



**australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy inc.**



# **annual report 2011**

**The mission of ASCIA is to advance the science and practice of clinical immunology and allergy, by promoting education and the highest standard of ethical medical practice.**

**ASCIA is the peak professional body of clinical immunology and allergy specialists in Australia and New Zealand and is a member society of the Asia Pacific Association of Allergy, Asthma and Clinical Immunology and the World Allergy Organisation.**

**[www.allergy.org.au](http://www.allergy.org.au)**

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## ASCIA 2011



ASCIA 2011, the highly successful 22nd Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology & Allergy (ASCIA) was held at the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, from 6-10 September 2011.

Congratulations and thank you to the organising committee of ASCIA 2011 (**pictured above at ASCIA 2011**); Dr Preeti Joshi, Dr Brynn Wainstein, Professor Brad Frankum, Dr Fred Lee, Dr Karuna Keat and Pam Burton, led by the ASCIA 2011 Chair, Professor Connie Katelaris.

Thank you to all speakers and chairs, delegates, sponsors and exhibitors for their support of ASCIA 2011.

In particular we would like to thank our international speakers, Professor Abul Abbas (USA), Dr Domingo Barber (Spain), Professor Pascal Demoly (France), Dr George Du Toit (UK), Professor Gunnar Johansson (Sweden), Dr Montserrat Fernandez-Rivas (Spain), Dr Steven Holland (USA), Dr Marc Riedl (USA) and Professor Yehuda Shoenfeld (Israel).

The ASCIA 2011 scientific program included a record number of 9 international speakers, more than 40 Australasian speakers and chairs, 75 posters and 9 Clinical Grand Round (CGR) presentations. All ASCIA 2011 poster and CGR abstracts have been published in the online Internal Medicine Journal (IMJ) and these can be accessed via the ASCIA website. Congratulations to the poster and CGR award winners, who are also listed on the ASCIA website.

For the first time in Australasia, a postgraduate immunology course was held as part of the meeting, expertly run by Professor Abul Abbas, who is the current President of the Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies (FOCIS). This course was very popular, with 82 delegates participating on the Saturday, after also attending the 3 day ASCIA Annual Scientific Meeting.

ASCIA 2011 included social functions on each evening from Tuesday to Friday. One of the highlights was the outstanding performance at the ASCIA 2011 Welcome Function by *The Ultrasounds*, the choir of the School of Medicine at the University of Western Sydney (**pictured below at ASCIA 2011**).

Another highlight was the presentation *Medicine and the Media* by Dr John D'Arcy at the ASCIA 2011 Gala Dinner, held at the spectacular National Maritime Museum.



ASCIA members can view the ASCIA 2011 photographs taken by the multi-talented Dr John Tan on the ASCIA website members section (login is required).

We look forward to seeing you at ASCIA 2012, in Wellington New Zealand next September. ■

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### A/Professor Jo Douglass

I must firstly say thanks to Jill Smith for her wonderful work this year. Jill has worked extremely hard to achieve several outcomes for ASCIA in terms of education and financial achievements. Importantly, ASCIA has also continued its services to members with communication within the membership, development of educational resources, support for trainees and access to allergens. Jill is ably supported by Michelle Haskard, particularly in respect of finances and Sandra Vale, as the ASCIA Education Project Officer.

I am also pleased (and relieved) to acknowledge the initiatives of our Treasurer, Melanie Wong in ensuring that for the first time in 5 years we have a surplus budget. This is in no small part due to the efforts of Jill and the conference organising committees who contribute so much time to ASCIA. We are also grateful for the continued support from sponsors and exhibitors.

One of the major achievements of ASCIA this year has been the further development of ASCIA e-training programs. In March 2011 ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for health professionals was launched, with presentations by A/Professor Richard Loh and myself, Anaphylaxis Australia President Maria Said and the ASCIA GP representative Alison Cunningham (**pictured below at the launch**). The launch complemented ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for schools and childcare services, which was launch in March 2010.



ASCIA e-training packages are produced through the combined efforts of a wide range of ASCIA members led by A/Professor Richard Loh, as well as non-members to meet the objectives of accuracy, consistency and sustainability to provide access to widely dispersed people who suffer from allergic diseases.

Anticipated ASCIA e-training courses include food allergy, allergic rhinitis, immunotherapy and primary immune deficiencies.

