



In this edition:

- Capturing the opportunity cost of oncological care | P1
- ANZUP update | P2
- TOGA update | P3
- CREST HTA webinar videos | P3
- AGITG update | P4
- CREST Structured Training Opp. | P4
- TROG update | P5
- CQUEST consumer workshop | P5
- ANZGOG update | P6
- MASC Trials | P7
- CREST resources | P7
- COGNO update | P7
- CREST consumer workshop | P8
- PoCoG update | P8
- Drug pricing & disrupting the drug premium | P9
- CREST workshop - recap | P9
- ALLG update | P10
- ANZSA update | P11
- CREST virtual workshop | P11
- BCT update | P12
- PaCCSC Clinical Trial Master Class P|12

Capturing the opportunity cost of oncological care

The impacts of high cancer costs to patients are widespread – ranging from refusing or delaying treatment, to negative effects on mental health and poorer quality of life. This is often referred to as financial toxicity. In addition to out-of-pocket costs, patients also face the opportunity costs of treatment, that is, the loss of benefit from other alternatives when one option is chosen. The opportunity cost of treatment can be: time spent seeking care, time spent commuting, lost wages, lost leisure time, as well as other, indirect costs of seeking care.

To measure the patient opportunity cost of seeking oncologic treatment, Handley et al developed the Oncology Opportunity Cost Assessment Tool (OOCAT). The research team initially conducted focus groups with patients which generated 112 'themes' related to the opportunity cost of cancer treatment, which were categorised under six domains shown in Table 1. Using these concepts and domains, the team developed a set of survey questions to measure the cost of the domain or to ascertain the patient-perceived importance of the domain (using a 7-point Likert scale).

The OOCAT was then validated through interviews with patients which further refined the tool.

Each patient journey is unique. The OOCAT provides a means of engaging patients in a shared decision-making process together with their providers. By understanding the opportunity costs patients face, providers can have discussions to empower patients to choose how they receive certain elements of their care e.g.: face to face in the clinic; home visits by the provider; digital platforms for monitoring? The OOCAT can help identify the unique strategies and systems that can help reduce the patient's opportunity cost, thereby delivering more effective patient-centred care.

The research team are planning to further validate the tool using a larger patient cohort. In the meantime, you can review the OOCAT [here](#).

Source: Handley, N.R. et al. (2022) 'Development of the oncology opportunity cost assessment tool: Item generation and content validity testing', *JCO Oncology Practice*, 18(3). doi:10.1200/op.21.00288.

Table 1: Opportunity costs of cancer treatment

Opportunity cost domain	Example
Travel	Time required for driving, parking, and walking to appointment, with associated financial costs
Appointments	Time waiting in a clinic waiting room, with associated distress related to infection risk, cleanliness, and medical errors
Work and school	Time required off work or school for appointments and treatments, sometimes requiring disability or unemployment benefits
Home	Difficulty coordinating care for dependents, decreased time with loved one, and decreased engagement with meaningful activities
Health system	Trade-off between care perceived to be high quality and care closer to home; challenges with care coordination in a complex system requiring investment of time and resources
Caregiver	Time required off work for caregivers, increased expectation on caregivers in the home setting

Source: Table 2 Opportunity cost domains elicited in focus groups, Handley et al 2021



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



Some recent ANZUP trial news highlights

At the recent #ASCO23 Annual Meeting held in Chicago and online from June 2-6 2023, ANZUP had five posters featured:

- BCG+MM (ANZUP 1301),
- CLIMATE (ANZUP 1906),
- GUIDE (ANZUP 1903),
- P3BEP (ANZUP 1302) and
- TheraP (ANZUP 1603).

You can view these and other presentations and poster on the [ANZUP website](#).

During the quarter, our BCG+MM study reached full recruitment - congratulations to Dickon Hayne and everyone involved in this important bladder cancer study.

Our DASL-HiCaP trial (ANZUP 1801) reached 1,000 patients (as of 1 June at 1,041) with only 59 to reach full recruitment.

Our new Phase 2 prostate cancer study DIPPER (ANZUP 2002) opened to recruitment. Congratulations to Study Co-Chairs Matt Roberts and Louise Emmett for all their efforts to get this study opened.

As of 1 May 2023, our co-badged study #UpFrontPSMA closed to recruitment.

A huge thank you once again to all the PI's and trials teams for their ongoing efforts and to all the patients who take part in our trials.

Synchrony Fellowship Award

Late last year we launched the Synchrony Fellowship Award, providing support for prostate and urogenital cancer research support driven by a defined clinical question. The Award supports up to \$250,000 for 2 years.

We are delighted to announce ANZUP's inaugural 2023 Synchrony Fellowship has been awarded to Dr Ed Kwan for his application: 'Multimodal ctDNA analysis and novel imaging to inform precision use of PSMA radioligand therapy: an integrative biomarker analysis of the phase 2 TheraP trial'.

This research aims to assess ctDNA samples of prostate cancer patients treated with different anti-cancer treatments including LuPSMA. By examining ctDNA at different timepoints, this will help identify genetic, DNA and patient-specific factors that are predictive of improved anti-cancer response to varying treatments. This will be done in conjunction with testing for key genes known to be associated with, and driving prostate cancer such as those involved in DNA repair and testosterone.

