



ANZSN

Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology

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1. HEO'S REPORT
Robyn Langham

The start of the new financial year is upon us already, and the Society is gearing up for what promises to be a bumper annual Scientific Meeting in Melbourne in just a few weeks time. Parts of the program this year will be held in conjunction with the RSA, and a large turnout is expected. All the abstracts have been reviewed, prize sessions allocated, the three international speakers are on their way, all is in readiness. A reminder that early-bird registration closes at COB Friday July 7th, 2006. Social program highlights include a cocktail party at the Aquarium (with nephro musos to entertain) and the Society dinner at the National Gallery. Tickets to the dinner are limited, so get your order in now.

Visit the ANZSN website (<http://www.icms.com.au/anズsn2006>) for all the details.

In other exciting ANZSN news, five new members of Council will take over the positions being vacated at the ANZSN ASM this August. Our retiring members, John Kelly, Mark Cooper, Helen Healy, Paul Snelling and Grant Pidgeon will make way for the five members who were recently elected. The Council will welcome Dr Stephen Alexander, Dr Adrian Gillin, Dr Nikky Isbel, Dr Vicki Levidiotis and Dr Johan Rosman at it's meeting in Melbourne, all elected for a period of four years. The new Executive will also be decided at the Melbourne meeting.

In other dispatches, David Harris reports an increase in the impact factor of the APSN journal Nephrology, and extends his thanks to the Society and its members for their support of our regional publication. We should in turn congratulate David for his efforts.

In trainee news, the ANZSN Postgraduate Workshop Sponsored by Amgen was held in Adelaide in early May was a great success by all reports, and the feedback was superb. There was a good turnout of both advanced and basic trainees in attendance, and the international speaker, Stuart Shankland, had proved yet again to be an excellent teacher.

See you in Melbourne!!

2. PHARMACEUTICAL'S REPORT

Ashley Irish

The applications for the PBS listing of both Cinacalcet (Sensipar) and Sevelamer (Renagel) have both been rejected by the PBAC. This is not surprising as neither application has sufficient clinical outcome data to allow the PBAC to meet a cost/benefit decision. Despite the pharmaceutical sponsors and clinical enthusiasm this is inadequate without the required clinical endpoints. Further submissions are underway although in the absence of additional robust trial data one will have to be concerned that a full listing is some way in the future. The PBAC are now fully aware of the clinical importance and lack of therapeutic options in 2HPT however they maintain their rational approach to all high cost drugs. The application for listing of Lanthanum (Fosrenol) is also expected and an outcome is awaited. The application by the society to list erythropoietic agents under S85 (analogous to the immunosuppressant agents for transplant) was rejected due to concerns over cost and leakage of a high cost agent. In the majority of instances this is of no concern to clinicians but in remote areas of Australia, availability of these agents via GPs, private pharmacies or aboriginal health services would be advantageous. In addition the society responded to a request by a working party specifically examining the feasibility of increasing availability of non-PBS items (sodium bicarbonate, magnesium) for CKD in aboriginal communities. The society indicated it preferred that all Australians have equal access to agents for CKD and supported the incorporation of sodium bicarbonate, but saw little utility in magnesium, for inclusion on the PBS. Clinicians should be aware that Calcium Carbonate preparations including caltrate and cal-sup (120 and 1 repeat) and Titalac (200 and 5 repeats) have returned as authority items on the PBS for management of hyperphosphataemia in patients with renal failure.

3. NEWS FROM KIDNEY HEALTH AUSTRALIA

Timothy Mathew

KCAT

Obesity

The Kidney Check Australia Taskforce (KCAT) recommended at its last meeting in March that obesity should be added to the list of 6 risk factors known to be associated with chronic kidney disease. Obesity thus joins diabetes, hypertension, family history, smoking, age over 60 years and Aboriginal and Torres St Islander heritage as an accepted risk factor.

It has been recognised for some years that obesity is associated in adults with the glomerular lesion of focal sclerosis. While evidence suggesting obesity was an independent risk factor for CKD has been accumulating for some years, the recommendation was based on new and conclusive evidence that obesity (defined as BMI >30 kg/m²) was associated with an increased risk 3.6 times greater than normal weight individuals (1). The risk remained significant even after adjusting for baseline blood pressure and diabetes.

The risk with obesity increases with increasing weight reaching a 7 fold increase for those with extreme obesity. It remains to be proven that reducing weight in those who are already obese reduces the relative risk.

(1) Hsu C, et al. Body Mass Index and risk for ESRD. 2006. Ann Int Med; 144;21-28

4. DNT WORKSHOP 2007
Helen Pilmore

The DNT workshop will be held in Queenstown, New Zealand from 4 - 7 March. We are looking forward to a stimulating and interesting meeting. Letters will be sent out to people in isolated or single nephrologist based centres at the end of June with invitations to larger units in early September. Accommodation will be at Rydges Queenstown with everyone getting lakeside views. There will also be a short period for everyone to experience some of the activities possible in Queenstown (Wine Tasting, Bungee Jumping!!).

Please respond to your invitations as soon as possible after receiving them to ensure a spot at the workshop.

5. POSITIONS VACANT

Visit the ANZSN website www.nephrology.edu.au for more details about the following opportunities:-

- Clinical Director (Nephrologist) - Renal Unit, Department of Medicine, Townsville Hospital
 - Clinical Epidemiology Training Scholarships in Renal Medicine
 - Consultant Nephrologist, Mildura, Victoria
 - Locum Physician in Wollongong
 - PhD opportunity Royal Brisbane Hospital
 - PhD Positions in Clinical and Experimental Nephrology, Westmead Millennium Institute
 - PhD Scholarships in Renal Medicine
 - Renal Staff Specialists (0.6 FTE & 1.0 FTE) St George & Sutherland Hospitals
 - Research Fellows - PhD / MD students, St Vincent's Health, Melbourne
 - Research/Senior Research Fellow (Renal), The George Institute for International Health
 - Staff Specialist – Renal Medicine, The Canberra Hospital
 - Staff Specialist (Nephrology) Launceston General Hospital
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6. MEETINGS

Visit the ANZSN website www.nephrology.edu.au under Clinical & Scientific Meetings for details about forthcoming meetings.
