

Newsletter | Issue 3 | August 2009

The ANZMTG continues to support Investigator-driven clinical trials in Australia and New Zealand. With three trials open and recruiting and one protocol in the development phase, ANZMTG now has at least three investigator-driven clinical trial synopses under review by the Executive Committee. Two intergroup trials have been successfully closed and follow-up is continuing for final analysis.

For the very first time, a questionnaire-based research study on quality of life of melanoma patients and that of their families is being conducted by ANZMTG, led by Associate Professor Julie Winstanley. This study has received ethics approval and is now underway.

To date, the year 2009 has been very productive for ANZMTG with active representation in several national and international conferences. There has been significant interest from Australian and international clinics in our current clinical trials and research activities in particular towards the Whole Brain Radiotherapy (WBRT) and Quality of Life protocols.

The ANZMTG continues to be involved with Cancer Australia, Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (COSA) and various Consumer Groups.

This year ANZMTG Annual General Meeting will be held in Sydney in October. All members are invited to attend. Notice of the meeting will be featured online so please stay in touch on www.anzmtg.org.

Executive News – Arrivals



In the first quarter of 2009, a new role was established within the ANZMTG Executive Committee. Dr Campbell Rose was successfully elected as a Consumer Representative to the Committee. With this new role, ANZMTG is better able to facilitate the integration of the

consumer perspective and to involve Dr Rose in the design and ongoing conduct of melanoma trials.

Dr Campbell Rose is the current Chief Executive for the Western Bulldogs Football Club. In 2005 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters by Victoria University in recognition of his achievements in sports and sports administration.

He is a melanoma survivor and has established a consumer advocacy network for melanoma, the Melanoma Foundation of Australia, initially focussed in Victoria.

Nicola Groves also joined ANZMTG in 2009 as the Acting Executive Officer. Nicola completed her Masters in Business Administration at Macquarie Graduate School of Management. She will be offering her expert skills in the business administration to lead the group. Nicola is also the General Manager of Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA).



We welcome both Dr Rose and Nicola to the group.

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Cancer in Rural Australia

In a recent fact sheet released by the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) in May 2009, there were some astonishing figures on cancer incidence and poorer survival rates in rural and remote regions. It was reported that the higher incidences in rural and remote areas were partly due to lifestyle factors and partly due to lower availability of services in those areas. One of the concerning cancers was melanoma associated with sun exposure.



The 10th National Rural Health Conference held which was held in Cairns, Queensland from 17 to 20 May 2009 highlighted some key issues related to cancers and presented 19 priority recommendations to the Hon. Nicola Roxon, Minister for Health and

Ageing and the Australian Government.

One of the recommendations made by the conference delegates with research support by the Royal Flying Doctor Service (Queensland Section) was to possibly look into further studies that could assist in the future development of models for skin cancer clinics in remote areas (*Proceedings of the 10th National Rural Health Conference, editor Gordon Gregory, Cairns Queensland, 17-20 May 2009. Canberra: National Rural Health Alliance, 2009*).

Rasch Analysis Workshop

ANZMTG continues to support initiatives for improving standards of clinical trials management and conduct. In June 2009, the Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) conducted a statistical workshop, presented by Associate Professor Julie Pallant proved to be a success.

Biostatisticians from the ANZMTG, MIA, Melanoma Network and the Psycho-Oncology Co-operative Research Group (PoCoG) attended this two day workshop. This training presented participants with useful skills in research analyses.



"I really enjoyed the RUMM2020 training session. Julie presented the software and concepts in such a way that I was up and running in two days and thinking analytically about issues with psychometric scales and questionnaire development. This course was useful and inspiring. Thank you!" Lauren Haydu, Senior Project Officer, Melanoma Network

ANZMTG is keen to promote access and participation in melanoma clinical trials in rural and remote settings. One of the ways of achieving this is by increasing rural and remote membership to enable ANZMTG to actively engage with these members. This includes involvement of primary physicians, allied health care workers as well as patients. ANZMTG membership provides a professional network, linking regional and metropolitan cancer services in all Australian states as well as with our neighbours in New Zealand.