Congratulations Ed!

#ANZUP23 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) - registrations now open

Our 2023 ASM will be held in Melbourne from 9-11 July. The theme is 'Bouncing Back' with the convening committee led by Ben Tran and Renu Eapen. The program features a faculty of world-class international and national speakers, your ASM favourite sessions, as well as some new and exciting additions to the program.

We have confirmed an exciting International Faculty: Andrea Apolo, Darren Feldman, Alex Wyatt, Sima Porten, Ananya Choudhury, Rebecca Martin and Laurien Buffart.

[Registrations are now open](#), and we invite you to attend this face-to-face event.



The return of the ANZUP Pedalthons in Sydney & Melbourne!

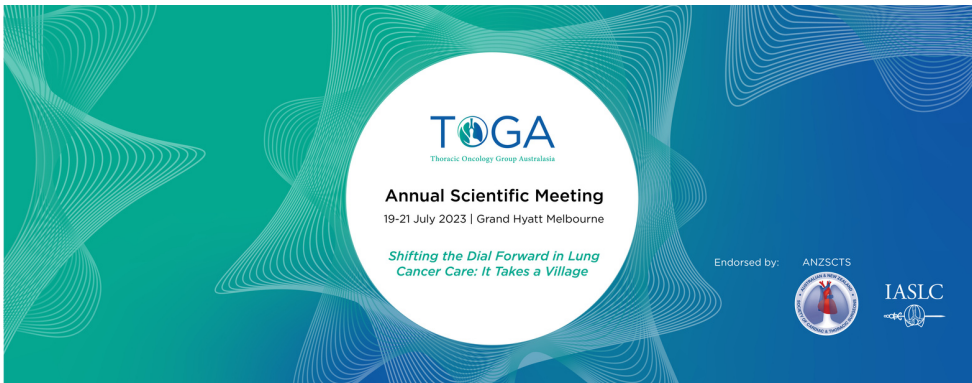
During the year we were pleased to announce the return of our face-to-face Pedalthon events in both Sydney and Melbourne.

The 2023 Melbourne Pedalthon was a tremendous success with 30 teams, 120 riders completing 2,756 laps! We thank everyone who joined us out at Sandown on Sunday 26 March 2023 for their enthusiasm, comradery and dedication to fighting cancer, below the belt. A huge congratulations to all the riders and supporters for raising nearly \$60,000.

The Sydney Pedalthon will be held on Tuesday 31 October 2023 at Sydney Motorsport Park, Eastern Creek. Get a team together or ride individually. For more information or to register go to: <https://www.belowthebelt.org.au/event/view/sydney-pedalthon-2023>.



Thoracic Oncology Group Australasia (TOGA)



TOGA Annual Scientific Meeting

Registrations have opened for the TOGA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) to be held 20-21 July face to face at the Grand Hyatt Melbourne, with accompanying virtual livestream and OnDemand.

International speakers include: Prof Karen Kelly, medical oncologist and IASLC CEO; Prof Stephen Swisher, surgeon, who has been involved in several clinical trials for immunotherapy and surgery and Dr Tarek Mekhail, speaking on targeted therapies. We are also delighted to welcome Senior Australian of the Year, Prof Tom Calma AO, who will speak on tackling smoking rates in indigenous Australians.

The program will also include updates in lung cancer prevention, diagnosis, surgery, radiotherapy targeted therapies, immunotherapy, palliative care, time toxicity of cancer treatment, and the effect of climate change on lung cancer.

TOGA is conducting a pre-ASM 'Molecular testing in NSCLC' workshop, in preparation for the rollout of [medicare-reimbursed small gene panel testing](#). The workshop will be held face to face only at the Grand Hyatt, Melbourne, Wednesday 19 July.

Register for this workshop and apply for travel grants as part of ASM [registration](#), or see the [program](#).

National Lung Cancer Screening Program

A National Lung Cancer Screening Program (LCSP), due to commence in 2025 will receive \$263.8 million over four years. TOGA welcomed the news as this program will facilitate detection of lung cancer at an earlier stage, significantly improving chances of survival.

Lung cancer is the 5th most common cancer but continues to be the leading cause of cancer death in Australia with over 8000 deaths per annum. See Figure 1.

In indigenous Australians, lung cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer, with the public health burden 2.5x the burden in non-indigenous Australians. Much of this is due to late diagnoses and poor survival. The five-year relative survival for stage IV is 3.8%, compared to 67.7% for stage I lung cancer. To overcome this striking disparity, lung cancer needs to be diagnosed at an earlier stage, when curative treatment is possible. Two clinical trials (NELSON and ILST) have provided evidence that early detection via low-dose CT imaging in high-risk populations reduces the number of deaths from lung cancer.

The proposed LCSP will offer screening to high-risk candidates: Australians between 50-70 years who currently smoke or who have previously smoked and meet internationally validated risk assessment criteria. If there are no findings, participants will be screened every two years. Findings will be referred to specialist tertiary healthcare providers.