All of these require input from ASCIA members who are generous with their time and efforts. It is because of the commitment of ASCIA members, both full and associate, to these programs that we are able to disseminate knowledge of allergy and clinical immunology and meet the needs of people with allergic and immunological disease.

We also need to thank Sandra Vale and Suzanne Grainger of Impagination who have worked together with Jill Smith to see these projects come together.

The ASCIA Anaphylaxis Working Party has achieved a great deal in improving access to adrenaline autoinjectors (EpiPen or Anapen) available in Australia through the PBAC. We need to assist our New Zealand colleagues to achieve a similar outcome with Pharmac.

We have also been successful in declaring our interests in relation to allergy practice that is not conventional and this has resulted in legal restrictions on the practice of offering unsafe "allergy" testing and practice.

We are pleased to say that there are currently approximately 40 trainees in Allergy and Clinical Immunology. ASCIA has provided support for trainees in Allergy and Clinical Immunology. The Trainees met on the 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011 for the ASCIA Advanced Training (Allergy) meeting.

The specialist training committee (JSAC) has put in an enormous effort to improve the access of trainees to jobs throughout Australia, as well as the personal accreditation of training sites. JSAC holds the

very future of ASCIA in its hands and we should acknowledge and thank the efforts of this committee chaired by A/Professor Matthew Cook, assisted by Dr Tiffany Hughes, Dr Melanie Wong, Professors Brad Frankum and Bob Heddle who have continued to work to ensure that trainees continue to have great training and opportunities. We are also grateful for the work of Dr Jan Sinclair and colleagues who represent JSAC in New Zealand.

I would like to thank all of these ASCIA members for their efforts, the success of which can be judged by the large number of trainees and their enthusiasm in embracing ASCIA and its objectives.

I would also like to acknowledge the achievements of those members who take leadership on state and international roles. Activities within each state are critical to recruiting and maintaining a workforce in allergy and clinical immunology, for trainees and facilitating the local profile of ASCIA to allied health and associate members.

In particular I should note the ASCIA WA Immunology Days for scientists and immunopathologists. For the past two years these have been successfully organised by Dr Chris Bundell and Monica Kemp.

Internationally, Professor Connie Katelaris was elected President of the Asia Pacific Association of Allergy, Asthma and Clinical Immunology (APAAACI), A/Professor Frank Thien was elected APAAACI Secretary General and Dr Fred Lee is Associate Editor of the APAAACI Journal (**pictured below at ASCIA 2011**).



Professor Susan Prescott is on the Education committee of World Allergy Organisation (WAO) and A/Professor Pete Smith is on the WAO Web Editorial Committee, so ASCIA is well represented at international forums.

### **What challenges are facing ASCIA?**

It is a fact that 30 per cent of allergy and clinical immunology physicians intend to retire in the next 5 years and yet current training capacities are substantially less than replacement levels. Moreover the increased prevalence of allergic and immunological disease in the community is translating to long waiting lists and the reality that allergy and clinical immunology services are overwhelmed. Waiting lists are too long and training is failing to meet this demand.

How we respond to this challenge will determine the shape of allergy and clinical immunology services throughout Australia in years to come. Prior to ASCIA 2011 a strategic planning meeting was convened. This involved current ASCIA Council members and past ASCIA Presidents, who worked through a number of issues in response to the workforce crisis. As a start Council decided that ASCIA will produce a Standard of Care document for Australian practice which focuses on raising the profile of allergy and clinical Immunology and its expanding needs in order to service patients. This document can then be used as a resource to represent needs to state and national governments as well as hospitals and other sources of funding. This will be a major focus of the Council in 2012. Other priorities listed include the role of educational services, financial priorities and member services.

ASCIA needs to formally acknowledge and thank A/Professor Richard Loh for accepting the role of President Elect. Richard is a passionate and committed advocate for allergy and clinical immunology services, and our thanks are due to him in his support of ASCIA's future efforts in education and raising the profile of our speciality, whilst serving the cause of people with allergic and immunological disease.

I also need to thank the Council members I have been so fortunate to inherit: an enthusiastic and tolerant group, they together put their best efforts to seek to serve people with allergic and immunological disease with a resolve. I would like to thank them for this year and for the year to come.

