

Quick Update:

- 15th COGNO Annual Scientific Meeting
- Getting to know COGNO's Scientific Advisory Committee - Geraldine O'Neill



COGNO

COOPERATIVE TRIALS GROUP
FOR NEURO-ONCOLOGY

Member Newsletter

Issue 43

Winter 2023

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Message from our Chair



Dear COGNO Member

2023 has been such an inspiring year to date for COGNO as well as the broader community involved in and committed to brain tumour care and research.

COGNO-led LUMOS2 trial in recurrent IDH1 grade 2/3 mutant glioma - start-up activities

These proceed in earnest as we approach the first Australian sites progressing to activation in the near future under the leadership of Prof Hui Gan. We continue to work closely with our colleagues from the Canadian Clinical Trials Group in supporting Canadian start-up activities. It is tremendous to witness COGNO break new

ground with leadership of its first international study.

EORTC-led PersoMed-1 study in AYA medulloblastoma - Trial activation

We are delighted to announce the activation in July 2023 of the first four Australian sites! Congratulations to Royal North Shore Hospital, NSW ; Royal Adelaide Hospital, SA; Princess Alexandra Hospital, Qld and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, VIC. Special thanks to the central trial team led by Prof. David Ziegler and A/Prof. Liz Hovey for overseeing the progress to date. We remain very keen to see the remaining sites activated as soon as feasible. Pleasingly the EORTC has also recruited its first European patients into the study.

COGNO-led MAGMA trial in glioblastoma - completed recruitment!

What an incredible achievement to see the MAGMA trial reach its recruitment target meeting projected timelines for both question 1 and question 2 on July 10th 2023. This is truly an incredible achievement, particularly through the challenges of the pandemic. We give particular acknowledgement to A/Prof. Craig Gedye for his leadership, the central trials team, the trial management committee, with of course special mention and thanks to all sites. I thought it was particular poignant for Townsville Hospital, Qld to have recruited the final 250th participant, given the Australia Cancer Plan's focus on the success of trials in regional, rural and remote settings.

Another successful COGNO Ideas Generation Workshop was held virtually on 23 June 2023 with two excellent concepts proposed. I wish to thank the co-convenors Dr Annette Tognola and Dr Sagun Parakh for auspicing this event and also working to support these and future concepts being developed and nurtured.

The COGNO Outreach and Education Committee hosted and delivered another fantastic post ASCO update on June 21st 2023. After quite a long hiatus, there were exciting trial results in neuro-oncology with particular highlights being the results of the phase 3 INDIGO trial in IDH1/2-mutant glioma with the use of vorasidenib.

15th COGNO ASM - Sunday 8th October - Tuesday 10th October 2023 in Sydney

We are incredibly thrilled to confirm a stellar array of five eminent international speakers as well as other prominent national speakers. The COGNO ASM Organising Committee, with co-convenors Dr Adrian Lee and Dr Keryn Davidson are overseeing a fantastic ASM programme. The official launch of the ASM and registrations is imminent. ASM Abstract submissions have opened on Monday 31 July and will close Sunday 27 August. Please mark your calendars!

As always, the core team - COGNO Executive Officer Jenny Chow, Yi Feng and Danielle Massey, all the trial coordination teams, together with COGNO Committee members, continue to undertake excellent work across the full spectrum of COGNO activities. I especially wish to acknowledge trial leads, site investigator and trials teams and researchers. Together, we contribute to a strong brain tumour trials network that is COGNO through which we can see improved outcomes realised.

With best wishes



Associate Professor Eng-Siew Koh
MBBS FRANZCR
Group Chair

15th COGNO Annual Scientific Meeting
Bridge to the Future: Biomarkers in Brain Tumour Care
Sunday 8th October - Tuesday 10th October 2023, Hilton Sydney, NSW, Australia

Online registration now open! Register here: <https://cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-reg>

Please note your ASM registration does not include accommodation. You will need to organise accommodation directly with the hotel of your choice. We recommend that you book early to secure your preferred accommodation. Special rates are available to delegates at Hilton Sydney subject to availability. A list of hotels near the conference venue is available on our accommodation page <https://cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-accomm>.

Abstract submissions close 27 August. Submit here: <https://cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-abstracts>

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

To join our mailing list for regular updates, email ctc.cognoasm@sydney.edu.au with your interest.

We look forward to welcoming you in October!