CREST HTA webinar videos

Earlier in the year, CREST ran a webinar series on Health Technology Assessment (HTA).

It covered three topics:

- What is HTA?
- How are consumer inputs used in HTA?
- How are trials used in HTA?

If you missed this webinar, you can now watch the recordings on our website along with recordings from other workshops/webinars.

[CREST videos >](#)

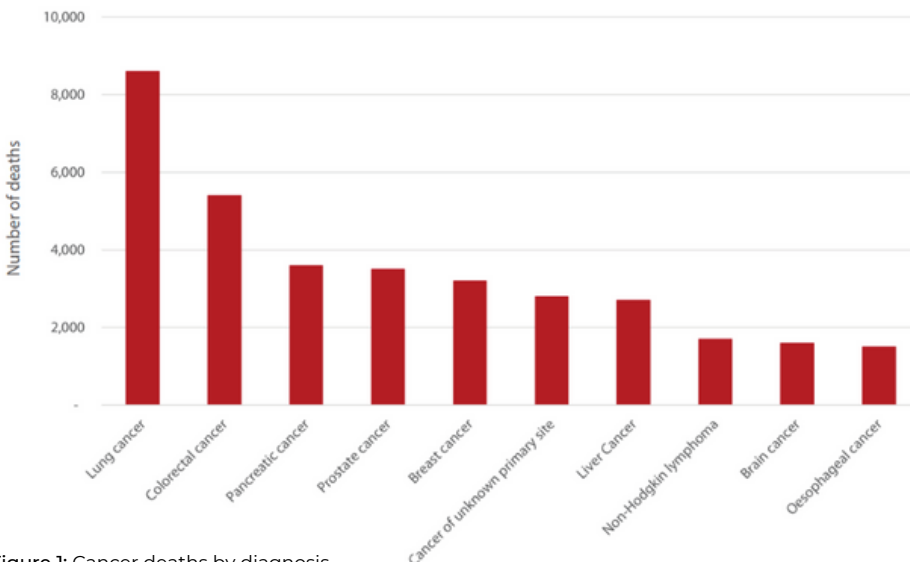


Figure 1: Cancer deaths by diagnosis

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022. Cancer data in Australia. Cat. No. CAN 122. Canberra: AIHW.



Australasian Gastro-Intestinal Trials Group (AGITG)



Annual Report 2022

Our latest annual report is now available to download and view on our website. This past year has been ambitious and transformative for the AGITG, having introduced an updated strategic plan and the Research Development and Prioritisation Framework. [View our achievements and goals from 2022.](#)

Stay up to date with the AGITG

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) or [@GICancer](#) on Twitter for more updates.

TRAINING & MENTORING

CREST STRUCTURED TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Being hands on is a great way to build skills and knowledge. This applies to building skills in the use of **health economics methods** for the analysis of clinical trials and similar projects.

To facilitate that learning, CREST has a program of Structured Training Opportunities available to members of Cancer Australia Clinical Trial Groups (CTG).

Through this structured training opportunity you will receive:

- Guidance from a CREST health economist for your eligible project
- 30 to 40 hours of mentoring (typically across a 3 month period)
- Face-to-face session at the CREST office (complemented by online, phone and email contact)

If you are a member of a CTG, have a project with a health economics component, and are interested in discussing whether it might be suitable as a Structured Training Opportunity project, please contact us: crest@uts.edu.au.

Please note: CREST is unable to sponsor individuals for participation in these training opportunities.

Register now for our ASM 13-16 November, Christchurch

We look forward to welcoming you to beautiful Aotearoa New Zealand for our 25th Annual Scientific Meeting. This year, the prestigious AGITG ASM will build on the theme of equity, diversity and inclusion in clinical trials.

After full-day workshops on Day One, there will be an exciting three-day program, ranging from keynote sessions by International Faculty to presentations on the latest in GI cancer research – including crowd favourites such as the New Concepts Symposium and multidisciplinary debate sessions.

Early bird registration and abstract submissions are now open at asm.gicancer.org.au.

Late-Stage Colorectal Cancer Idea Generation Workshop

On 19 May, the AGITG hosted the 2023 Late-Stage Colorectal Cancer Idea Generation Workshop online, convened by A/Prof Cherry Koh and Dr Sina Vatandoust.

Five concepts addressing gaps in current knowledge on late-stage colorectal cancer were presented respectively by Prof Vicki Whitehall, Dr Vanessa Wong, Dr Yoko Tomita, Dr Alex Flynn and Dr Mark Nalder. We would like to thank the convenors, the presenters and all participants for another successful and inspiring workshop. [Read the workshop recap.](#)

Role vacancy: Research Fellow

The AGITG is seeking a part-time Clinical Research Fellow based in Australia or New Zealand to support our growing GI cancer portfolio. The role intends to provide early career researchers an opportunity to build experience and expertise in:

- trial development, conduct and completion;
- clinical oversight of the research portfolio; and
- membership engagement across major scientific events.

