# Quick Update:

- Membership:452 members
- 8<sup>th</sup> COGNO ASM 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> Oct, Stamford Plaza Brisbane



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Issue 19

Winter/Spring 2015



# Message from our Chair

Welcome to another COGNO newsletter.

Your COGNO has demonstrated many successes over its 8 years of existence and continues to build its national and international reputation. We have contributed significant accrual to international studies (CATNON), completed and begun to publish on a seminal national trial (CABARET) and a number of scientific publications have been generated including patterns of care studies. Our ASM is the peak neuro-oncology meeting in Australia and many of us are involved

in other international groups and meetings.

Mustafa Khasraw managed to somehow bring together a number of parties to establish the VERTU study that will open Australia-wide in the next few weeks for patients with non-methylated de novo GBM. Further, a number of us are involved in the development of a global study emanating from the USA built with Cure Brain Cancer Foundation funding that will test a variety of novel agents based on the molecular analysis of the patients' tumour. And finally, I am now the President of the Asian Society of Neuro-Oncology (ASNO) in preparation for the 2016 ASNO meeting that will be held in Sydney.

Despite our successes, your Management Committee is well aware of the issues that face all individual trialists, Australian Cooperative Groups and COGNO in particular. We held a strategic meeting in June and a number of recommendations eventuated. Many suggest we are doing well and our basic structures and performance are sound. But we recognised that COGNO needs to better engage its members, ensure financial sustainability and to keep the trial development process active, efficient and productive. An executive summary of the strategic meeting will be made available to all members shortly.

I hope that many of you can attend the upcoming 2015 ASM and perhaps start thinking about attending the 2016 ASNO/COGNO meeting.

Mark Rosenthal Group Chair

## 8<sup>th</sup> COGNO ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING 'WHERE THE FUTURE LIES'

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> - Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2015 Stamford Plaza Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Just a quick reminder that online registrations close 9 October - onsite registration will only be available subject to meeting room capacity, so register now to ensure your attendance! Convenor, Dr Cecelia Gzell, and the organising committee have developed a packed program with fantastic speakers. An updated program is available on the next page or online at (<a href="http://www.cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-program">http://www.cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-program</a>).



8<sup>th</sup> COGNO Annual Scientific Meeting *'Where the Future Lies'*Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2015
Stamford Plaza Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre



## PROGRAM OF EVENTS (as at 30 Sep 2015)

Thursday 22 October: Pre-ASM Meetings (Raffles room)				
TIME	MEETING	CHAIR		
2:00 - 5:15pm	COGNO Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting (open to COGNO members only)	Dr Liz Hovey		
5:30 - 6:30pm	COGNO Management Committee Meeting (closed meeting)	Prof Mark Rosenthal		

TIME	er: Day 1 (Ballroom)  MEETING	CHAIR			
8:30am	On arrival tea/coffee				
8:45 - 9:10am	Welcome and Day 1 program overview	Dr Cecelia Gzell			
9:10 - 10:30am	Session 1: COGNO Trials Update	Ms Marcia Fleet			
	Prof Anna Nowak: CATNON				
	Dr Liz Hovey: CABARET				
	Dr Mustafa Khasraw: ACED				
	Dr Mustafa Khasraw: VERTU				
	Dr Liz Hovey: Targeted agents: challenges in neuro-oncology trials				
	Oral abstract/proferred paper – Dr Alison Salkeld: Impact of a combined				
	neurosurgery / neuro-radiation oncology clinic for patients with brain metastases: a				
	pilot study				
10:30 - 11:00am	Morning tea				
11:00 - 12:15pm	Session 2: Grade II & III Glioma: The Present and the Future	Prof John Simes			
	Prof Martin van den Bent: Grade II glioma beyond RTOG 9802				
	Prof Kenneth Aldape: Pathology WHO criteria update & integration of biomarkers in				
	brain tumor classification				
	Invitation to Lunch / Poster Walkaround / Welcome Reception	Dr Cecelia Gzell			
12:15 - 1:45pm	Lunch / Poster Walkaround / Welcome Reception				
1:45 - 3:15pm	Session 3: Immunogenetics in Practice in Australia and Internationally: An Interactive Panel Discussion				
	Integration of immunogenetics into clinical practice in Australia				
	Panel:  • Dr Michael Rodriguez  • A/Prof Kerrie McDonald  • Prof Kenneth Aldape  • Prof Martin van den Bent  • Prof Vinay Puduvalli				
2:1E 2:4Enm	Afternoon tea				
3:15 - 3:45pm 3:45 - 5:30pm	Session 4: Management Approaches to Recurrent High Grade Glioma	A/Prof Matthey			
	A/Prof Hui Gan: Clinical trials for progressive high grade glioma				
	Dr Mark Pinkham: Salvage options for high grade glioma (reRT & Avastin)				
	Dr Zarnie Lwin: Lost in Translation				
	Oral abstract/proferred paper – Dr Adrian Lee: Palliative treatment with Bevacizumab for recurrent high grade glioma				
	Oral abstract/proferred paper – A/Prof Michael Back: Patients with Favourable Anaplastic Glioma who relapse after definitive intensity modulated radiation therapy have a pattern of relapse involving distant brain sites and ventricular				