[International Speakers](#)



PROF MELANIE HAYDEN GEPHART MD MAS



PROF MUSTAFA KHASRAW
MBChB MD FRCP FRACP



PROF MARTIN TAPHOORN MD PHD
Courtesy of Brain Tumour Alliance Australia (BTAA)



PROF STEPHEN PRICE BSc MBBS PhD FRCS
Courtesy of The Brain Cancer Group (TBCG)



PROF JUSTIN LATHIA PhD
Courtesy of Australian Brain Cancer Research Alliance (ABCARA)

GETTING TO KNOW COGNO'S SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Geraldine O'Neill is Head of The Children's Cancer Research Unit (CCRU) at the Children's Hospital at Westmead, Conjoint Professor of Cancer Cell Biology at the University of Sydney and Group Leader of the Functionally Applied Biology lab.

She completed her PhD at the Kolling Institute of Medical Research, University of Sydney and undertook post-doctoral training at Fox Chase Cancer Centre, Philadelphia USA. She returned to Australia as an NHMRC Howard Florey post-doctoral research fellow.

Subsequently, as the NSW Cancer Council Career Development Fellow, she established her program of cancer cell biology at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. As head of CCRU she oversees translational research programs spanning Advanced Cellular Therapeutics, Advanced Molecular Diagnostics and Molecular Genomics.

Her own research bridges insights from cancer cell biology, tissue engineering and biophysics to yield comprehensive understanding of the extracellular contributions to cancer development and response to therapy. She has elucidated fundamental mechanisms of cancer cell interaction with the tumour microenvironment and applies these insights to developing better preclinical cancer models.

How did you become involved in COGNO?

I met Terry Johns (former COGNO translational lead) many years ago on an NHMRC grant review panel and subsequently we became friends and collaborators. It was through Terry that I learned about COGNO and I was very keen to be involved. I think it's important to have multi-disciplinary input into the assessment of proposed trials and I am particularly focused on interrogating the quality of the preclinical data that is used to progress to clinical trial. Given the short life span for patients with some of the worst diagnoses, it is imperative that only the treatments with the best possible chance of success are progressed to clinical trial.

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

I've always been interested in understanding why. My favourite show as a child was something called the "Curiosity Show" where the two presenters completed simple experiments and emphasised science, technology, and things to make and do. So, a science degree was a natural fit for me. During my early post-doctoral career at Fox Chase Cancer Centre in Philadelphia, I focused on elucidating fundamental mechanisms of cell movement and migration. Following this period, I worked in breast cancer invasion and metastasis. But given the great progress that has been made in successfully treating many breast cancers, a number of years ago I decided to work on a cancer for which there was less interest (at the time) from cell biologists. That's when I decided to work in brain cancer, particularly the deadliest forms of highly invasive brain cancer as it seemed that my knowledge of cell invasion mechanisms could be of use. Since I started working in brain cancer, there has been an explosion of interest among other cell biologists; either I was ahead of the curve or unwittingly absorbed the zeitgeist! The large critical mass of researchers now actively working in the field can only mean good things for brain cancer survival rates.

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

Paperwork! We are just about to launch a clinical trial in the research unit that I lead (CAR T cell treatment for children with bone cancer) and the paperwork seems never-ending. It feels like the actual trial will be easier. I'm not complaining about the need for careful and safe regulation of novel therapies, but, wow, there's a lot of forms. The most rewarding thing that I find in my job is working with students, teaching them about research, guiding them through their experiments and cheering them on when they make new findings. I am always reinvigorated by their optimism and excitement to use their knowledge and skills to improve treatment for cancer patients.

How do you stay motivated to continue in your role?

I'm a bit like my students, always optimistic and really excited about science and how it can solve problems. I feel privileged to have had the career that I have and since being appointed as head of the Children's Cancer Research Unit every day I am motivated by the amazing scientists that I work with and being able to help them work towards realising their goals.

What are you most proud of in your career?

I was very proud when I was awarded as NSW/ACT Young Tall Poppy by the Australian Institute of Policy and Science in 2006. It was extra special as my partner also received this award in the same year. Our mothers were thrilled! These awards are given to recognise not only excellence in research but also enthusiasm for communicating science beyond the walls of the laboratory. It was a particularly rewarding achievement as I have long been an enthusiastic champion of science and dedicated considerable time to promoting science.

TRIAL UPDATES



MAGMA hits recruitment target

A total of 338 glioblastoma (GBM) participants have been recruited to the MAGMA study across 28 Australian sites. It was a substantial feat opening a new study and recruiting participants during the pandemic and local health restrictions, but with the generosity of patients agreeing to be part of the trial, the study has now completed recruitment to both study questions. Question one is looking at neoadjuvant chemotherapy and question two testing 6 cycles adjuvant TMZ vs adjuvant treatment until progression. We look forward to updating the COGNO community on the progress of the trial.

