



australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy inc.



Annual Report 2012

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

ASCIA Annual Report 2012

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ASCIA 2012 Conference



ASCIA 2012, the 23rd Annual Conference of the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) was held at the magnificent Wellington Town Hall from 5th to 8th September 2012.

Congratulations and thank you to the organising committee of ASCIA 2012; Dr Shannon Brothers, Dr Marianne Empson and Pauline Brown, led by the ASCIA 2012 Chair, Dr Miriam Hurst. Thank you also to all speakers and chairs, delegates, sponsors and exhibitors for their support of ASCIA 2012.

In particular we would like to thank our keynote international speakers, Professor Andrew Cant, Professor Ulrich Wahn, Dr Jorg Kleine-Tebbe and Prof Carlos Camargo for their entertaining and highly informative presentations throughout the conference.

Several innovations were introduced at ASCIA 2012, including:

- A large proportion of speakers and chairs from Australia or New Zealand (55 out of a total of 60) and certificates of appreciation for all of these participants, in recognition of their valued contribution to ASCIA 2012.
- More opportunities for other delegates to present, with 31 poster presentations and 13 clinical grand rounds presentations.
- A total of \$15,000 of awards and scholarships (\$500 each) were provided, comprising 15 CGR or poster awards and 15 advanced trainee travel scholarships. Congratulations to the poster and CGR award winners, who are also listed on the ASCIA website:
www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/awards-grants/ascia-award-grant-scholarship-recipients
- More "Plenary" style sessions with 2 rather than 3 speakers, presenting for 40-45 minutes each.
- Concurrent Immunopathology Update and Allergy/Immunology Update meetings on Saturday, with the most of the exhibition remaining for these meetings.
- A traditional "Powhiri" welcome.

All ASCIA 2012 poster and CGR abstracts have been published in the online Internal Medicine Journal (IMJ) and these can be accessed via the ASCIA website:
www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/meetings/ascia-annual-scientific-meetings/published-abstracts-ascia

ASCIA 2012 included extremely popular social functions on each evening from Wednesday to Friday. The ASCIA 2012 Gala Dinner was held at the spectacular Te Papa Museum.

ASCIA members can view the ASCIA 2012 photographs on the members section of the ASCIA website (login is required to view the photos). For a sample of photos please see the last page of this report.

We look forward to seeing you at **ASCIA 2013**, in Perth, Western Australia next September, which promises to be an event not to be missed! ■

President's Report

Professor Jo Douglass



Firstly, thank you for attending the ASCIA Annual General Meeting. At the end of a long day, at the end of a conference, it is no small feat to attend. It is strong evidence of the commitment so many of you have for Clinical Immunology and Allergy that you are here.

My report for 2013 needs to acknowledge where we are, what we've done and what we've yet to do.

We are an organisation of 496 members comprising 213 full members and 283 associate members. We are a dynamic organisation with a full-time secretariat and a growing role in leading education, which is an important resource for Clinical Immunology and Allergy in Australia and New Zealand.

ASCIA remains indebted to those individuals who have put up their hands (or had them held up) as office bearers. At this meeting we welcome Dr Melanie Wong as President Elect and A/Prof Richard Loh as President. Will the Treasury survive without Melanie? Will Anaphylaxis survive without Richard?

I am pleased to report that it certainly will:

- Dr Sam Mehr has generously put up his hand as Treasurer, vacating the post of Education committee Chair and handing these reins over to Dr Sara Barnes.

- The ASCIA Anaphylaxis Working Party is now in the able hands of Dr Ray Mullins as Chair.
- A/Prof Richard Loh will now assume the role of President, fresh from his many and excellent achievements in anaphylaxis education, especially e-training.
- Dr William Smith continues to provide a wise head and steady hand on the tiller as Secretary, and his contributions to the Executive are greatly appreciated.

And so the Society looks forward.

ASCIA greets the coming 12 months in a robust state of health. We now have a significant budget surplus for 2 years in a row and Council decided this week on future strategies so that we can invest in our own future with training and advocacy. We should thank Melanie for her careful and diligent contribution to this over the past 4 years, including holding the reins when times were challenging with the GFC.

This is an opportunity to celebrate our achievements over the past 12 months.

ASCIA continues to use Education to improve the welfare of people suffering from Allergy and Immunodeficiencies in both health professional and community education.