[Learn more and apply](#)

Research news

AGITG's trial portfolio remains diverse. Two of our studies currently open and recruiting are VADER and PALEO. VADER is investigating the efficacy of a new combination of drugs for RAS wild type metastatic colorectal cancer, while PALEO is aiming to alleviate dysphagia symptoms in patients with oesophageal cancer. [View all open AGITG trials.](#)

Congratulations to Prof Vicki Whitehall for being awarded the one-off community-funded Rectal Cancer Research Grant for her study, Predicting Chemoradiotherapy Sensitivity in Rectal Cancer Organoids (PProSecCO).



TransTasman Radiation Oncology Group (TROG)



Concept Development Workshop

TROG Cancer Research held its one-day [Concept Development Workshop \(CDW\)](#) on Wednesday, 31 May 2023. Hosted by A/Prof Puma Sundaresan (Convenor) and A/Prof Sasha Senthil (Chair TROG Scientific Committee) along with Senior Research Fellows (Biostatistics) Chris Brown and Dr Kristy Robledo, this online workshop was designed to support TROG's early to mid-career clinical cancer researchers develop their ideas into a trial concept.

The program was a mix of presentations on steps to develop up a trial concept and trials design by Biostatisticians, Chris Brown and Dr Kristy Robledo, and smaller group discussions, where each idea was workshopped in a multidisciplinary and collaborative manner, receiving input and guidance from experienced TROG trialists, dedicated mentors and representatives from the national technical services including CREST's own Richard De Abreu Lourenco!

Ideas were submitted from a variety of disciplines (Medical Physics, Radiation Oncology, Medical Oncology, Radiation Therapy) ranging over a variety of subspecialties. TROG are excited to support this new wave of researchers develop their concepts.

Climb For a Cause: Trek4TROG

Come join the Trek4TROG Kosi Challenge 01 to 03 December 2023!

Commencing at the Ski Rider Hotel in Wilsons Valley, this is an amazing opportunity to climb the highest point in Australia, Mt Kosciuszko while helping to fundraise for TROG Cancer Research. Trekker's will experience three days of exploration, viewing Australia's natural landscapes and awe-inspiring scenes.

[More information about joining the trek.](#)

[Can't make the hike? Sponsor a hiker or team today!](#)



Join a TROG Committee Today!

The TROG Scientific Committee (TSC) main aim is to ensure that TROG's mission to conduct world-class research in radiation medicine that leads the global effort to better control and cure cancer and to help improve outcomes for people affected by cancer is met.

The [TSC](#) is composed of members who are experts in the fields of radiation, medical and interventional oncology, medical physics, clinical research, quality of life research, health economics, statistics, and trial coordination and supported by 5 subspecialty working parties (Breast, CNS, GU, H&N and Lung), the New Technologies and Techniques Committee, the Secondary Data Analysis Committee and other Special Interest Groups. They are vital in shaping the research priorities of TROG by identifying gaps in research, developing new research concepts, reviewing the scientific merit of research proposals, and providing expert advice.

TROG welcomes people from all areas of research to become a member of these working parties, committee and/or groups. Express your interest today via www.surveymonkey.com/r/TROG_Join_a_Committee



Cancer Quality of Life Expert Service Team (CQUEST)

Save the date:
face-to-face consumer workshop | 2 Feb 2024

Patient and public involvement in the design of studies is vital for ensuring that research is relevant and meaningful to people affected by cancer.

Early next year on **Friday, 2 February 2024**, CQUEST will host a free face-to-face workshop for CCTG consumer/community representatives at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS).

This workshop will cover ways of measuring, analysing and interpreting quality of life in cancer clinical trials, with examples and group activities to help them review the PROM components of CCTG trials at concept development workshops.

For more information:
cquest@uts.edu.au

Australia New Zealand Gynaecological Oncology Group (ANZGOG)

ANZGOG Trial Update

ANZGOG is fortunate to have active and engaged members working locally and globally to bring new trials to Australia and New Zealand for participation by women with a gynaecological cancer:

ANZGOG clinical trials open to recruitment:

- one ovarian cancer trial: HyNOVA in collaboration with the NHRMC Clinical Trials Centre, at the University of Sydney
- two endometrial cancer trials: ENDO-3 in collaboration with Queensland Centre for Gynaecological Cancer and ADELE in collaboration with the NHRMC Clinical Trials Centre, at the University of Sydney
- one ovarian + endometrial cancer trial: PARAGON II in collaboration with NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre, at the University of Sydney
- one quality of life/end of life study: PEACE in collaboration with the Nordic Society of Gynaecological Oncology – Clinical Trial Unit
- one ovarian + endometrial cancer trial: EPOCH in collaboration with Imperial College London, UK and Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Canada.

ANZGOG clinical trials in start-up:

- Three ovarian + endometrial cancer trials: DOMENICA, XPORT-EC-42 and TAPER
- one cervical cancer trial: ITTACc
- one ovarian cancer trial: ROSELLA
- one survey study: EXPRESSION IX

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

New Trial for Ovarian and Endometrial Cancer Patients Opens to Recruitment

ANZGOG's EPOCH study is open for recruitment for women with tubo-ovarian or uterine carcinosarcoma, examples of rare gynaecological cancers.