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## PROGRAM OF EVENTS (as at 30 Sep 2015)

TIME	MEETING	CHAIR		
8:00am	On arrival tea/coffee			
8:15 - 8:20am	Welcome and Day 2 program overview	Dr Cecelia Gzell		
8:20 - 9:35am	Session 5: "Can We See It": Technological Advances in Neurosurgical Technique and Imaging			
	Dr Ben Jonker: Advances in neurosurgical techniques for tumour resection			
	Dr Geoff Schembri: Functional imaging and theranostics in the management of brain tumours			
	Dr Lynette Masters: Spectroscopy and perfusion imaging in brain tumours			
9:35 - 10:05am	Morning tea			
10:05 - 11:45am	Session 6: Personalising the Treatment of Brain Metastases	Dr Ben Jonker		
	Dr Jodi Saunas: Breast cancer brain metastasis			
	Dr Mustafa Khasraw: Targeted agents for brain metastasis & histology based evidence			
	A/Prof Matthew Foote: WBRT versus SRS			
	A/Prof Tamara Ownsworth: Considerations for neuro-cognitive assessment and			
	psychosocial management of people with brain metastases			
11:45 - 12:30pm	Lunch			
12:30 - 2:20pm	Session 7: Emerging Targets in High Grade Glioma	Dr Bryan Day		
	Prof Stephen Rose: Developing EphA2 based theranostic and imaging targets for glioma			
	Dr Sameer Greenall: Simultaneous targeting of the cell cycle and gene transcription as an effective therapy for high grade glioma			
	Dr Anchit Khanna: Therapeutic targeting of Cancerous Inhibitor of Protein Phosphatase 2A (CIP2A) in Glioblastoma			
	Prof Amy Heimberger: Immunotherapy for GBM			
	Prof Vinay Puduvalli: Overcoming resistance in glioblastoma			
2:20 - 2:50pm	Afternoon tea			
2:50 - 3:40pm	Session 8: Unforgettable Tumours Part II	A/Prof Hui Gan		
	Prof Martin van den Bent: Treatment options for medulloblastoma in young adults			
	Prof Vinay Puduvalli: Primary spinal cord tumours overview & Leptomeningeal disease			
3:40 - 3:45pm	ASM Summary	Dr Cecelia Gzell		
3:45 - 4:00pm	ASM Awards and Close	Prof Mark Rosenthal		
	Prof Mark			

<sup>\*</sup>changes may be made to the program

RANZCR CPD POINTS AVAILABLE: 11.75 RANZCR CPD points can be claimed for attendance at the 8<sup>th</sup> COGNO Annual

Scientific Meeting.

#### GETTING TO KNOW COGNO'S MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS



**Dr Elizabeth (Liz) Hovey** is on the COGNO Management Committee (Treasurer) and is the current Chair of the COGNO Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). Liz is also Co-Convenor of the 2016 ASNO/COGNO ASM and Chair of the 2016 ASM Organising Committee. A medical oncologist with expertise and research interest in neuro-oncology, Liz was one of the founding members of COGNO back in 2007.