A quick Google of other Special Society's websites or a visit to the sessions at the ASCIA 2012 Annual Conference will tell you that the depth and breadth of ASCIA's educational interventions are unmatched.

These have the potential to meet the needs of many, with evidence-based education in the field of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, as more than 32,000 individuals who have completed an ASCIA e-training course attest.

In September 2011 ASCIA held a **Strategic Planning Meeting** with past ASCIA Presidents and current ASCIA Council members, to set an agenda for ASCIA in

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coming years. A key finding of this was the service gap between the need for Immunology and Allergy services and the qualification of specialists in this area. Demand for services is evidenced by long waits for appointments and the growth of alternative and non-specialist practices.

ASCIA has responded to this by:

- Writing a scope of practice document, responding to the national medical workforce surveys; and
- Developing a workforce document that has resulted in a commitment from the RACP to work with its Policy and Advocacy unit.

Meanwhile, parallel developments such as the development of the postgraduate diploma in clinical allergy, developed by Prof Connie Katelaris and the University of Western Sydney, should enable the delivery of clinical allergy services to greater numbers of people.

Nevertheless, as the recent awarding of STP places indicated, Allergy and Immunology is still not on the Government's agenda: and it will be a task of the next few years to raise our profile and ultimately develop a model of care that places our speciality at the core of service delivery and sustainable resources in an epidemic of allergic disease.

A major focus of our year is the **ASCIA annual conference**. These meetings take an inordinate amount of work and ASCIA remains indebted to the organising committees:

- In 2011 in Sydney, we owed our thanks to Prof Connie Katelaris and her committee.
- In 2012 ASCIA members are delighted to be visiting New Zealand and catching up with our colleagues, whilst achieving CPD in such a beautiful place. We should particularly thank Dr Miriam Hurst and her

organising team of Dr Shannon Brothers, Dr Marianne Empson and Pauline Brown for this. Given the events in Christchurch, ASCIA should especially acknowledge and thank you for the commitment you've shown at a time it must have been easier to think of other things.

I would be remiss not to mention and thank the large number of ASCIA members who contribute to ongoing activities of ASCIA by membership, leadership of, and contribution to, standing committees and working parties. Time does not enable me to deliver a comprehensive list of their achievements but I will mention a few:

- The **ASCIA Paediatric committee**, under the chairmanship of Prof Dianne Campbell has progressed on several fronts, most noticeably the establishment of protocols for food challenges which are available on the members section of the website. These constitute a huge service to members undertaking this activity in ensuring practice is as far as possible uniform and within safe boundaries.
- The **ASCIA Immunodeficiency committee**, chaired by Dr Jane Peake has continued to liaise with the NBA regarding availability of intravenous or subcutaneous immunoglobulin and support standards of care, including a national patient registry in this vital area of practice.
- The **ASCIA Education committee** in the past two years, chaired by Dr Sam Mehr has seen the revolution of e-training courses, the most recent in allergic rhinitis and immunotherapy, both to be launched in 2012 and presented for the first time at ASCIA 2012. These training packages represent tangible evidence of the progress made in this area. Sam has been ably assisted by the ASCIA Education Project Officer, Sandra Vale.

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- The **ASCIA Anaphylaxis working party**, chaired by A/Prof Richard Loh continues to be a strong advocate for anaphylaxis and it is to their credit that ASCIA Action Plans for Anaphylaxis are the internationally recognised standard in Australia and New Zealand as the preferred method of providing an emergency anaphylaxis plan for individuals at risk of anaphylaxis.
- The **ASCIA Laboratory Practice committee**, chaired by Bob Wilson continues to support the laboratory and regulatory roles of ASCIA.
- The **ASCIA Clinical Practice committee**, chaired by Dr Jo Smart continues to work on gaining item numbers for allergen challenges.
- The **ASCIA HAE working party**, chaired by Prof Connie Katelaris has supported the PBS registration of icatibant in Australia and the timely publication of a Position Paper and Action Plan for HAE.
- **ASCIA Associate (Nurse and Dietitian) members** have also promoted the role of specialist allergy nursing, nutritional advice and e-training so that these areas of specialist allied health practice can be supported to deliver best care. Thank you to Merryn Netting, the Associate members' representative on Council, for her role in these activities.
- Thank you also to Alison Cunningham, the **GP Liaison representative** on Council, who continues to play an active role in GP education, which has been enhanced through ASCIA training courses.
- I would also like to acknowledge the role of the **ASCIA area representatives**, who continue to organise vibrant local meetings in each state and in New Zealand.

