology Co-operative Research Group



The first cost analysis comparing radiotherapy and topical imiquimod for lentigo maligna treatment: A CREST STO example

CREST is delighted to present the first economic analysis comparing radiotherapy to topical imiquimod for the treatment of lentigo maligna (LM). This work is a collaborative effort between Pascale Guitera at MASC and Rafael de Feria Cardet, a CREST health economist.

The analysis was conducted as part of CREST's Structured Training Opportunity (STO) program, exclusive to members of Cancer Clinical Trial Groups. For more information about CREST's STO, please see here.

LM is a melanoma that occurs on sun exposed skin, and its incidence has been gradually increasing in Australia. Treatment options include surgery, radiotherapy or topical imiquimod. A recent randomised trial showed no difference in treatment failure 24 months after treatment completion between radiotherapy or topical imiquimod (the RADICAL trial). Based on these results, a cost analysis was performed to compare the direct medical costs and the indirect costs incurred by patients in each of the treatment arms of the RADICAL trial.

To conduct the cost analysis, patients' use of healthcare resources was collected during the trial. Direct medical costs were calculated from a health care system perspective, including treatment administration, follow-up care, and management of adverse events (AEs) during treatment. Indirect costs, reflecting the burden on patients and society, were estimated as productivity loss and time loss in travel to clinic visits. Sources of resource use and cost data are presented below. All costs were converted to US dollars (for publication purposes).

- Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) data were used to calculate costs of radiotherapy.
- Pharmacetuical Benefits Scheme (PBS) data were used to calculate costs of imiquimod, and other medicines used to treat adverse effects.
- Productivity losses were calculated by using the patient's income level and time missed from work.
- Travel time was estimated using Google Maps to calculate the shortest travel time by car from the patient's residence to the appointment centre. Average weekly earnings from the Australian Bureau of statistics was used to cost travel time.

Pascale et al. reported in their analysis that radiotherapy had higher direct treatment cost (US$2673.43) compared with imiquimod (US$72.50), including both LM and AE treatments.

The total cost associated with travel time during treatment was estimated to be 7.5 times higher for the radiotherapy group (US$793.69) compared with the imiquimod group (US$105.76). The average productivity loss was higher in the radiotherapy group (US$912.09) than in the imiquimod group (US$519.68). This higher cost was attributed to the radiotherapy group requiring more trips to the treatment location (27.39 visits compared to 6.25 in imiquimod group).

The authors presented the results of a sensitivity analysis to explore the effect of changes in individual cost parameters, adopting a healthcare system and societal perspective. These are presented in Table 1.

The economic analysis by Pascal et al. suggests that topical imiquimod is a cost-effective treatment option for managing LM compared to radiotherapy.

To access the original article, click here.

Contributed by: Lutfun Hossain

References:
Guitera, P. et al. (2026) 'A cost comparison of radiotherapy and topical imiquimod for lentigo maligna treatment: Considerations for clinical decision-making', Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, 94(4), pp. 1109–1115. doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2025.12.053.

TRAINING & MENTORING

STRUCTURED TRAINING OPPORTUNITY (STO)

Discover a hands-on approach to building your health economics skills and knowledge.

If you're working on a clinical trial or cancer research, understanding health economics is vital. Providing decision-makers with evidence of cost-effectiveness is the key to success.

The Structured Training Opportunity program by CREST, is designed exclusively for members of the Cancer Australia Clinical Trials Groups (CTGs).

As an STO participant, you'll receive:

- Expert guidance from a CREST health economist for your eligible project
- 30 to 40 hours of mentoring (typically across three months, with flexibility)
- Face-to-face sessions at the CREST office (complemented by online, phone and email support).

Find out more here or contact us crest@uts.edu.au to discuss a potential project.

Table 1: *Results of the sensitivity analysis to estimate range of costs*

Treatment arm	Perspective	Cost range (USD)
Imiquimod	Societal	$206.29-$2616.12
	Healthcare system	$47.92-$121.64
Radiotherapy	Societal	$3691.28-$6392.03
	Healthcare system	$2318.62-$3107.08

GI Cancer Trials (GCT)



Submit your idea at the 2026 Idea Generation Workshop on Young-Onset GI Cancer

Call for embryonic trial ideas focusing on young-onset GI cancer

We invite the submission of clinical trial ideas for young-onset GI cancer at our upcoming Idea Generation Workshop in May, convened by Dr Rebecca Bergin and Professor S. George Barreto.

Held annually, the Workshop is a unique platform to elevate embryonic ideas for GI cancer research. Each workshop features ideas that have been selected and invited for presentation. Non-presenting participants may also attend the Workshop and are encouraged to offer constructive advice, as well as ways of improving the proposed ideas.