Led by Professor Clare Scott AM, this Phase II open-label study aims to improve outcomes for women by offering eligible patients access to treatments which may have superior

superior efficacy compared to the currently accessible standard chemotherapeutic options. EPOCH is one of the first ANZGOG trials to incorporate TR-ANZGOG, enabling ANZGOG to facilitate current and future translational research from these precious rare cancer specimens.

Contact john.andrews@anzgog.org.au for more information.

ANZGOG's Endometrial Cancer Study Awarded \$1.27 Million in Funding

ANZGOG's TAPER study has been awarded a \$1.27 million grant from the Australian Government's Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

The TAPER study is a clinical Phase II trial that aims to improve treatment options for women with endometrial cancer. The funding is a testament to the importance of this study, which has the potential to create a real difference for those affected by this cancer.

Under the leadership and guidance of Principal Investigator Professor Alison Brand AM, Gynaecological Oncologist and past-Chair and Director of ANZGOG, ANZGOG will pioneer the trial in both Australia and New Zealand.

ANZGOG's 2023 Annual Scientific Meeting

The ANZGOG 2023 Annual Scientific Meeting proved to be an outstanding success with 324 delegates from Australia and New Zealand converging at the Hilton Hotel in Brisbane, QLD.

The conference provided an excellent platform for engaging in meaningful discussions and collaborative efforts in the field of gynaecological oncology research.

Read about the key highlights and takeaways from the meeting [here](#).



Uterine Cancer Awareness Month Webinar

June is Uterine Cancer Awareness Month around the globe. In Australia, cases of endometrial cancer (the most common type of uterine cancer) have almost doubled over the last 20 years, and the incidence continues to rise, particularly in New Zealand.

ANZGOG and WomenCan are hosting a public 'lunch and learn' webinar presented by ANZGOG member, Medical Oncologist, Associate Professor Yolanda Antill, to provide valuable insights into the rise of endometrial cancer. Please share the below details with your networks.

Date: Thursday 29 June 2023

Time: 12pm-1pm (AEST)

[RSVP for this free webinar today.](#)



Contributed by: Prof Clare Scott AM



Improving life for women through cancer research



Melanoma and Skin Cancer Trials (MASC Trials)



Melanoma patient joins clinical trial to help others

Stuart's melanoma journey began with a mole on the back of his knee. After knocking it and drawing blood, Stuart had a biopsy that confirmed it was a melanoma. A couple of weeks later he underwent surgery to remove the mole and was asked if he would like to join the Melanoma Margins Trial, MelMarT-II.

Led by Australian investigators and Melanoma and Skin Cancer Trials, the MelMarT-II trial will study almost 3,000 patients across eight countries. The results of this global effort will help determine the best surgical treatment for stage II melanoma, leading to better outcomes for melanoma patients in Australia and around the world.

[Read Stuart's story.](#)



Melanoma patient joins clinical trial to help others

Melanoma and Skin Cancer Trials (MASC Trials) membership is open to anyone interested in our melanoma and skin cancer clinical research, from healthcare professionals to consumers. Applying is simple and free.

As a MASC Trials member, you will join our network of over 2,250 professionals and consumers who are committed to reducing the toll of melanoma and skin cancer through clinical research. Learn more about MASC Trials membership benefits and [apply here](#).



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?

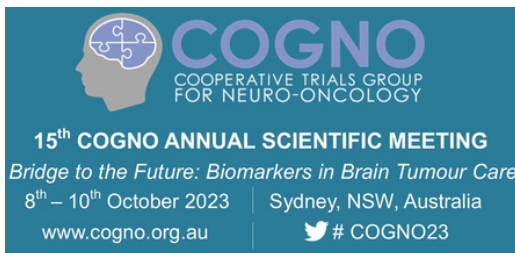
On our page we have available:

- 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
- A number of useful links

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



Cooperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO)



15th COGNO Annual Scientific Meeting

Save the date and mark your calendars, the 15th COGNO Annual Scientific Meeting will be held in Sydney, NSW on Sunday 8th October - Tuesday 10th October 2023.

We are excited to announce this year's theme - "Bridge to the Future: Biomarkers in Brain Tumour Care". Co-Convenors Dr Adrian Lee, Dr Keryn Davidson and the ASM Organising



Committee are busy planning a strong, informative program that you won't want to miss.

International Speakers

The ASM Organising Committee is pleased to announce this year's international speakers who will be joining us in-person to present on the latest updates and research in brain cancer from the U.S. and Europe.

- [Professor Melanie Hayden Gephart](#)
- [Professor Mustafa Khasraw](#)
- [Professor Martin Taphoorn](#)

Abstracts

COGNO ASM abstract submissions will be opening soon, in the meantime, start thinking about your submissions! This year's abstract themes are:

- Adolescent and Young Adult, Paediatric and Rare CNS Tumours
- Basic / Translational Science
- Brain Metastasis
- Pathology
- Radiology
- Surgery
- Survivorship, Psychology, and Supportive Care
- Therapeutics in Clinical Care
- Other

Online registration opening soon, to join our mailing list for regular updates, email ctc.cognoasm@sydney.edu.au or visit our twitter page [@cogno_trials](https://twitter.com/cogno_trials). Additional information can be found at www.cogno.org.au. We hope to see you in Sydney in October!