ANZMTG welcomes professionals in rural and remote areas involved in the management of melanoma patients to apply for ANZMTG membership. Membership is also open to patients and other consumers who are in some way affected by melanoma. For more information on how to obtain membership, please visit www.anzmtg.org.

The NRHA fact sheets and the 10th National Rural Health Conference proceedings are available at www.ruralhealth.org.au.

Western Australia Melanoma Advisory Service

The Western Australian Melanoma Advisory Service (WAMAS), a joint initiative between Western Australia's Department of Health and St John of God Hospital Subiaco (SJOGHS), was established at SJOGHS in 2000.

WAMAS is a state-wide, multidisciplinary service, involving specialists in dermatology, general and plastic surgery, radiation and medical oncology and pathology. Most of the specialists involved with WAMAS have been with the service since its inception. It has a dedicated Nurse Coordinator. The primary aim of WAMAS is to provide advice to the referring medical practitioner and their patient on diagnosis, management, treatment and prognosis as well as advice on clinical trial availability for patients with complex (high risk) primary melanoma or metastatic melanoma.

As WAMAS is an advisory service it does not provide treatment to patients unless specifically requested to do so by the referring clinician.

Approximately three quarters of referrals are received from general practitioners and skin cancer clinics, the remaining referrals are from specialists. Upon referral to the service the Nurse Coordinator arranges the patient's appointment and organises for pathology review to be undertaken prior to the patient consultation. Following consultation, opinions are communicated back to the referring doctor. The patient is not charged for the consultation irrespective of their insurance status.

In addition to the provision of advice to patients and clinicians, WAMAS has developed a comprehensive booklet "Information for Medical Practitioners". The booklet, which is currently under review, provides information on referring patients to WAMAS, data on melanoma incidence in Western Australia (WA), prognostic factors and staging as well as a number of position statements.

WAMAS hosts annual education seminars for GPs which address difficulties in melanoma diagnosis and controversies in management. WAMAS also collaborates with the Western Australian Institute of Medical Research (WAIMR) and Professor Lyle Palmer of The Western Laboratory of Genetic Epidemiology, which is investigating the clinical and genetic epidemiology of melanoma.

Some of the WAMAS panel of clinicians also form the Skin Cancer Collaborative which as part of the WA Health Department Clinical Networks is currently developing a Model of Care for the management of cutaneous melanoma. The document whilst being a clinical guideline also serves as a model for the "standard of care" for patients with melanoma.

For more information on WAMAS services, visit www.sjog.org.au.



From left: Dr Gordon Padovan, Dr Gordon Harloe, Mr Andrew Crocker, Dr James Rohr, Mr Mark Hanikeri (Director), Dr Evan Bayliss, Julie Teraci (Nurse Coordinator), Dr Alan Donnelly, Mr Robert Pearce and Prof Michael Millward

Announcements

ANZMTG Annual General Meeting 2009

This year the ANZMTG Annual General Meeting will take place in Sydney. The 2009 AGM will report on the organisational budget, staff and management changes over the past year as well as highlight and review new ANZMTG initiatives. Attendance is open to all ANZMTG members and researchers involved in melanoma clinical trials.

For more information on the 2009 AGM, contact ANZMTG by email anzmtg@usyd.edu.au.



COSA ASM 2009, 17-19 November, Gold Coast, Queensland

The 36th Annual Scientific Meeting for the Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (COSA) will be held from 17 to 19 November 2009 at the Gold Coast, Queensland. This year's theme is "*Cancer Services and Our Community: Awareness, Access, Action*".

Awareness of cancer services will be explored from patient, community and medical perspectives. Access to cancer care will be considered in the context of limiting factors such as geographical, cultural and financial backgrounds. Awareness and access lead to action in the form of cancer prevention programmes, new developments in diagnosis and compliance strategies with treatment regimens.

Registration is now open.

Oral abstract submission is now **closed**

Earlybird registration deadline: **Friday 28 August 2009**

Poster abstract submission deadline: **Friday 4 September 2009**

Conference and registration details can be found on the conference website www.asnevents.com.au/cosa.

