



A Message from the President

"The hardest thing in the world to understand is the income tax."

Albert Einstein

I am not sure Einstein's quote can be used as defence but I find some consolation that even the great are troubled by some of the certainties of life.

There may not be much on tax advice at the 9th Annual Scientific Meeting of our society to be held in Brisbane from 26-28th July but just about all you wanted to know about head and neck oncology but were afraid to ask, will be revealed! Ben Panizza, Sandro Porceddu, Del Hinckley, Alex Guminski, Kylie Perkins and Wendy Davidson have put together a comprehensive program that will be of interest to all with a head and neck oncologic interest.

The international faculty includes Gary Clayman from the M.D. Anderson Cancer Centre in Houston, Texas who is recognised for his contributions to basic science research in Head and Neck oncology and David Brizel from Duke University, North Carolina renowned for his work on tumour biology and pharmacologic radioprotectors. Ezra Cohen from Chicago has expertise on targeted therapy for cancer and last but not least Corina van As-Brooks is a Speech pathologist and researcher from the University of Amsterdam with an interest in the assessment and rehabilitation of Speech and swallowing disorders in patients with head and neck cancer.

I invite all members to attend and support the meeting and encourage them to invite their colleagues with whom they manage patients with head and neck cancer. The success of the soci-

ety and its aims to promote the multidisciplinary care of our patients depends on the success of our annual scientific meeting. Encourage your colleagues to consider membership of the society and promote its increasing scope of activity.

Following the 2007 ASM is the East-West Symposium on Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma, to be held on the Sunshine Coast and chaired by Dr June Corry (Vice President of ANZHNS).

Presidents before me and I have regularly recognised the contribution of Professor Chris O'Brien and no newsletter can be complete without keeping the membership abreast of his progress. He is well and undergoing treatment but such is his character that despite his own battle he is providing support for other patients having treatment for brain malignancy. We wish him and his family well.



Dr Suren Krishnan
President

Executive Committee Members

Dr Suren Krishnan
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Dr Del Hinckley
Chair Nominating Committee

Dr Bob Smee
Chair Membership Committee

ANZHNS 9th Annual Scientific Meeting

Thurs 26th—Sat 28th July 2007, Brisbane Convention Centre

Visit www.anzhns.org for information.

Important

Dates:

- Abstract Submission Deadline: Friday 1st June
- Abstract Notification: Monday 18th June
- Early Bird Registration Closing Date: Friday 1st June
- Accommodation Closing Date: Monday 18th June
- Travel Grant Applications Closing Date: Friday 29 June

East-West Symposium on Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma

July 30—Aug 2, Sunshine Coast. Website: <http://npc2007.qimr.edu.au/index.html>. Guest speakers: Prof Alan Rickinson, Prof Anne Lee, Prof Lori Frappier, Prof Nancy Raab-Traub, Prof Yi-Xin Zeng



Gary Clayman



David Brizel



Ezra Cohen



Corina van As-Brooks

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Recent Head & Neck Meetings — Bob Smee

Two significant Meetings have occurred over the past few months.

The first a Multidisciplinary Meeting on Head & Neck Cancer held in Melbourne attracted a large audience of Specialists from multiple fields (it is hoped the Society can benefit with an increase in membership from this forum). The essential theme was the current evidence that epidermal growth factor inhibitors may have significant impact upon local control and probable survival as evidence from the recent Phase-3 study. Kian Ang gave a very good talk on current understandings of the molecular behaviour of head & neck squamous cell carcinoma cells, and how we may be able to manipulate this. As usual an enlightening and entertaining talk.

An overview of the current Tirapazamine study was given by Danny Rischin. There is, however, some concern regarding support of Cetuximab as it has not been compared with the current standard of chemo-radiation. As an example NICE in the UK has not recommended its use as sole added treatment. Kian Ang reported that this is a subject of a current RTOG study which is recruiting ahead of schedule. Kian also discussed the recent concluded and published RTOG and EORTC chemo-radiotherapy studies. These two organisations had different definitions of high risk in the post-op setting. Consensus is now that the only two significant high risk features are: positive margins, and

extracapsular extension. Other features such as: number of nodes, close margins, lymphovascular permeation, etc., have not shown benefit of adding chemotherapy to post-op radiotherapy. At the MD Anderson only the really high risk patients are offered combined treatment thus a patient classified as T3, T4, or N1-2 would not necessarily qualify for chemo-radiotherapy. A well attended interactive meeting.