#### How did you become involved in COGNO?

In 2007 I was chairing the COSA (Clinical Oncological Society of Australia) Neuro-Oncology Group, and I was also the Project officer for developing the Consensus Clinical Guidelines for the Management of Gliomas at the time. There was an unexpected opportunity (from Cancer Australia) to apply for

funding of a cooperative trials group. We had a small but active community of neuro-oncologists who had been working closely together on the guidelines, and we (including Mark Rosenthal, Anna Nowak, John Simes, Kevin Patterson, Lawrence Cher, Kate Drummond, Helen Wheeler) hastily convened some teleconferences to get our grant application together. From memory John Simes had an assistant Alison who came up with a few acronyms we could run with for the name of the group. As soon as I saw the acronym COGNO I thought that was the one we should go for as it made one think of a brain due to the proximity to the word cognitive. Eight different groups applied and neuro-oncology was one of the 2 successful groups that year, which was very exciting indeed.

#### Why are you still a member 8 years on?

It has been marvellous to watch COGNO grow to a group of more than 400 members and also for the international neuro-oncology group to accept and embrace COGNO as an important group-in no small part due to COGNO's contributions to CATNON and running our own timely CABARET study. The personal opportunity to convene the 2009 COGNO ASM (piggybacked to COSA ASM) when Roger Stupp came to Australia and our glioma guidelines were also launched was a very exciting time indeed. There's much more to do though! As we know, outcomes for glioma patients still could benefit from thoughtful innovative research and it is exciting to remain part of it.

Why did you become a medical oncologist and what triggered your interest in neuro-oncology research?

Medical oncology is a very satisfying mixture of challenging medicine where one needs to remain a thoughtful diagnostician and physician and clear communicator, but also there are so many thrilling scientific advances, which mean it is a field which is always evolving. My first job as a consultant was at Liverpool Hospital and as part of the new job I was given neuro-oncology to work in (in addition to my pre-existing area of interest of genito-urinary oncology). I remember a colleague of mine offered to swap melanoma with me but I declined (at the time there were not many drugs in either field). My work colleague Professor Michael Barton asked me to help set up a NSW Neuro-Oncology Group in late 2001 (he became Convenor and I was the secretary) and the late Hubert Stuertzl from Schering-Plough supported the group and that is how my interest in neuro-oncology research started.

#### What do you find most challenging about your work, and most rewarding?

Giving bad news to patients is never easy; the moment of stopping treatment is also always hard. The unexpected loss of a patient is far far harder than an expected loss.

Seeing a patient respond well to therapy is rewarding. Most rewarding is the strong connections we make with our patients and their families. Also rewarding is the stimulation of mixing other aspects of medicine into work including research (such as through COGNO).

#### What is a typical day for you?

Most workdays either start at 0700 or 0730 and I am not a morning person! But that is the only time that we can get surgeons into the room for a multidisciplinary team meeting. The rest of the day is usually a mixture of ward rounds, outpatient clinics, chemotherapy charting, various meetings and teleconferences, often going into the evening.

#### What do you do in your 'spare' time?

I am what is known as a "theatre tragic". I subscribe to 3 theatre companies and I attend a lot of smaller independent theatre too. In my "spare time" I act and direct when I can. I have performed in 3 short plays this year (including 2 comedies and an intense piece/monologue about domestic violence based on a true story all in verse!). Occasionally the 2 worlds collide - in 2014 I got to do some medical dramaturgy for a professional theatre company when there was a play called Constellations where the main character had a glioblastoma and I coached the actor about dysphasia and her mobility and the medical words she was using.

#### What are you looking forward to in 2016?

This is the perfect opportunity to remind our readers that COGNO is hosting the ASNO (Asian Society for Neuro-Oncology) ASM in Sydney in September 2016. Cecelia Gzell and I are Co-Convenors and Mustafa Khasraw and Zarnie Lwin are overseeing the scientific programme. There's a great line up of international guests including Roger Stupp, Paul Mischel and Mitch Berger and Al Yung. See you all there!

For further details about the 2016 ASNO/COGNO ASM, please visit <a href="http://www.cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm">http://www.cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm</a>-home2016.

#### STUDY & TRIAL UPDATES

CATNON (EORTC 26053-22054): Phase III trial on concurrent and adjuvant Temozolomide chemotherapy in non-1p/19q deleted anaplastic glioma

The CATNON study has now randomised 749 patients internationally (1407 patients were registered), reaching their target in mid September 15. Our 13 Australian sites registered 191 patients of which 82 were recruited to the study which accounted to approx. 11% of the overall total contribution to the trial.