2009 ANZMTG COSA travel grant

ANZMTG is again inviting members to apply for grant in support to attend the 36th COSA ASM. The travel grant is up to \$1000AU and may include costs associated with registration, travel and accommodation. To be eligible for this grant, you have to be a member of the ANZMTG. For more information on how to obtain membership, please visit www.anzmtg.org.

If you would like to obtain an application form for this grant, please email anzmtg@usyd.edu.au.

Clinical Oncological Society of Australia

COSA'S 36TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

17-19 November 2009
Gold Coast Convention Centre

The Cancer Journey:

- Awareness
- Access
- Action



American Society of Clinical Oncology

Making a world of difference in cancer care

The 45th American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting held in Orlando, Florida USA provided an exemplary forum for the dissemination and discussion of cutting-edge scientific and educational developments in melanoma.

ANZMTG Executive Committee member, Associate Professor Michael Henderson presented the interim analysis results of the intergroup trial, **ANZMTG 01.02/TROG 02.01** - *A Randomised Clinical Trial of Surgery versus Surgery plus Adjuvant Radiotherapy for Regional Control in Patients with Completely Resected Macroscopic Nodal Metastatic Melanoma* at the 2009 ASCO Annual Meeting.

ANZMTG 01.02/TROG 02.01 was ANZMTG's first project since its establishment. This trial successfully met the target patient recruitment in 2007 and is the first completed randomised controlled trial investigating the effects of radiotherapy on rate of regional recurrence,

ANZMTG 01.02 trial result at ASCO Annual Meeting

survival, morbidity and quality of life in patients treated for spread of their melanoma to the regional lymph glands.

The study results reported that adjuvant radiotherapy improved regional control in melanoma patients. The study is still in follow-up and survival analysis is planned at approximately 3 years.

More information on the interim analysis result is available on our website www.anzmtg.org and in the Journal of Clinical Oncology.

Abstract article

Henderson M. A., Burmeister B., Thompson J. F., Di Iulio J., Fisher R., et al. Adjuvant radiotherapy and regional lymph node field control in melanoma patients after lymphadenectomy: Results of an intergroup randomized trial (ANZMTG 01.02/TROG 02.01). *Journal of Clinical Oncology* (Meeting Abstracts). 2009; 27: 18S

7th World Congress on Melanoma



This year the Joint Meeting of the 7th World Congress of Melanoma and the 5th European Association of Dermato-Oncology (EADO) conference was held in the historic Hofburg Conference Centre in the heart of Vienna, Austria from 12 to 16 May.

Professor John Thompson (Chairman of ANZMTG Executive Committee) and Elizabeth Paton (ANZMTG Senior Project Officer) attended this interdisciplinary gathering to present research work in melanoma.

The Whole Brain Radiotherapy (WBRT) trial and the Quality of Life Research Study (MEL-QOL), both ANZMTG sponsored research were orally presented during the Congress and were received well by fellow Researchers. An overview of ANZMTG operations and activities as well as the ANZMTG/TROG intergroup trial - *A Randomised Trial of Post-Operative Radiation Therapy Following Wide Excision of Neurotropic Melanoma of the Head and Neck* were also showcased at the Congress.

Melanoma Patients Australia



Melanoma Patients Australia (*mpa*) started in 2006 in response to the overwhelming community need for information for patients diagnosed with melanoma and to provide support to nurture patients and their families through difficult times.

mpa is the only patient-focused, patient-driven organisation in Australia dedicated to providing information and support to patients diagnosed with melanoma. In the 3 years since it was established *mpa* has grown from a grassroots organization of 10 to a membership of over 500 Australians who are affected by melanoma.