ASCIA's primary mission is the support of health professionals and in this ASCIA owes a debt of gratitude to Dr Tiffany Hughes, Chair of **JSAC** and her colleagues, both current and past on that committee, especially Dr Melanie Wong, Prof Brad Frankum, A/Prof Matthew Cook, A/Prof Bob Heddle, Dr Theo de Malmanche and others who have given so much time and energy to support training programs in Clinical Immunology and Allergy.

It is largely due to their direction and advocacy that advanced trainee numbers are now more than 40.

I was fortunate enough to be part of the advanced trainees' weekends over the past 2 years, and the buzz of collegiality and practical experience, advice and teaching in the room is truly exciting and augers very well indeed for the future of the speciality. I must thank Prof Dominic Mallon for his contribution to ASCIA in this very important way by instigating and chairing the allergy and autoimmunity **advanced training meetings** for the past few years, the great number of individuals who contribute by their teaching and example in this area and the companies who provide support. These training meetings continue to be a very impressive investment in ASCIA's future workforce capacity and skill.

The accreditation of specialists in our specialty remains a challenge for ASCIA and will stretch the resources of Council and JSAC in coming months. The role of JSAC has been stretched lately by decisions regarding the recognition of Immunology and Allergy qualifications for prescriptions, especially infant formulae, but also other areas of practice. Accreditation or Certification of those trained in other specialities will continue to be an issue for ASCIA over the coming year with the increasing regulatory framework imposed upon us.

I cannot pass this opportunity without thanking Jill Smith, ASCIA's wonderful Executive

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Officer and her exceptional team of Michelle Haskard and Education Project Officer Sandra Vale. Under Jill's expert guidance ASCIA has continued to grow and develop and Jill's initiatives in the areas of sponsorship, e-training, new website development and in the management of the ASCIA Annual Conference have been inspirational.

We should be grateful indeed to her for all their efforts and our current financial state is substantially due to the initiatives Jill has developed in growing partnerships with sponsors. The size and activity of the Society does start to raise the question of whether further support is required.

This is my final report as President and I would like to thank the ASCIA community for their support and encouragement over the past 2 years (and long before that).

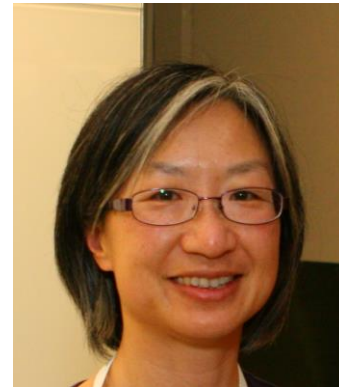
It is always said that one gains more experience and life-skills than you lose in energy or time from taking up public positions, and my experience in ASCIA has been no exception to this. But better still my close affiliation with ASCIA has brought to me a depth of friendship and professional collegiality that I could not have anticipated: and to this organisation and its members I am deeply grateful.

I am pleased (and relieved) to hand over the presidency to A/Prof Richard Loh and the very able ASCIA Executive. I am confident that Richard's passion to make a difference to people with allergic and immunological disease drives his endless enthusiasm and energy for this society. I know that under his leadership ASCIA will continue to make a difference in the lives of the patients and their families that we seek to serve.

Thank you. ■

Treasurer's Report

Dr Melanie Wong



Since the ASCIA AGM on 7 September 2012 there have been some amendments to the ASCIA Financial Report, which have resulted in the final profit being significantly higher than previously reported. The revised figures are included in this report.

In the 2011-2012 financial year ASCIA achieved a profit of \$219,817 (table 1):

- This is the 2nd consecutive year, and 1 of only 4 times in the past 8 years in which ASCIA has achieved a profit.
- This is a very encouraging trend and is mainly due to the success of recent ASCIA annual conferences, the conversion of a mixed investment portfolio into 2 cash term deposits of \$500,000 each, increased ASCIA membership and ASCIA education projects (mainly e-training).

TABLE 1

OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY		
	11-12	10-11
Total Revenue	947,545	891,635
Total Expenses	727,728	743,158
Net profit (loss)	219,817	148,477

Compared to the previous financial year:

- Revenue has increased by 6.3% and expenses have decreased by 2.1%.
- Total assets have increased by 6.6% to a total of \$1,598,048 (table 2).