We will help transform your concept into reality through our well-established Working Parties and Concept Development Groups.

Submissions close on 7 April. Registrations to attend close on 14 May. Learn more and submit an idea.

International pancreatic cancer study PemOla now open in Australia

The international PemOla study, led in Australia by Dr Daniel Croagh and Associate Professor Sumitra Ananda, is investigating a potential combined immunotherapy treatment for metastatic pancreatic adenocarcinoma (mPDAC). Using a precision medicine approach, the trial is investigating whether patients with mismatch repair deficiency or a TMB of ≥ 4 mutations/Mb may respond well to a combination of the immunotherapy drug, pembrolizumab, and the PARP inhibitor, olaparib. PemOla is currently open at Monash Medical Centre, Victoria.

TOPGEAR results inform new radiation therapy guidelines

The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) has updated guidelines for radiation therapy for gastric cancer in a variety of clinical settings. Published in Practical Radiation Oncology, these new guidelines were helped informed by the results of the TOPGEAR trial. Findings from TOPGEAR indicated that there was no significant benefit of chemoradiotherapy on long-term survival, recommending that chemoradiotherapy not become a routine standard of care.

Findings published for colon cancer trial RoLaCaRT-1

Results from the RoLaCaRT-1 trial were published in *Surgical Endoscopy*. The study showed that a robotic right hemicolectomy improved short-term surgical morbidity and surgeon physical demand and performance, while obtaining similar quality of life and pathological specimen quality compared to a laparoscopic procedure for right sided colon cancer.

28th Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM): 24–27 November 2026, Nipaluna/Hobart

Keep up the momentum from our ASM last year by delving into the full potential of high-impact partnerships through the 2026 Meeting theme: Collaborate. Accelerate. Improve Outcomes.

At our first ASM as GI Cancer Trials, the focus will be on addressing the key challenges in GI cancer research and care, with a strong emphasis on innovation, collaboration, and equitable trial access. Collaborations with CommNETs and AANZGOSA will strengthen the program by bringing together multidisciplinary expertise and perspectives from across the GI cancer community.

Keep an eye out for early bird registrations, award nominations and abstract submissions opening in April. Learn more / Read the 2025 ASM highlights

10,000 patients joining our trials

We recently reached an important milestone: enrolling our 10,000th trial participant since our establishment in 1991.

We're humbled by the trust that every participant has placed in us to turn their experience into practice-changing research, meaningful to everyone impacted by GI cancer.

Thank you to all our participants and their loved ones for being part of our work, towards a better future for GI cancer.

Stay up to date with our news

Follow us on LinkedIn for more updates.

GI CANCER TRIALS



Save the date for our Annual Scientific Meeting: 24–27 November, Nipaluna/Hobart

Breast Cancer Trials (BCT)

Breast Cancer Trials 47th Annual Scientific Meeting

Breast Cancer Trials (BCT) invites you to the **47th Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), to be held at the Sofitel Brisbane Central from 29–31 July 2026**. This premier event provides an invaluable opportunity to stay up to date with the latest in breast cancer clinical trials research.

The full and extensive program will include:

- A Trials Coordination Forum for staff involved in the conduct of BCT trials at their institution.
- A Concept Development Workshop providing opportunities to discuss new protocols, future trials and emerging research ideas.
- Two days of scientific sessions featuring updates and reviews of current breast cancer clinical trials research.
- Sponsored breakfast, lunch and dinner symposium sessions.
- A conference dinner.
- A Trainee and Early Career Day on Saturday 1 August 2026, with an accompanying dinner on Friday night.

We are also pleased to introduce two new sessions to the 2026 program:

- a Scientific Welcome Session, and
- a Welcome Event and Abstract Viewing session.

Confirmed Guest Speakers:

- **Dr Jana de Boniface:** A general surgeon trained in Berlin and Stockholm, specialising in oncoplastic and reconstructive breast surgery. She is currently a consultant at Capio Saint Göran's Hospital in Stockholm, Sweden.
- **Dr Sara Hurvitz:** Professor of medicine, co-director of the Santa Monica–UCLA Outpatient Oncology Practice, Medical Director of the Clinical Research Unit at the Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Director of Breast Oncology at UCLA.
- **Dr Chihwan David Cha:** A breast surgeon and clinician scientist at Hanyang University Hospital in Seoul, South Korea, with specialised expertise in hereditary breast cancer, male breast cancer, and translational research integrating multi-omics data.
- **Professor Julia White:** Tenured Professor of Radiation Oncology, Vice Chair of Clinical Operations, Hall Family Foundation Endowed Professor of Clinical Science, in the Department of Radiation Oncology at the University of Kansas Medical Center, and Professor Emeritus at The Ohio State University, in the US.
- **Professor Giuseppe Curigliano:** The director of the Early Drug Development Division and holds the co-chair for Experimental Therapeutics Program at the European Institute of Oncology, a comprehensive cancer center in Milano, Italy.
- **Professor Nadia Harbeck**: Director of the Breast Centre and holds the chair for Conservative Oncology at the Department of OBGYN, LMU University Hospital, Munich, Germany. She also heads the Oncological Therapy and Clinical Trials Unit, Department OBGYN, and the Centre for Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer at LMU University Hospital, Munich.