Finally I must thank the ASCIA 2011 team for a wonderful conference and I look forward to being together again in Wellington in 2012. ■



**Professor Dianne Campbell and Dr Joanne Smart at ASCIA 2011**



**Dr Melanie Wong and Dr Jan Sinclair at ASCIA 2011**



**Dr John Tan, Immunology Fellow and ASCIA 2011 photographer**

## ASCIA COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE

President	A/Prof Jo Douglass
President Elect	A/Prof Dr Richard Loh
Secretary (Hon)	Dr William Smith
Treasurer (Hon)	Dr Melanie Wong

### AREA REPRESENTATIVES

New South Wales	Dr Sam Mehr
New Zealand	Dr Jan Sinclair
Queensland	Dr David Gillis
South Australia	Dr Anthony Smith
Victoria	Dr Dean Tey
Western Australia	Dr Richard Nolan

### OTHER REPRESENTATIVES

Associate Representative  
**Merryn Netting**

Clinical Practice Committee Chair  
**Dr Joanne Smart**

Education Committee Chair  
**Dr Sam Mehr**

Laboratory Practice Committee Chair  
**Robert Wilson**

Paediatric Committee Chair  
**Prof Dianne Campbell**

Immunodeficiency Committee Chair  
**Dr Jane Peake**

Anaphylaxis Working Party Chair  
**A/Prof Dr Richard Loh**

GP Liaison Representative  
**Dr Alison Cunningham**

Joint Specialist Advisory Committee (JSAC)  
for Clinical Immunology and Allergy  
**Dr Tiffany Hughes**

Immediate Past President  
**Dr Raymond Mullins**

Advanced Trainee Representative  
**Dr Alisa Kane**

# TREASURER'S REPORT

**Dr Melanie Wong**

In the 2010-2011 financial year ASCIA achieved a surplus of \$148,477. This is the first time since 2006-2007 that ASCIA has not been in deficit and one of only three times in the past eight years when ASCIA has achieved a surplus.

This result is mainly due to the success of recent ASCIA Annual Scientific Meetings and an improved performance of the ASCIA investment held with Macquarie Private Portfolio Management (MPPM).

Compared to the previous financial year:

- Revenue has increased by 71.5% (Table 1)
- Total assets have increased by 15% to a total of \$1,499,352 which means we have achieved our target of \$1.5m, to ensure sustainability (Table 2)
- Equity has increased by 27% (\$259,301) to a total of \$1,218,857 (table 2)
- Cash held by ASCIA (including cash held with MPPM) has increased by 30% to a total of \$919,232 (Table 3)

**TABLE 1 - OPERATING STATEMENT**

	10-11	09-10
Total Revenues	891,635	519,870
Total Expenses	743,158	541,810
<b>Net surplus (loss)</b>	<b>148,477</b>	<b>(21,940)</b>

**TABLE 2 - FINANCIAL POSITION**

	10-11	09-10
Total Assets	1,499,352	1,301,405
Liabilities	280,495	341,849
<b>Equity</b>	<b>1,218,857</b>	<b>959,556</b>

**TABLE 3 - CASH FLOW STATEMENT**

	10-11	09-10
Cash (start of yr)	702,900	598,552
<b>Cash (end of yr)</b>	<b>919,232</b>	<b>702,900</b>

## ASCIA INCOME SOURCES

ASCIA income is dependent on ASCIA Annual Scientific Meetings, educational initiatives (particularly e-training), investments and annual membership fees.

Income from membership fees is limited due to the relatively small size of the ASCIA membership (approximately 450 members in 2011). An annual increase in the ASCIA membership fee consistent with the CPI increase has been implemented since 2010.

ASCIA e-training projects have attracted a total of \$284,000 in sponsorship and incurred a total of \$147,540 in direct expenses since 2009, hence the surplus from these projects is currently \$136,460 over 3 years, or \$45,486 per year. This surplus allows for ASCIA infrastructure costs including ongoing maintenance, unexpected technical issues and time spent by ASCIA staff (other than the Education Project Officer) on fundraising, planning and reviewing e-training which is not directly attributed to e-training expenses. One of the main costs for developing these courses is the face to face planning meeting, which is essential for the development of some, but not all ASCIA e-training courses.

## INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The motion to change the ASCIA investment strategy to invest \$500,000 in an ANZ term deposit and retain \$500,000 in MPPM (with an amended mix of investments) was approved at the ASCIA Council teleconference on 23 February 2011 and implemented on 1 July 2011.