CREST consumer workshop

SAVE THE DATE | FRIDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER | UTS

Later in the year, on Friday, 15 September, CREST will hold a FREE face-to-face workshop at the University of Technology, Sydney for consumer/community representatives working with CTGs.

This workshop is for consumer/community representatives to gain an insight into how health economics fits with clinical trials and the role it plays in making health care available, in particular pharmaceuticals and medical services. Participants in the workshop will receive course notes, including copies of the slides presented on the day, references used as examples throughout the workshop, and additional useful readings. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

Workshop program

The workshop will use a series of workshop-style seminars and exercises to provide theory and practical examples to cover:

- fundamental concepts in health economics;
- how health economics is used in the context of collecting and using clinical trial information;
- how consumer data from within trials, clinical practice or surveys might be used in health economic analyses;
- the processes of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee and the Medical Services Advisory Committee; and
- the role consumers play in providing data and shaping how evidence is viewed through the reimbursement process.

Travel assistance

CREST will provide up to \$500 travel assistance for one (1) consumer/community representative from each CTG to attend. The representative must be outside of Sydney and endorsed by the Executive Officer.

We will provide more information in the following weeks.

Psycho-oncology Cooperative Research Group (PoCoG)



It's been an exciting first half of the year in the PoCoG Executive Office. We are proud to report that we launched the last two modules in our e-Learning Series: [Improving Cancer Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples](#).

This series is a collaboration between PoCoG and the Centre of Research Excellence in Targeted Approaches To Improve Cancer Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (TACTICS) at the University of Queensland.

The series offers valuable information for a wide range of audience, including clinicians and researchers and includes three modules and we'd encourage you to view the modules and share them with your networks.

The links are provided below:

- [Cancer overview and factors impacting health inequalities.](#)
- [Communicating with patients and carers.](#)
- [Boosting Participation Rates of First Nations People in Cancer Clinical Trials.](#)

Just this month we hosted our first concept development workshop for 2023. This meeting was specifically for concepts with a clinical focus and was hosted by the co-leads of our Clinicians in Research Special Interest Group.

Members of the PoCoG Scientific Advisory Committee and content experts were invited to attend and provide their input and we are looking forward to working with concept authors to develop their research ideas over time.

PoCoG CDWs provide a valuable opportunity for members to receive expert feedback and are an effective

forum for building inter-group collaborations, many of which lead to the development of PoCoG supported studies. We will hold another concept development later in the year, so be sure to keep an eye out.

As we head into the second part of the year our attention is firmly focused on our Scientific Meeting, at the Crown Plaza in Melbourne on Tuesday 31 October (the day before the COSA ASM). The theme for the meeting is Sustainability in Psycho-oncology and our multi-disciplinary organising committee is hard at work planning the agenda.

The agenda will include a mix of invited speakers and abstract presentations and [we are accepting abstracts now](#). [Early bird tickets are also on sale](#).

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

Drug pricing and disrupting the cancer premium

As the prevalence of cancer increases, so too does the cost of cancer drugs. The emergence of novel therapies and technologies, as well as the use of combination therapies and multiple lines of treatment, has seen public health systems, and patients, confront these rapidly rising costs.

Why is the cost of cancer drugs often much higher than non-cancer drugs? The public awareness and concern for cancer is greater than non-cancer diseases. People may be more concerned about life expectancy and the risks of the diseases and this can drive a higher premium.

Drug pricing differs between countries. The US have traditionally had a system by which manufacturers set drug prices, resulting in higher drug prices than other countries. Recently, as at August 2022, the US implemented reforms to negotiate drug prices, with a limit on the number of drugs that can be negotiated (up to 20 annually by 2029). Canada, Japan and many European countries also have national mechanisms for drug pricing negotiations and regulation. In Australia, advice from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) is used by Government in price negotiations with the manufacturer.

How do these national regulatory bodies negotiate drug prices? There are a few factors that influence the cost at which drug prices are set and are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: The determinants of drug price negotiations

Determinants of price negotiation	Positive	Negative
External reference pricing	Drug prices are benchmarked against the prices in those countries which are economically similar.	Confidential agreements between the government and the manufacturer means that the actual price of the drug is different to the publicly available price, resulting in higher than actual drug costs being set.
Value-based pricing (therapeutic)	Drug pricing considers the added therapeutic value of a new drug, compared to the standard treatment for the same indication.	May not be sufficient to establish an association between the magnitude of therapeutic value and price if considered alone.
Value-based pricing (cost-effectiveness)	Drug pricing considers the additional costs required to generate an additional unit of health (generally measured in quality-adjusted life years [QALYs]).	Challenges remain in interpreting what is an appropriate incremental cost-effectiveness ratio.

Of course, no one method is perfect and a combination of the different methods may be more informative.

To improve patient access to cancer drugs, Vokinger recommends the following steps to disrupt the cancer premium.

