

EDITORIAL/MEETING

Global Controversies and Advances in Skin Cancer

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Abstract

Advances and controversies of skin cancer prevention in the Asian-Pacific region are to be examined in the world's first Global Controversies and Advances in Skin Cancer Conference to be held in Brisbane, Australia this November. APOCP Members are cordially invited to register early for the opportunity to contribute to the debate on a cancer which continues to be a prominent issue in the Asia Pacific and indeed worldwide. We need answers to the questions of why a cancer that is so preventable and easily detectable is still shrouded in controversy. Primary focuses will be on issues like viral involvement, vaccines and novel clinical approaches.

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The Background

Skin cancer is broadly classified by two key types, melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer. The latter are not routinely collected by cancer registration as many are treated in doctor's surgeries using destructive techniques that preclude histological confirmation (Cancer Council Queensland, 2013a).

Melanoma of the skin is not an insignificant problem worldwide. In 2008 in the South-East Asian Region (SEARO) as classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) there was an estimated incidence of 2800 cases of melanoma of the skin in 2008 and a staggering 20782 cases in the Western Pacific Region (WPRO) (IARC, 2008). Of note, Australia and New Zealand are included in the WPRO classification and melanoma incidence rates in Australia and New Zealand are two to three times as high as those found in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. Although mortality rates are quite low, they are still approximately two times higher in Australia and New Zealand than in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom (IARC 2008).

The incidence of both non-melanoma and melanoma skin cancers has been increasing over the past decades with between 2 and 3 million non-melanoma skin cancers and 132,000 melanoma skin cancers occur globally each year (WHO, 2013).

Skin Cancer - a Costly Disease

In a report to identify the burden and cost of non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC) treatments in Australia and to project estimates of numbers and costs to 2015, Fransen et al (2012) noted the total number of NMSC treatments increased from 412 493 in 1997 to 767 347

in 2010. The total cost of NMSC treatments in 2010 in Australia was a staggering \$93.5 million - estimated to increase, to \$703.0 million by 2015.

Skin Cancer - Preventable, Readily Detectable and Clinically Treatable

Skin cancer, unlike many cancers can be prevented with a range of personal and environmental lifestyle factors, including the use of personal protective clothing, hats and sunglasses along with a sunscreen applied correctly and the use of environmental adaptations to the outdoor environment such as shade (Gies et al., 1998; Cancer Council Queensland, 2013b).

Cancer Councils across Australia recommend community sun protection strategies based around the Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide slogan. The catchy Slip, Slop, Slap part of the slogan (Slip on a shirt, slop on sunscreen and slap on a broad brimmed hat) has been popular in Australia since the early 1980s with a recent addition of the 'seek' and 'slide' components to promote the importance of seeking shade and sliding on sunglasses.

Success of early skin cancer prevention campaigns are now having effect on incidence of NMSC with the stabilization of rates of basal cell carcinomas in Australia, consistent with the introduction of sun protection educational programs (Staples et al, 2006).

Early detection strategies encouraging skin self-examination and consultation with a general practitioner for new spots or those that change has also shown success with removal of early lesions associated with lower morbidity and mortality (Berwick, M, 1998; Janda et al, 2009).

Along with success in the prevention and early detection space, skin cancer has enjoyed similar success

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in the clinical world with the development of advanced topical skin applications to treat skin cancers through to developments in immune therapy (Zalaudek et al, 2013).

Why Controversy?

For such a preventable, early detectable and potentially treatable cancer – there are many advances to celebrate, but why are there controversies which continue to surround skin cancer advances, including:

- Vitamin D - how much Vitamin D do we need? What is the clinical advice? What about Vitamin D supplements?
- Ultraviolet-emitting tanning devices are classified by IARC as class 1 carcinogens, so why do they still operate?
- Is there a need for a skin cancer vaccine?
- Sentinel lymph biopsy - when should this be performed?

With this in mind, on behalf of the Organising Committee of the world's first Global Controversies and Advances in Skin Cancer Conference, we are pleased to invite APOCP Members and other experts involved in skin cancer to attend this ground-breaking summit.

GC-SC 2013 will provide a forum for promotion of accelerated scientific and clinical investigations into skin cancer, bringing together leading experts from the Asian-Pacific region to share knowledge and expertise with other leading international specialists.

Researchers, public health practitioners, clinicians and related professionals involved in the work of APOCP should not miss this opportunity to discuss, debate and direct the current controversies and advances in skin cancer from across the globe.

The Conference, to be held in Brisbane, Australia, from November 21 to 24, 2013, will comprehensively address current controversies and advances in skin cancer prevention, along with other topical issues:

- Prevention and early detection of skin cancer
- Small DNA viruses and skin cancer
- Advances in skin cancer vaccines
- Sentinel lymph node biopsy
- Vitamin D and skin cancer
- Lentigo maligna

This is an opportunity to learn from an array of world leading keynote speakers in one forum, including Professor Adele Green, Queensland, Australia on the scope of the skin cancer problem worldwide, Professor

Patrick Moore, USA on MCV and merkel cell carcinoma – a molecular success story, Jan Nico Bouwes Bavinck, the Netherlands on organ transplantation and skin cancer: basic problems and new perspectives.

A separate plenary session investigating the controversial area of, vitamin D and skin cancer, a topical and relevant issue for the Asia Pacific, will feature Professor Michael Kimlin, Australia and Associate Professor Billie Bonevski, Australia and other high profile researchers, presenting all sides of the Vitamin D story and importantly, investigating the public message. A panel of experts chaired by world renowned Dr Norman Swan will question whether there is a need for a skin cancer vaccine, whilst the advancements in skin cancer prevention and early detection will be discussed.

Delegates will learn from topical sessions including pathology of melanocytic proliferations perineural invasion and dermoscopy, whilst being inspired by former Australian of the Year Professor Ian Frazer.

A highlight of the conference is the celebration of advancements through of the 50th anniversary of the Queensland Melanoma Project on the opening day and the incorporation of the second Australian National Melanoma Conference throughout the four days.

The inaugural Conference will be guided by a steering and scientific program committee comprised of world leaders in skin cancer. As an APOCP delegate, you can be assured of a provocative and exceptionally high quality program.

Abstract submissions for Global Controversies and Advances in Skin Cancer (GC-SC 2013) close on 7 June – don't miss this opportunity to present at this cutting edge international skin cancer conference along with leading experts in the field. Papers selected for presentation at GC-SC 2013 will be published in a special supplement to the Asian Pacific Journal of Cancer Prevention.

Authors of Poster presentations will also have the further option of publishing their paper in the F1000 research repository. We are also pleased to announce that prizes will be awarded for Young Investigator, Clinical Research



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Poster and General Research Poster. Award winners will be selected by the GC-SC 2013 Scientific Program Committee. Don't miss out - Abstracts close 7 June!

Lodge your abstract/s now at **www.gc-sc.org**

We would welcome the opportunity to extend our hospitality to APOCP Members who take up the exciting opportunity to attend the event. Please join us and take the time to enjoy our dynamic lifestyle, sumptuous seafood, luxury shopping, and fabulous beaches during your stay!

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