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- Equity has increased by 18.3% to a total of \$1,441,508 (table 2).
- Cash (including term deposits) has increased by 68.8% to a total of \$1,551,384 (table 3).

To ensure stability of finances and buffer ASCIA in light of possible further volatility in the financial sector and sponsorship, the goal for ASCIA is to have 3 years of annual expenditure in reserve (~\$1,500,000) which has now been achieved for the past two financial years (tables 2, 3).

TABLE 2

FINANCIAL POSITION SUMMARY		
	11-12	10-11
Total Assets	1,598,048	1,499,352
Liabilities	156,540	280,495
Equity	1,441,508	1,218,857

TABLE 3

CASH FLOW STATEMENT SUMMARY		
	11-12	10-11
Cash (start of yr)	919,232	702,900
Cash (end of yr)	1,551,384	919,232

ASCIA INCOME SOURCES

The main sources of ASCIA income are as follows:

- ASCIA annual conferences (~500,000 income and ~\$130,000 surplus from ASCIA 2011).
- ASCIA annual membership fees (~\$100,000 income in 2011-2012).*
- ASCIA investments (return of ~\$50,000 per year from \$1,000,000 invested in cash term deposits as 1 July 2012, with ANZ and NAB). **
- ASCIA e-training (~\$60,400 surplus in 2011-2012 and ~\$77,700 surplus in 2010-2011).***

*An annual increase in the ASCIA membership fee, consistent with the CPI increase, has been implemented from 2011 onwards and a steady increase in membership has resulted in additional income of ~\$20,000 per year. The membership increase has also contributed to the higher attendance at ASCIA annual conferences.

**The motion to change the ASCIA investment strategy to retain \$500,000 in an ANZ term deposit and transfer \$500,000 from a portfolio managed by Macquarie Bank to an NAB term deposit was approved by the ASCIA Executive and implemented in May 2012.

***The surplus from ASCIA e-training projects 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. Expenses for ASCIA e-training courses developed in 2012-2013 are expected to be lower than in other years as they are largely being adapted from the existing courses and will not require face to face planning meetings, which are one of the highest expenses of developing these courses.

There was agreement that ASCIA would not currently revert to funding research grants for the following reasons:

- ASCIA has only achieved a profit for the last 2 years and half of the past 8 years.
- ASCIA income is heavily reliant on sponsorship which is uncertain in the future due to changes in Medicines Australia regulations, fluctuations in product sales and other factors out of ASCIA's control.
- ASCIA needs to address workforce issues and funding may need to be used to address this issue, which would be beneficial to the ASCIA membership in general.
- It may be a more feasible option for an Australasian Allergy and Immunology Foundation to be established which specifically raises funds for research and education.

Decisions made and approved by Executive and Council regarding strategies to reduce expenditure, maximise income and reduce risk have assisted in achieving these excellent results for the past 2 years. ■

Incoming President's Report

Clinical A/Professor Richard Loh



On behalf of ASCIA, I would like to thank our outgoing President Prof Jo Douglass, the ASCIA Executive and Council Members. Jo has provided strong leadership, particularly when confronted with challenging issues. Her guidance has ensured that ASCIA now has 3 years of reserve operational funding.

Jo has also developed a scope of practice document that will assist in workforce planning for our specialty and to inform discussions regarding the range of practice of specialist physicians in Clinical Immunology and Allergy.

Over the past few years, the activities of ASCIA have increased with the development of ASCIA education resources. Jo has supported these initiatives and ensured that before each resource is developed ASCIA has adequate funds.

One of Jo's many strengths is her ability to facilitate discussion, encourage members to express their views and work towards consensus. And she does this all within the allocated time for Council meetings.

Thank you Jo for the guidance you have provided to ASCIA and to me personally as I step forward to take on the role of ASCIA President. You will be a hard act to follow.

ASCIA has become a very productive and busy Society in recent years, with continuing development and updating of education resources for patients, health professional

information, position statements, guidelines, action plans and treatment plans. It takes a tremendous amount of time and skill to manage the many committees, working parties and activities of the Society and I would like to thank Jill Smith for her continued dedication and contribution to ASCIA. Her corporate memory has been invaluable and her commitment to ASCIA has been unwavering.