The second meeting was the Conference on Innovative Approaches in Head & Neck Oncology in Barcelona. This meeting brought together many of the international experts dominated, given location, by Europeans. There were a number of highlights from this writer's point of view. There is an intention in the UK to establish a Phase-3 study of laser resection versus radiotherapy for early glottic carcinoma. A representative from each of the European national Head & Neck Co-Operative Groups gave an overview of current and proposed studies. Shortening of overall radiotherapy time seems to be a common theme. HPV-16 appears to be increasingly implicated in the causation of many oral and oropharyngeal cancers with DAHANCA-5 study demonstrating improved prognosis in response to radiotherapy for HPV-16 positive patients. PET/CT imaging has had a big impact upon cancer imaging as usual a number of papers on this. There still seems to be some concern over specificity and sensitivity related to the threshold for an

"abnormal" scan. J Bourhis represented the meta analysis study reaffirming the benefits of concurrent chemo-radiotherapy. David Brazel and Brian O'Sullivan expanded on this indicating the benefit is with Cisplatin monotherapy not necessarily combination treatment. The best way of delivering this is still to be established. Current standard 3 x 100mg per m² Cisplatin, although 2 x 100mg m² probably suffice. Is low-dose weekly Cisplatin "equivalent"? Interestingly this approach improves survival by improving the local regional control, there is no statistical impact upon distant metastatic growth. There is increasing enthusiasm for incorporating Taxol into combination. There is no published study that compares this approach to the current concurrent chemo-radiotherapy.

Quality of life has the appropriate providence with a very good stage demonstrating it is the extent of constrictor muscles that are irradiated that has the greatest impact upon post-radiotherapy swallowing. As expected Jan Overgaard gave a very good presentation indicating altered fractionated radiotherapy alone is associated with improved survival. Multiple papers on IMRT for parotid sparing highlighting some of the potential for nodal underdosing for upper cervical lymph nodes if parotid sparing has priority over nodal control. Reduction in the size of a nodal mass during IMRT may negate the benefit for further sparing since there is a shift in treated volumes.

Board Vacancies — Bob Smee

The Constitution indicates that there is a 3-year limit to membership of the Executive. Thus after three years on the Executive that person's position expires, although renomination can take place. There is the opportunity for those interested to be considered for election to the Executive when such a position becomes vacant. Thus for those members of the Society who have a strong desire to contribute to the function of

the Society as Chairman of the Membership Committee, I welcome your interest. At this point all that is necessary is to forward through our Secretariat an "expression of interest" note. All members will be provided with a list of those candidates seeking election to the Executive, as the Constitution requires that this be provided one month prior to the AGM, which will held during the 2007 ASM, on Friday, 27th July.

Upcoming Conferences

- ☞ 1st World Congress of the International Academy of Oral Oncology (IAOO) May 17-20, 2007, Amsterdam The Netherlands www.iaoo2007.com
- ☞ ANZHNS 9th Annual Scientific Conference, July 26-28, 2007. Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, QLD. www.anzhns.org Enquiries: (+61 2) 9954 4400
- ☞ East-West Symposium on Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma 30 July—2 August 2007. Sunshine Coast, Australia. <http://npc2007.qimr.edu.au/index.html>
- ☞ 7th International Conference on Head and Neck Cancer July 19 - July 23, 2008, San Francisco Marriott, San Francisco, CA, USA Website: www.ahns.info/meetings/
- ☞ 4th World Congress of the International Federation of Head & Neck Oncologic Societies (IFHNOS) June 15- 19, 2010 Seoul Korea. Website: www.ifhnos2010.org