On behalf of the EORTC, the CTC would like to thank you for your dedication and commitment to the study thus far, your efforts are very much appreciated. The EORTC will be conducting an interim analysis in September to assess the data collected to date. Our Australian sites have been working hard to ensure that all of the patient information has been provided to the EORTC for this important analysis.

As always, the CATNON Trial Coordinator, is happy to provide any information that you may require. Please email catnon@ctc.usyd.edu.au if you have any questions or queries.

	CATNON Recruitment by Site						
No	Site name	State	Principal Investigator	Date activated	No. of patients registered	No. of patients deemed ineligible	No. of patients randomised
1	Royal North Shore Hospital	NSW	Helen Wheeler	20-Aug-10	42	22	20
2	Royal Hobart Hospital	TAS	Rosie Harrup	8-Sep-10	13	4	9
3	Austin Health	VIC	Lawrence Cher	21-Jun-10	14	12	2
4	Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital	WA	Anna Nowak	29-Sep-10	23	13	10
5	The Alfred	VIC	Sanjeev Gill	31-Aug-11	28	13	15
6	St. Vincent's Hospital Melbourne	VIC	Anthony Dowling	22-Mar-11	23	13	9
7	Royal Melbourne Hospital	VIC	Mark Rosenthal	3-Sep-10	14	8	6
8	Flinders Medical Centre	SA	Ganessan Kichenadasse	26-Jul-11	8	6	2
9	Chris O'Brien Lifehouse	NSW	John Simes	11-Mar-11	6	3	3
10	Princess Alexandra Hospital	QLD	Katharine Cuff	14-Dec-11	7	4	3
11	Westmead Hospital	NSW	Najmun Nahar	23-Jul-13	6	5	1
12	Prince of Wales Hospital	NSW	Elizabeth Hovey	30-Oct-13	2	2	0
13	Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital	QLD	Po Ling-Inglis	7-May-14	5	3	2
	Current at 22 Sep 2015			Total	191	108	82

#### **NEW CONCEPTS/TRIALS IN DEVELOPMENT**

The following two trials are due to open late 2015:

ACED: Phase II randomised placebo-controlled, double blind, multisite study of acetazolamide versus placebo for management of cerebral oedema in recurrent and/or progressive HGG requiring treatment with dexamethasone - the ACED trial. This study will recruit 84 participants (at initially 3 sites) with GBM, HGG, AA, AO (progressive and/or recurrent disease) who require dexamethasone recommencement or dose increase due to progressive raised ICP. This study has central ethics approval and it is anticipated this study will be activated November 2015.

**VERTU:** A Randomised Phase II study of veliparib + radiotherapy (RT) with adjuvant temozolomide (TMZ) + veliparib versus standard RT + TMZ followed by TMZ in patients with newly diagnosed glioblastoma (GBM) with unmethylated O (6)-methylguanine-DNA methyltransferase (MGMT). This study will recruit 120 participants (at 12 sites)with newly diagnosed patients with histologically confirmed GBM (WHO grade IV) following surgery, with unmethylated MGMT promoter gene GBM. This study has central ethics approval and is undergoing local governance procedures. Delays were experienced due to contract negotiations however it is now anticipated this study will be activated October 2015.



#### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Prof Mark Rosenthal (Chair)
Prof John Simes (Deputy Chair)
Dr Liz Hovey (Treasurer)
Dr Eng-Siew Koh (Secretary)
A/Prof Meera Agar
A/Prof Kate Drummond
Ms Marcia Fleet
Dr Matthew Foote
Prof Terry Johns
Ms Robyn Leonard

# SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dr Liz Hovey (Chair) Dr Eng-Siew Koh (Deputy Chair) A/Prof Meera Agar **Ms Liz Barnes** A/Prof Kate Drummond **Dr Matthew Foote Dr Lindy Jeffree Prof Terry Johns** Ms Marina Kastelan **Dr Danette Langbecker** Ms Robyn Leonard Dr Kerrie McDonald Dr Anna Nowak **Prof Mark Rosenthal** Dr Gail Ryan **Prof John Simes** Ms Renee Swanson **Dr Helen Wheeler** 

# OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Prof Mark Rosenthal (Chair)
Prof John Simes (Deputy Chair)
Ms Liz Barnes
Ms Jenny Chow
Mrs Merryn Hall
Dr Liz Hovey
Dr Mustafa Khasraw
Dr Eng-Siew Koh
Mrs Ann Livingstone
Ms Renee Swanson