To ensure sustainability of finances, and to buffer ASCIA in light of possible further volatility in the financial sector, the goal for ASCIA is to have 3 years of annual expenditure in reserve, which is approximately \$1,500,000.

At the end of the 2011-2012 financial year ASCIA will reassess its financial position, to determine if there is sufficient, long term funding for grants or specific projects. ■

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

### Jill Smith

ASCIA has achieved an enormous amount in the past year, particularly regarding ASCIA educational programs. As outlined in the Treasurer's Report this has had a positive effect on the ASCIA finances, mostly due the success of recent ASCIA Annual Scientific Meetings (ASM) and the new ASCIA e-training programs for health professionals.

I would like to thank everyone for your highly valued contributions to ASCIA over the past year.

The main ASCIA educational project is of course the ASCIA Annual Scientific Meeting and in 2011 it has been a great pleasure and privilege to work with Professor Connie Katelaris and members of the ASCIA 2011 organising committee (see page 1). Thank you also to all the speakers, chairs, delegates, sponsors and exhibitors for their support as well as Natalie Austin and the team at ICMS Australasia (pictured below with Michelle, Suzanne and myself at ASCIA 2011).



ASCIA educational activities are reliant on the initiative, support and work of the ASCIA Executive (A/Professor Jo Douglass, A/Professor Richard Loh, Dr Melanie Wong and Dr William Smith), ASCIA Council members, ASCIA Committee and Working Party members, ASCIA Annual Scientific Meeting committee members, ASCIA staff and the ASCIA webmaster (Impagination).

ASCIA educational activities are also reliant on the unrestricted education grants that ASCIA receives from industry and some state governments.

ASCIA currently receives no commonwealth government funding and income from annual membership fees is limited due to the size of the ASCIA membership.



ASCIA education initiatives in 2011 included:

- Updating of ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for schools and childcare services
- Launch of ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for health professionals in March 2011 (see picture above)
- Launch of ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for Pharmacists in September 2011
- Launch of ASCIA food allergy and anaphylaxis e-training for dietitians and other health professionals in November 2011
- New ASCIA dietary avoidance information for 9 of the most common food allergens
- New Australian Prescriber anaphylaxis wallchart for health professionals – published in August 2011
- Revised ASCIA Action Plans for Anaphylaxis and ASCIA Action Plans for allergic reactions, now with text fields to type into
- Revised FAQ documents for ASCIA Action Plans and adrenaline autoinjectors

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- Revised ASCIA Food Allergen Challenge Protocols
- New AER FPIES patient information
- Revised AER seafood allergy patient information
- ASCIA Advanced Training Meeting (Allergy) in May 2011
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual WA Immunology Day in July 2011.

At the end of the 2010-2011 financial year there were approximately 450 ASCIA members, comprising:

- 39% Medical Specialists (FRACP) providing allergy and clinical immunology services
- 13% Trainees / Registrars
- 12% Other medical practitioners (including GPs and ENTs)
- 16% Nurses
- 11% Scientists
- 6% Dietitians
- 3% Other

With the continuing increase in membership it is vital to have good support and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Michelle Haskard, Sandra Vale and Suzanne Grainger (pictured below).



Michelle Haskard has worked part time for ASCIA since 2007, assisting with administration duties, particularly finances. I am extremely grateful for her intelligent, considered and efficient approach to her work. This position is gradually increasing in scope each year and has enabled ASCIA to expand its other activities.

Sandra Vale commenced in the position of ASCIA Education Project Officer in June 2010. Sandra's enthusiast and efficient approach to her work and her excellent medical writing skills are also greatly appreciated. This position has enabled the expansion of the ASCIA e-training projects without compromising other ASCIA activities.

Over the past three years we have learnt so much about development and maintenance of e-training courses. Suzanne Grainger and her committed team at Impagination have been willing to take on all the projects that we have proposed and have worked on them tirelessly to achieve the deadlines. Thank you to Suzanne Grainger and the team at Impagination. Due to the large workload in developing and updating ASCIA e-training courses, the update of the extremely popular ASCIA website has been delayed until early March 2012.

I look forward to seeing you at ASCIA 2012 [www.ascia2012.com](http://www.ascia2012.com) in Wellington New Zealand, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> September. ■



**Oriental Bay, Wellington, New Zealand**



**Wellington Town Hall (pictured to the right of Civic Square) is the main ASCIA 2012 venue**