PersoMed-1 has now opened to recruitment

Personalized Risk-Adapted Therapy in Post-Pubertal Patients With Newly-Diagnosed Medulloblastoma

PersoMed-1 opened to recruitment in Australia with the first 4 Australian sites activated on 12 July 2023. PersoMed-1 is an EORTC study being run in Europe and Australia. It is looking at personalised risk-adapted therapy in post-pubertal patients with newly diagnosed medulloblastoma.






Thank you to all site personnel for their ongoing diligence in screening and enrolling patients and to all participants and their families for their participation and contributions to the COGNO trials to date.

NUTMEG

-  GBM; ≥ 65 years
-  18 sites
-  103 patients
-  102 patients (Aust & USA)
-  Status: **Follow Up**

[ACTRN12617000267358](https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/Trial.jsp?ACTRN12617000267358)

LUMOS (Pilot)

-  Grade 2/3 gliomas for molecular profiling
-  5 sites
-  10 patients
-  10 patients (Pilot study)
-  Status: **Close out**






[ACTRN12620000087954](https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/Trial.jsp?ACTRN12620000087954)

VERTU

-  GBM; unmethylated MGMT
-  17 sites
-  125 patients
-  125 patients
-  Status: **Follow Up**

[ACTRN12615000407594](https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/Trial.jsp?ACTRN12615000407594)

MAGMA

-  GBM or glioma with molecular features of GBM
-  28 sites
-  330 patients
-  300 patients (for the initial 2 Questions)
-  Status: **Recruiting**

[ACTRN12620000048987](https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/Trial.jsp?ACTRN12620000048987)






CATNON

-  Non-1p/19q deleted anaplastic glioma
-  13 sites
-  82 patients (Australia)
-  751 (internationally)
-  Status: **Follow Up**

[ACTRN12609000485235](https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/Trial.jsp?ACTRN12609000485235)

NEW

PersoMed

-  Medulloblastoma; post-pubertal
-  11 sites; 4 open
-  0 patients
-  33 patients (Aust)
-  Status: **Start up**

[NCT04402073](https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/Trial.jsp?NCT04402073)

NEW CONCEPTS / TRIALS IN DEVELOPMENT

Do you have an idea for a potential study?

The COGNO SAC (Scientific Advisory Committee) meets four times a year to assist with developing trial concepts. The next opportunity to present new concepts to SAC is on Monday 9 October 2023. Concepts are due four weeks prior to each meeting. The concept submission form can be found on the COGNO website (www.cogno.org.au). During the SAC meeting, new protocols are presented by the proposer, and feedback is provided by clinical, translational, consumer and scientific members of the committee. If you have a great idea, you are welcome to contact the COGNO SAC to discuss how we can assist in concept development.

If you become aware of a funding opportunity during the year that might be of relevance to COGNO or for which you would like to involve COGNO in your application, please let us know! Under these circumstances, we can facilitate urgent COGNO SAC review and COGNO input to assist you in refining your proposal, building your team, and hopefully improving your chances of a successful application.

If you require any further information, please email ctc.cogno@sydney.edu.au.

Prof Hui Gan and Prof Bryan Day, on behalf of the COGNO SAC and COGNO community.

Important dates for noting:

- 11 Sep 2023 - Concepts due for presentation to SAC on 9 Oct 2023.

STAFF UPDATE

We farewelled Lisa Bailey (Clinical Trial Operations Lead) who was working on the PersoMed-I trial. Lauren Fisher (pictured) has stepped into the role.



Lauren has worked at NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre (CTC) since 2017 having worked as a (Senior) Trial Operations Coordinator on COGNO trials NUTMEG and VERTU. Lauren is currently the Clinical Trial Operations Lead for the COGNO trial PersoMed-I and an ANZUP trial at the CTC.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

COGNO now has 958 members! 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 (www.cogno.org.au) or office (cogno@cogno.org.au).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Boosting Participation Rates of First Nations People in Cancer Clinical Trials

First Nations Australians rarely participate in cancer clinical trials. A new e-learning module for researchers and clinicians is designed to change that.

The final module in a series of three was launched by 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 and the [Psycho-oncology Co-operative Research Group \(PoCoG\)](#) at the University of Sydney

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's participation in clinical trials* module was developed for a wide range of audiences to increase diversity, equity and inclusion of First Nations people in clinical trials and clinical research.