#### **NEW CONCEPTS/TRIALS IN DEVELOPMENT**

DO YOU HAVE A NEW CONCEPT? COGNO is always looking to develop new studies - from inception through to full protocol development and managing feasibility and operational issues. We aim to help progress and support development of important clinical trial questions. If you would like to propose a concept or have an amazing idea for a COGNO clinical trial, please contact us on <a href="cogno@ctc.usyd.edu.au">cogno@ctc.usyd.edu.au</a> or call and chat to Renee Swanson, Associate Oncology Program Manager - Development, on 02 9562 5374. The SAC meets regularly and Renee and the team can assist you to develop and progress your idea or assist you with completion of the Trial Concept Outline form available at <a href="www.cogno.org.au">www.cogno.org.au</a>.



L to R: Martijn Oostendorp, Mark Rosenthal, Mustafa Khasraw and Merryn Hall at the VERTU Investigator Meeting



Mustafa Khasraw presenting at the VERTU Investigator Meeting

#### **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

COGNO'S membership continues to increase with numbers now at 452. Help us expand our Group's expertise and networking capacity. If you know someone who would like to join, you can refer prospective members to our online membership application on our website (<a href="https://www.cogno.org.au">www.cogno.org.au</a>) or office (<a href="mailto:cogno@ctc.usyd.edu.au</a>).

#### **COGNO Team Update**

We farewell Ann Livingstone, who has been associate oncology program manager for COGNO since 2010 (with a break in 2011 to have her little boy, Samuel). Ann has been a key member of the team and we thank her for her contribution over the past 5 years, and wish her well in her new role working with ALTG.



We welcome Felicia Roncolato who joins COGNO as a Research Fellow. Felicia has been with the CTC since 2014, and worked with ANZGOG and ANZUP. She is also a fellow at St. George Hospital in Sydney in breast/gynaecological and hereditary cancer clinics. Felicia obtained her FRACP this year, is finishing a Masters of Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology) and embarking on a PhD looking at improving prognostication in advanced cancers. Her interests are in patient reported outcome measures, prognostication and improving patient-doctor communication. Felicia enjoys yoga and barre classes, living by the beach and spending time with her very vocal 15 month old son.



We also welcome Elise Robertson who joins as Trial Coordinator for the CATNON and CABARET Trials. Elise discovered her interest for research six years ago when she began working at Brien Holden Vision Institute where she was trained as a clinical trial coordinator. In her role as trial coordinator she managed a number of medical device trials based both in Australia and globally.

In her spare time Elise loves to spend time with her husband, family and friends. She is passionate about travel and aims to visit a new destination at least once a year.

#### REMINDERS/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

- 7-10 October 2015 ACTA, Sydney, Australia, <a href="http://www.acta2015.com.au/">http://www.acta2015.com.au/</a>
- 23-24 October 2015 8th COGNO ASM, Brisbane, Australia, http://www.cogno.org.au/
- 17-19 November 2015 COSA ASM, Hobart, Australia, http://cosa2015.org/
- 19-22 November 2015 SNO 2015 Annual Meeting, Texas, USA, <a href="http://www.soc-neuro-onc.org/2015-annual-meeting/">http://www.soc-neuro-onc.org/2015-annual-meeting/</a>
- 11-15 September 2016 ASNO-COGNO ASM, Sydney, Australia, <a href="http://www.cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-home2016">http://www.cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-home2016</a>

#### Optimal Care Pathways for High-Grade Glioma Now Published Online

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services has commissioned the Cancer Council Victoria to conduct a review of the Optimal Care Pathways (formerly Patient Management Frameworks). **These will be adopted nationally**. Cancer Council Victoria advises that following publications are now available online at <a href="http://www.cancervic.org.au/for-health-professionals/optimal-care-pathways">http://www.cancervic.org.au/for-health-professionals/optimal-care-pathways</a>.

- Optimal cancer care pathway for people with high-grade glioma and the corresponding quick reference guide
- High-grade glioma what to expect (quick reference consumer version)

Optimal Care Pathways and corresponding Quick Reference Guides for other tumour streams, and a consumer web portal are at various stages in development - further information is available from Alexandra Philpott, Optimal Care Pathways project manager, Cancer Council Victoria (ph 03/9514 6345 or Alexandra.Philpott@cancervic.org.au.



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