1. More transparency on actual drug prices paid by the government.
2. More transparency on the health technology assessments used in value-based pricing i.e., drug's therapeutic value, comparative drug assessment, clinical endpoints and trial outcomes.

3. Price adjustments for drugs that enter the market through accelerated approval pathways, based on evidence from post-approval studies.

In Australia, a drug's clinical and cost-effectiveness and publicly listed price can be accessed here:

<https://www.pbs.gov.au/info/industry/listing/elements/pbac-meetings/psd/public-summary-documents-by-product>

Source: Vokinger, K.N. (2023a) 'Determinants of cancer drug pricing and how to overcome the cancer premium', *Cell*, 186(8), pp. 1528–1531. doi:10.1016/j.cell.2023.02.019.

Intro to health economics workshop

On Friday, 9 June 2023, CREST hosted the, *Understanding health economics in cancer research* workshop at the University of Technology Sydney. It was presented by CREST staff, A/Prof. Richard De Abreu Lourenco and Dr. Joe Carrello.

This face-to-face workshop was well attended by researchers and clinicians from a range of different CTGs, all looking to better understand how to incorporate health economics into their work.

A day full of great discussion, questions and engagement. Thank you to all who attended!



Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group (ALLG)

The Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group (ALLG) held its May 2023 Scientific Meeting for ALLG Member clinicians, scientists, registrars and trial staff on 16 to 19 May. To help mark the ALLG's 50th anniversary, the Meeting included a showcase of the ALLG's five decades of impact in blood cancer clinical trial research along with a complementary [online resource](#).

A few of the special guest speakers included:

- The Honourable Mary-Anne Thomas, Victorian State Government Minister for Health, Minister for Health Infrastructure, Minister for Medical Research. She remarked on the ALLG's 50 years of clinical trial research and said that blood cancer has experienced one of the biggest improvements out of all cancers.
- Professor John Skeritt, The Chair, CIRS Scientific Advisory Board, Adjunct Professor, University of Sydney, Former Head (May 2012 to April 2023) Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration. He presented 'Medicine development and regulation for haematological cancers'.
- Prof Wee Joo Chng, Director, National University Cancer Institute, Singapore. He presented 'Multiple Myeloma standard of care treatment in Asia'.

The following members were honoured at the Meeting's Life Membership Awards ceremony to acknowledge their sustained and significant contributions to the ALLG:

- Dr Ruth Spearing, previously at Christchurch Hospital, and now retired from her role as Clinical Lead for Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Services at Canterbury District Health Board
- Professor Graham Young, now retired from the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and University of Sydney.



L-R: ALLG Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Chair, Prof Judith Trotman, Prof John Skeritt, The Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas, ALLG CEO Ms Delaine Smith, ALLG CML/MPN Scientific Working Party Chair (SWP) A/Prof David Ross, and SAC Deputy Chair and Chair of ALLG Supportive Care SWP, A/Prof Zoe McQuilten.

- Mr John Stubbs AM, health advocate and blood cancer survivor, and long-standing member of the ALLG Safety and Data Monitoring Committee as an external advisor, and a member of the Consumer Representative Panel.
- Professor Tim Hughes, Precision Medicine Theme Leader at SAHMRI and Consultant Haematologist in the Division of Haematology at SA Pathology.

At the Scientific Meeting CML plenary, Prof Hughes presented '30 years of CML Research Advancement'. He was CML program leader that resulted in significant research break-throughs in CML and acted as the Local Chief Investigator on many ALLG trials at Royal Adelaide Hospital. He has also provided mentorship to numerous clinician researchers.

As part of our 50th year, the ALLG launched the ALLG HSANZ Clinical Trials Fellowship to accelerate research impact and provide outstanding early-career researchers a pathway to a career in clinical trial research. [Learn more](#).

The ALLG also launched its annual Research Report publication at the Meeting, available to download at www.allg.org.au.



**Better treatments...
Better lives.**

Australia and New Zealand Sarcoma Association (ANZSA)



ANZSA 2023 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

THEME: USING DATA TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES
Lessons Learnt and Future Directions

10-11 November
Melbourne | Online

ANZSA
Australia and New Zealand
Sarcoma Association

REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN

ANZSA 2023 Annual Scientific Meeting

ANZSA 2023 Annual Scientific Meeting Registrations for the 2023 ANZSA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) on the 10th – 11th of November in Melbourne are now open! The event offers both in-person and online attendance. This year's meeting theme is Using Data to Improve Outcomes: Lessons Learnt and Future Directions.

This is a chance to hear from researchers and sarcoma specialists — from Australia and New Zealand as well as from around the world — about the most up to date multidisciplinary research in the sarcoma field.

This year, we welcome the following international guest speakers to our event:

- **Prof. Jason Hornick**, Professor of Pathology, Harvard Medical School (Boston, United States of America)
- **Prof. Ajay Puri**, Professor and Head of Department of Surgery, Tata Memorial Hospital (Mumbai, India)

Abstract and Poster submissions will be opening soon. You can register for the event here:

<https://aoa.org.au/events/cem-events/detail/7b2beef5-5266-46e5-8d6d-69dfd3e59343>.