Watch Module 3: [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's participation in clinical trials.](#)

Watch Module 2: [Communicating with patients and carers.](#)

Watch Module 1: [Cancer overview and factors impacting health inequalities.](#)

REMINDERS

- 24 - 26 August 2023: Australian & New Zealand Childrens Haematology/Oncology Group (ANZCHOG) Annual Scientific Meeting, Perth, <https://anzchog.org/asm/>
- 26 - 29 Sep 2023: Neurosurgical Society of Australasia (NSA) Annual Scientific Meeting, Port Douglas, <https://2023.nsa.org.au/>
- 8 - 10 October 2023: Cooperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO) Annual Scientific Meeting, Hilton Sydney, <https://cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-home>
 - (ASM Satellite Meeting, 8 October 2023: BTAA Patient Education and Information Forum, Hilton Sydney, <https://btaapatientforum23.eventbrite.com.au>)
 - (ASM Satellite Meeting, 8 October 2023: ABCARA Scientific Research Symposium, Hilton Sydney, <https://ABCARA2023.eventbrite.com.au>)
- 27 - 29 October 2023: Asian Society for Neuro-Oncology (ASNO) Annual Meeting, Indonesia, <https://asno2023.com/>
- 1 - 3 November 2023: Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) Annual Scientific Meeting, Melbourne, <https://www.cosa.org.au/education-events/annual-scientific-meeting/>
- 13 - 16 November 2023: Australasian Gastro-Intestinal Cancer Trials Group (AGITG) Annual Scientific Meeting, Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand, <https://asm.gicancer.org.au>
- 15 - 19 November 2023: Society for Neuro-Oncology (SNO) Annual Meeting, Canada, https://www.soc-neuro-onc.org/WEB/Events/SNO_Annual_Meetings/WEB/Event_Content/Annual_Events.aspx?hkey=f9b4fed1-3f51-4083-adfa-bf69de5fd450
- 12 - 15 March 2024: TROG's 36th Annual Scientific Meeting, Newcastle, <https://trog.com.au/health-research-professionals/36th-annual-scientific-meeting/>
- 6 - 10 May 2024: Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Annual Scientific Conference, Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand, <https://asc.surgeons.org/asc2024/>
- 31 May - 4 June 2024: American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting, Chicago USA, <https://conferences.asco.org/am/attend>
- 2 - 4 Aug 2024 (tentative): The 19th Meeting of the Asian Society for Neuro-Oncology (ASNO 2024), Singapore, <https://www.a-sno.org/meetings/index.php>
- 14 - 16 Aug 2024: Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA) 2024 ASM, <https://www.moga.org.au/2023-asm>
- 13 - 17 Sep 2024: European Society For Medical Oncology (ESMO) Congress, Barcelona Spain, <https://www.esmo.org/meeting-calendar/esmo-congress-2024>
- 17 - 20 Oct 2024: European Association of Neuro-Oncology (EANO) 19th meeting, Glasgow Scotland, <https://www.eano.eu/eanomeetings/future-eano-meetings/>
- 21 - 24 Nov 2024: Society for Neuro-Oncology (SNO) Annual Meeting, Houston USA, https://www.soc-neuro-onc.org/WEB/Events/SNO_Annual_Meetings/WEB/Event_Content/Annual_Events.aspx?hkey=f9b4fed1-3f51-4083-adfa-bf69de5fd450

DON'T FORGET, REGISTER NOW!

<https://cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-reg>

Program available here: <https://cogno.org.au/content.aspx?page=cognoasm-program>



15th COGNO ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING
Bridge to the Future: Biomarkers in Brain Tumour Care
 8th – 10th October 2023 | Hilton Sydney, Australia
www.cogno.org.au |  #COGNO23





MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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 A/Prof Georgia Halkett (Treasurer)
 A/Prof Liz Hovey (Secretary)
 Prof Meera Agar
 Ms Marcia Fleet
 Prof Hui Gan
 Dr Adrian Lee
 Dr Jonathon Parkinson
 Mrs Desma Spyridopoulos
 Dr James Whittle

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NUTMEG Project Manager
VERTU Project Manager
CATNON Project Manager
ACED Project Manager
PICCOG Project Manager
LUMOS Project Manager

Lauren Fisher
 PersoMed Project Manager
 (Mon-Thurs)

Patrick Wheeler
 LUMOS2 Project Manager

If you have any trial specific questions, please feel free to contact the study team via the trial mailbox listed below.

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