Welcome to November edition of the Society News!

Message from Anna Ugalde and Anna Boltong

This edition we update you on the Memorandum of Understanding signed earlier this year between MASCC and the International Society of Oral Oncology, based on interviews with their respective presidents, Dorothy Keefe and Richard Logan. Over the next year we hope to profile the Associate Editors for Supportive Care in Cancer to introduce them to the MASCC community and provide some insight into the important work they do in the publication and peer review process. This month, A/Prof Penny Schofield is featured, associate editor responsible for the section of the journal dedicated to behavioural interventions in supportive care. We also introduce you to a new MASCC member, Maria Lapid from Minnesota, USA and profile some of her publications, including one published in Supportive Care in Cancer! And on the final pages you can read some new publications coming from our members. If you’d like your publications added to the list, or have other stories or news, please email us at anna.ugalde@svhm.org.au or anna.boltong@cancervic.org.au

Memorandum of Understanding between ISOO and MASCC

At the MASCC/ISOO International Symposium on Supportive Care in Cancer in Berlin earlier this year, MASCC and the International Society of Oral Oncology (ISOO) signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding. We interview Dorothy Keefe (current MASCC president) and Richard Logan (current ISOO president) to obtain a better understanding of the context for the MOU, and its implications for ISOO and MASCC.

What is the background to the MOU?
The MASCC/ISOO MOU was renewed for five more years to formalize the continued alliance of our organizations and our commitment to supportive care in cancer. As you our readers know, MASCC is an international, multidisciplinary organization dedicated to research and education in all aspects of supportive care for patients with cancer, regardless of stage of disease. In 1998 the International Society of Oral Oncology (ISOO), an organization that addresses the management of complications arising in oral tissues secondary to cancer and its treatment, entered into a mutually beneficial partnership with MASCC.

ISOO President Richard Logan & MASCC President Dorothy Keefe

Why is an alliance between MASCC and ISOO so important?

This alliance recognizes the role of the oral oncology specialist in supportive care in cancer and the specific educational needs of oral oncology specialists. The goals of the MOU are designed to build upon the strengths of the MASCC/ISOO alliance as well as strategically expand the scope of the MASCC/ISOO missions worldwide.

Richard, from an ISOO perspective, why is a formal MOU of value? What was the most enjoyable aspect of signing it?

The relationship between MASCC and the ISOO is very important and highlights how critical oral care and oral health is for patients undergoing cancer treatment. The ongoing relationship means that the ISOO can continue to grow and continue work to promote the importance of oral health in supportive cancer care. It was great to be able to sign the MOU between MASCC and the ISOO in Berlin this year – extra special to be co-signing it with Dorothy Keefe.
Memorandum of Understanding between ISOO and MASCC, continued

Dorothy, why is a formal MOU of value from a MASCC perspective? How did it feel to be signing with Richard?

MASCC’s relationship with ISOO continues to be very fruitful and should be supported into the future. Richard is the co-head of my Mucositis lab, so it was quite special to be signing the MOU as two Presidents!

So, a big congratulations to our organizations for renewing an already strong relationship and best wishes as we all move forward together!

Profile of Supportive Care in Cancer Associate Editor - Penelope Schofield

Over the coming months we aim to profile the Associate Editorial team at Supportive Care in Cancer to introduce these important members of the journal and provide an insight into the publication and review process. This month we profile Associate Professor Penelope Schofield from Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne, Australia.

Describe the scope of your current work?
I am a behavioural scientist who has worked in cancer control research for over 25 years. My current appointment is the Scientific Director of the Department of Cancer Experiences Research at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne Australia. My research team conducts work on the rigorous development, evaluation and provision of effective, sustainable supportive care to improve outcomes for the increasing population of cancer patients. The goal of my work is to improve patient outcomes and alleviate burden on the health system by employing triaging, tailoring to individual needs and coaching in self-management.

What are the next big developments in your field?
I believe that the next big development is the challenge of how do we integrate psychosocial and behavioural interventions into routine clinical care. There is a lot of discussion about this, but I think we need to conduct implementation research to determine what mechanisms are optimal so that cancer patient care routinely includes attention to psychosocial/behavioural issues.

What are the biggest challenges you face in your work?
There are two major challenges that I face. How to design interventions which are sufficiently intense to achieve improved patient outcomes, but don't require huge resources. In these times of economic constraint, we have to consider the cost of our interventions to the health system if we ever want it to be implemented. And the second challenge is of course the continual struggle to win research support!

What is your area of expertise with regards to editorial input for Supportive Care in Cancer?
I am in charge of the Behavioural Interventions section of the journal, a load I share with Professor Tom Hack at the University of Manitoba, Canada. We receive not just papers on behavioural and psycho-social interventions, but many others with a psycho-social focus. The two questions I ask myself are: is the research design methodologically sound, and are these data and interpretation provided saying something new?

What is the most important advice you could give to manuscript authors who are hoping to publish in your area of expertise?
First, your paper has to have a compelling main message which is new. Second, we are keen to publish research from Non-English speaking countries, but we frequently receive papers which are hard to understand because the English expression is poor. If you are not a native English speaker, it may be wise to get your manuscript reviewed by someone who is.
Meet a new MASCC Member! - Maria Lapid

What is your job title and where do you work?

I am a geriatric psychiatrist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, USA. I have ABPN board certifications in Psychiatry, Geriatric Psychiatry, Psychosomatic Medicine, and Hospice and Palliative Medicine. My clinical practice at the Mayo Clinic includes outpatient and inpatient geriatric psychiatry, am a faculty member of Palliative Medicine, and also one of the associate medical directors of the Mayo Clinic Hospice Program. From an educational perspective, I am the training director of the Geriatric Psychiatry fellowship. My research interests include quality of life and end of life issues in geriatric and geropsychiatric patients and caregivers.

How you are involved in supportive care or why you are interested in supportive care in cancer?

I frequently encounter end-of-life issues in my geriatric psychiatric practice and had felt I needed skills beyond my psychiatric skills set in order to provide better care to my patients. The most common scenarios I see are depression, anxiety, and distress in the context of cancer, dementia, or other advanced illnesses. As we all know, these issues not only concern the patients, but equally important are the caregivers who at times need more support than the patients themselves.

What made you decide to join MASCC/ISOO?

I heard about the MASCC for the first time last year, after I had completed my training in hospice and palliative medicine. I attended the MASCC Symposium in New York (2012) and presented a poster. I really enjoyed the sessions, networking, and being exposed to all the knowledge there and to hear how the field is being advanced. I felt this could be a meeting I can attend every year, given it is so relevant to what I do clinically and in my research.

Some of Maria’s publications are listed below:


Some New Supportive Care Publications by MASCC Members


Some New Supportive Care Publications by MASCC Members, continued