Further information, including the detailed program and full speaker list, will be available in the coming months. Delegates include leading clinicians, researchers and clinical trials professionals from across Australia and New Zealand. **Early-bird registration closes at 11:59 pm on 31 May 2026**.

Register today: bct2026.org

Register Your Interest for Future Q&A Events

Hear from some of the world's leading breast cancer researchers through our free, online, and live Q&A events. Moderated by Author and Journalist, Annabel Crabb, the Q&As are aimed at keeping people informed about breast cancer research, clinical trials, and important associated topics, and they enable everyone to watch the events at a time and location that is convenient to them.

You will be able to ask our researchers your breast cancer questions on key topics and keep up to date on the latest in breast cancer research.

Previous topics that have been covered include:

- Are More Young Women Being Diagnosed with Breast Cancer?
- Side Effects of Breast Cancer Treatment.
- Supportive Care in Breast Cancer.
- Breast Cancer Research Update: Current Progress and Future Pathways.
- The Role and Impact of Diet and Exercise in Breast Cancer Care.
- Breast Cancer and Heart Health.

To find out more, watch a recording of a previous Q&A, or to register your interest for future Q&As visit: https://www.breastcancertrials.org.au/qa-events/

BREAST CANCER TRIALS



Author and Journalist, Annabel Crabb

Australian and New Zealand Urogenital and Prostate Cancer Trials Group (ANZUP)

Some recent ANZUP news highlights

New research findings were reported at ASCO GU 2026 from the CLIMATE study (ANZUP 1906), led by ANZUP in collaboration with the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

The findings reveal a simple blood test, measuring the levels of a highly sensitive and specific marker (miR-371) of testicular cancer germ cell tumours can help predict which people with early-stage testicular cancer are most likely to have their cancer return. You can read about this important research on our website.

We also had two posters feature at ASCO GU 2026:

- **P3BEP** (ANZUP 1302): An international randomized phase 3 trial of accelerated versus standard BEP chemotherapy for individuals aged 11-50 years with intermediate and poor-risk metastatic germ cell tumours (GCTs) - poster presented by Associate Professor Ben Tran.
- Development and validation of computational histology artificial intelligence (CHAI)-powered prognostic and predictive biomarkers in metastatic hormone-sensitive prostate cancer (mHSPC) using **ENZAMET** and CHAARTED prospective randomized phase 3 trials (RCT) - first author Neeraj Agarwal.

You can read more about ANZUP at ASCO GU 2026 on our website.

ANZUP's trial portfolio continued to grow with 5 ANZUP-led trials and 1 co-badged trial currently in recruitment, 17 in follow-up, and a number of new trials in development. You can read more about our trials on our website here.

#ANZUP26 –28-30 June 2026

The #ANZUP26 ASM will be held from Sunday 28 to Tuesday 30 June 2026 at the Adelaide Convention Centre, centrally located in the heart of Adelaide. Delegates will enjoy convenient access to experience fantastic hotels, lively dining and world-leading innovation districts—all within walking distance of the venue. We look forward to seeing you there. The theme of the 2026 ANZUP Annual Scientific Meeting, **"What Matters Most."**



"What matters most" reflects ANZUP's commitment to ensuring that every trial, every research question, and every clinical decision remains grounded in the needs of the people we are ultimately here to serve. It means designing studies that answer meaningful questions, investing in research that improves survival and quality of life, and driving outcomes that genuinely change the way we care for people affected by genitourinary cancers.

This theme reminds us that innovation, collaboration, and scientific rigour only have value when they translate into real benefits for patients, their families, and the broader community—and that keeping patients at the centre of everything we do is what matters most.

We have a great International Faculty lined up so far, including Prof Gerhardt Attard, Prof Marianna Kruithof-de Julio, Dr Darren Poon, Dr. Sarah Psutka and Prof Bertrand Tombal, as well as a stellar National faculty.

Early bird registrations are now open, and we invite you to register for this face-to-face event, and close on 31 March 2026.

We are also inviting abstract submissions from all professional disciplines and groups involved in researching and treating genitourinary cancers for admission into the program for 2026.

Abstract submissions close: 9am Monday 26 April 2026, AEST.

ANZUP
Cancer Trials Group Limited