We help to improve the quality and longevity of patients' lives through:

- A patient focused website for melanoma patients to meet on-line and share common experiences & information. Check out our website www.melanomapatients.org
- Hope, support and information to patients through facilitated peer support groups across Australia
- Information Forums where consumers can learn about strategies for melanoma care and treatment, clinical trials and new research
- a referral option for health professionals to ensure patients' support needs are met after diagnosis
- a monthly e-newsletter designed to link all patients to a melanoma community
- 24/7 telephone assistance



Lisa McFadyen (*mpa* CEO) and Herman Herlaar (Manager, *mpa* Support Services)

In 2006 *mpa* began responding to the needs of patients in Brisbane by establishing a melanoma support group in the Brisbane area. Demand for similar services in other areas grew rapidly with the result that, by the end of 2008, *mpa's* support groups had expanded to Melbourne, Sydney, Gold and Sunshine Coasts, Rockhampton and Townsville. More groups are planned in areas where significant unmet need has been identified. In 2009-2010 we hope to roll out a national network of support in areas such as SA, WA and Canberra and to provide melanoma patients, no matter where they live, with access to support and information which is patient-centred and patient-focused and which gives patients and their families hope - an illusive quality for many people and one often in short supply.

For more information contact *mpa* on +61 7 3314 2201 or email info@melanomapatients.org.

Melanoma Public Forum 2009



Australia's first Melanoma Public Forum, proudly presented by the Melanoma Network and Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) was held on Sunday 9 August 2009. This forum was part of the two day event of the 2009 Advances in Melanoma Care Symposium.

The forum focused on prevalence, prevention and treatment of melanoma. It also looked into latest research developments in melanoma. The importance of support groups, melanoma services and patient's perspectives towards melanoma were also highlighted. The day concluded with a question-answer session. ANZMTG would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Melanoma Network and MIA for their joint effort in organising and successfully presenting the Symposium and Public Forum.

ANZMTG Clinical Trials update

Featured trial

ANZMTG 01.07


Whole Brain Radiotherapy (WBRT) following local treatment of intracranial metastases of melanoma - A randomised phase III trial

Acronym: WBRT in melanoma

Chief Investigator: Dr Gerald Fogarty

This trial is now open to recruitment.

This is an important trial which will assist in determining the future best practice of treating and managing patients with intracranial melanoma metastasis (stage IV). This is the first trial to investigate WBRT in melanoma as previous WBRT trials have involved patients with different types of tumours. There are a total of 11 Australian sites involved in this study, 6 which are open and recruiting with another 5 sites which will open soon. This study seeks to determine if whole brain radiotherapy reduces the spread of melanoma in the brain, and lengthens the time to melanoma returning. This trial will also examine the effect of whole brain radiotherapy on quality of life and brain functions such as memory, speech and concentration. The primary end point is the proportion of patients with distant intracranial failure as determined by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) assessment at 12 months post randomisation. 200 people will be recruited from melanoma centres in Australia, New Zealand and other international sites.



"We don't know whether WBRT makes a difference, there has been no previous clinical trial in melanoma and that is why we are doing this trial. It is critically important that patients are entered onto the trial to answer this question"

The trial is funded by the Diagnostics and Technology Branch of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, with the support of Cancer Australia and the NHMRC. Trial coordination is through ANZMTG and the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre, University of Sydney in partnership with Trans-Tasman Radiation Oncology Group (TROG) and the Sydney Neuro-Oncology Group (SNOG).

Email Dr Gerald Fogarty gerald.fogarty@imed.com.au or Elizabeth Paton elizabeth.paton@smu.org.au for more information.

Other current trials - open and recruiting

ANZMTG 01.09/TROG 08.09

A Randomised Trial of Post-Operative Radiation Therapy Following Wide Excision of Neurotropic Melanoma of the Head and Neck (Acronym: RTN2)

Chief Investigator: Associate Professor Bryan Burmeister

Trial Co-ordinator: Janelle Meakin (email janelle.meakin@health.qld.gov.au for more information)

A phase III multicenter randomized trial of sentinel lymphadenectomy and complete lymph node dissection versus sentinel lymphadenectomy alone, in cutaneous melanoma patients with molecular or histopathological evidence of metastases in the sentinel node (Acronym: MSLT II)

Chief Investigator: Dr Donald Morton

Trial Co-ordinator: Lisa van Kreuningen (email lvk@jwci.org for more information)

Trial in development**ANZMTG 02.09**

A multi-centre phase II/III double-blinded randomised controlled trial comparing oral vitamin D with placebo in patients with cutaneous melanoma at high risk of recurrence (*Acronym: Mel-D*)