Sarcoma Awareness Month 2023

In line with Sarcoma Awareness Month this July, ANZSA is highlighting the importance of ongoing research into rare and complex sarcomas to increase survival rates – specifically utilizing ANZSA's National Sarcoma Database.

This year, ANZSA will be hosting two webinars during Sarcoma Awareness Month in partnership with the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre Alliance:

- **Webinar 1:** Early Diagnosis in Primary Care: A Comprehensive Approach to Improving Outcomes. (Monday, 17th of July, 1pm – 2pm AEST)
- **Webinar 2:** Advancing Sarcoma Research Through Clinical Trials: A Webinar on Current and Future Direction of ANZSA (Thursday 27th of July, 1pm – 2pm AEST)

Registration details to be released soon!



Sarcoma Guidelines

The second series in the ANZSA Sarcoma Guidelines are in development, adding six new topics of focus to the existing guidelines. The new topics include the role of radiation therapy, biopsy and chemotherapy in retroperitoneal sarcomas alongside other topics.

The current guidelines development process commenced at the end of 2020 with full support from the board and the scientific advisory committee of ANZSA. The intended end users are health professionals involved in the care of patients with sarcoma from time of initial presentation through diagnosis, staging, treatment and follow up.

The new Sarcoma Guideline topics closed for public consultation in June and are set to be published in July 2023.

SAVE THE DATE

CREST VIRTUAL WORKSHOP | 24 NOV 23

If you missed out on our June workshop, *Understanding health economics in cancer research*, we have some great news.

Later this year in November, CREST will be hosting a virtual version of the workshop for CTG members.

It will be a half-day session, but participants will need to do some homework beforehand.

This virtual workshop will be free for CTG members.

Date: Friday, 24 November
Time: TBC
Via: Zoom

Further details to be released closer to the date.

Breast Cancer Trials (BCT)



BREAST CANCER TRIALS

44th Annual Scientific Meeting

The Cordis Hotel Auckland,
New Zealand
Wed 26 – Fri 28 July 2023

The premier event on the
breast cancer research calendar.

Register today at bct2023.org

Breast Cancer Trials 44th Annual Scientific Meeting

Registration is open for Breast Cancer Trials (BCT) 44th Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), which will be held at the Cordis Hotel in Auckland, New Zealand from Wednesday 26 – Friday 28 July 2023.

The theme for the 2023 ASM is **Equity in Trials and Trial Participation**, with a number of key presentations on this important topic. This is an opportunity for BCT members, breast cancer researchers and clinical trials personnel to share knowledge in the field of breast cancer clinical trials and learn about recent developments in improvements to treatments for patients.

The ASM program will include three days of presentations, and will host a number of internationally renowned guest speakers including:

- **Professor Sibylle Loibl:** Chair of the German Breast Group (GBG) and the Chief Executive Officer of the GBG Forschungs GmbH. She is a professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at the Goethe University of Frankfurt.
- **Professor Philip Poortmans:** Radiation Oncologist at Iridium Network and University of Antwerp in Belgium. His research interests include breast cancer, FLASH radiation therapy, IOeRT, malignant lymphoma and rare tumours.

- **Professor Alastair Thompson:** Co-chair of the NCI BOLD Taskforce, the SWOG translational medicine breast group, the TBCRC locoregional working group and is an active member and regular presenter at SSO, ASBrS, ASCO and AACR.

In addition to our yearly Trials Coordination Forum, Abstracts, Debates and Scientific Sessions, this ASM will also include:

- A Concept Development Workshop: An opportunity for researchers to present new research ideas that can potentially move forward to a more formal stage of concept development with the support of BCT's Scientific Advisory Committee.
- A free Trainee and Early Career Day: Trainees in radiation oncology, medical oncology and surgical oncology are invited to participate in a free workshop on Saturday 29 July. This is a multi-disciplinary session with both presentations and MDT panel discussions from leading Australian and International breast cancer experts. This is a fantastic networking and professional development opportunity.

Don't miss out on the premier event! For more information or to register, visit www.bct2023.org.

Clinical Trial Masterclass Series presented by Palliative Clinical Studies Collaborative (PaCCSC)

Do you have an idea for a clinical trial but you're not sure how to get started?

Presented by the Palliative Care Clinical Studies Collaborative (PaCCSC), this free online Masterclass Series is designed for clinicians across Australia interested in taking their first steps or getting more involved in clinical research.

We'll give you an overview of the typical clinical trial lifecycle, show you how we support early career researchers to develop their ideas from concept to implementation, including conducting a critical appraisal, developing a protocol and applying for ethic approval and grants.

Our experienced clinical trials team will share their tips and tricks to developing a robust clinical trial idea as well as how to avoid pitfalls in the process.

The final session, **Critical appraisal skills: How to win friends and influence patient care**, will be held on Wednesday, 28 June from 3pm - 4.30pm AEST.

It will be presented by Dr Wei Lee, Associate Professor Ann Dadich and Misbah Faiz.

Register here: <https://bit.ly/3GJOVhW>