Chief Investigator: Dr Robyn Saw

Trial Co-ordinator: Valarie Jakrot (email valerie.jakrot@smu.org.au for more information)

Closed trials in follow-up phase**ANZMTG 01.02/TROG 02.01**

A randomised clinical trial of surgery versus surgery plus adjuvant radiotherapy for regional control in patients with completely resected macroscopic nodal metastatic melanoma

Chief Investigator: Associate Professor Bryan Burmeister

Trial Co-ordinator: Dr Juliana Di Iulio (email juliana.dilulio@petermac.org for more information)

A clinical study of wide excision alone versus wide excision with intraoperative lymphatic mapping and Sentinel Lymph Node Dissection in the treatment of patients with cutaneous invasive melanoma (*Acronym: MSLT I*)

Chief Investigator: Dr Donald Morton

Trial Co-ordinator: Lisa van Kreuningen (email lvk@jwci.org for more information)

MEL-QOL Research Study**ANZMTG RP1.09**

Improving Quality of Life measurement for melanoma patients: Validity and reliability study of QoL instruments in a NSW population (*Acronym: MEL-QOL Research Study*)

Chief Investigator: Associate Professor Julie Winstanley

Trial Co-ordinator: Bridget Myles (email bridget.myles@smu.org.au for more information)

Other Investigators

Professor Madeleine King, Professor John Thompson, Dr Grahame Simpson, Professor Rick Kefford

This study has now received ethics approval and is recruiting patients from the Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) and the Sydney Cancer Centre (Royal Prince Alfred Hospital) clinics.

The conduct of the study will result in the development of a melanoma-specific QoL questionnaire which would assist in the early detection of psychological stress in patients and their families, a prospect that may add value to the prognosis of patients and resourcing families to ease their psychological burden. Early qualitative research work (via focus groups/one to one interview) will be carried out during the latter part of 2009 to identify pertinent melanoma QoL issues. These data will be content analysed and new questionnaire items generated for piloting on a larger group of patients and family members during the first part of 2010. The psychometric properties of the new questionnaire will then be analysed in terms of validity and reliability.

Many international colleagues have expressed interest for collaboration in the MEL-QOL Research Study. More also, this study has instigated interest within the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) group for research into Quality of Life (QoL) and is now approved as a module in development for assessing quality of life in melanoma in their QoL instrument database.

2009 Calender of Oncological Meetings

Date	Name of Meeting	Place	Secretariat contact details
<i>September</i>			
20 - 24	34 th European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) Congress	Berlin Germany	The European CanCer Organisation (ECCO) E: berlin09@ecco-org.eu W: www.esmo.org
24 - 26	The Fifth Annual Oncology Congress	San Francisco USA	The Fifth Annual Oncology Congress E: jcook@reedexpo.com W: www.oncologycongress.com
<i>October</i>			
5 - 9	51 st American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO) Annual Meeting	Chicago USA	American Society for Radiation Oncology E : meetings@astro.org W : www.astro.org
8 - 10	Perspectives in Melanoma XIII	Baltimore USA	Imedex E: meetings@imedex.com Web: www.imedex.com
8 – 11	The Australian College of Dermatologists (ACD) Biennial Spring Conference	Hunter Valley Australia	The Australian College of Dermatologists E: admin@dermcoll.asn.au W: www.dermcoll.asn.au
<i>November</i>			
1 - 4	VI th International Melanoma Congress	Boston USA	E: info@societymelanomaresearch.org W: www.melanomacongress09.com
12 - 14	2 nd International Dermoscopy Society (IDS) Congress	Barcelona Spain	SBC Servicios Básicos de Congresos E: idscongress2009@sbccongresos.com W: www.congress2009.dermoscopy-ids.org
17 - 19	36 th Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (COSA) Annual Scientific Meeting	Gold Coast Australia	ASN Events Pty Ltd W: www.asnevents.com.au/cosa
19 - 21	3 rd World Meeting of Interdisciplinary Melanoma/Skin Cancer Centres	Berlin Germany	MedConcept GmpH E: info@medconcept.org W: www.melanomacongress2009.org

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