Two years ago we welcomed Sandra Vale as the new ASCIA Education Project Officer. Sandra's enthusiasm and tireless work has ensured the success of our e-training resources.

I also wish to acknowledge the work of Michelle Haskard who has supported ASCIA in many of our activities since 2007.

This is an exciting as well as challenging time for our society. Our membership continues to increase.

We have new therapies and tests but we also face a number of challenges. We have significant manpower issues that need to be addressed urgently. We estimate that more than 50% of our members are over 50 years of age and we do not have enough training positions.

I would like to announce a number of initiatives. Over the next 12 months I believe that ASCIA will need to work towards developing a **model of care** for delivery of allergy and immunology services.

The first stage of this project will be to work towards having allergy and other immune diseases recognised by governments in Australia and New Zealand as one of the most important and prioritised chronic disease groups and a National Health Priority Area in Australasia.

The next stage of this project will be to develop a model of care for delivery of allergy and immunology services that will be based on best practice evidence and expert opinion. The aim of this is to ensure that people with allergic and other immune mediated disease get the right care, at the right time, by the right

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team and in the right place. It should also provide an opportunity for ASCIA to influence future policy development including future activity modelling and planning in terms of workforce, infrastructure and information and communications technology. I anticipate that the model of care will focus on a number of key areas that are based on the National Chronic Disease Action Areas (National Health Priority Action Council 2006) including:

- Prevention and promotion;
- Early detection and intervention;
- Integration and continuity of care;
- Self management.

Another initiative is to look at the feasibility of developing a structure, such as a Foundation, to receive funds for research and education. It is anticipated that the main source of funds would be donations from companies, charitable or philanthropic organisations and individuals.

New initiatives are not without risk. I am aware of potential pitfalls, but I believe these new initiatives will benefit our Society and our patients. ■

Executive Officer's Report

Jill Smith



I am pleased to report that in 2011-2012 ASCIA has continued to make significant achievements, particularly in the area of education for members, other health professionals, patients and the public.

The ASCIA annual conference is the main ASCIA educational activity and provides an international standard of continuing education (without the jetlag) for ASCIA members and other health professionals.

I take this opportunity to thank:

- The ASCIA 2012 Organising committee, comprising Dr Miriam Hurst, Dr Shannon Brothers, Dr Marianne Empson and Pauline Brown. They have excelled in their selection of speakers, topics and new session formats, and they have all been an absolute pleasure to work with.
- Rebecca Hardman and Helane Doyle from ICMS Australasia, for their meticulous administration of this meeting and ensuring that we met all the deadlines.
- Michelle Haskard and Sandra Vale (fellow ASCIA staff members) for providing vital assistance for this meeting.
- Speakers and Chairs, and particularly the international speakers.
- Sponsors and exhibitors for their ongoing support.
- Last but not least the delegates, who have been very enthusiastic participants.

ASCIA membership continues to increase and we now have close to 500 ASCIA members. Maintaining the membership database, processing payments, keeping ASCIA financial records updated and proofreading/editing are the main roles of Michelle Haskard. I would like to thank Michelle for her highly valued work in this role, and particularly for her attention to detail and efficiency.

ASCIA e-training projects have also been a major focus in 2012. Developing and maintaining the content of ASCIA e-training courses is the main role of Sandra Vale. I would like to thank Sandra for her highly valued work in this role, and particularly for her enthusiasm, persistence and medical writing skills.

Suzanne Grainger from Impagination continues to work behind the scenes as ASCIA webmaster, and is responsible for developing and maintaining the new ASCIA website and ASCIA e-training programs. We thank Suzanne for managing all these tasks so well, which has enabled ASCIA to have a world leading reputation for its website and e-training courses.

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**Sandra Vale, Michelle Haskard,
Suzanne Grainger**

Upon reflection we are extremely blessed to have such a wonderful team who all have a similar high level of commitment, professionalism, whilst also being lovely people to work with.

I would also like to thank ASCIA Council members for their tremendous support, guidance and kindness. I feel very fortunate to work with such a great group of people, who are excellent representatives of the ASCIA membership.

It is particularly important to acknowledge the huge contribution of our outgoing President, Prof Jo Douglass. Since joining the ASCIA Executive as Treasurer several years ago, Jo has guided ASCIA through the best and worst of financial times and has been instrumental in reducing expenditure and maximising revenue. This has helped ASCIA to reach the solid foundation which it enjoys today.

Last but not least I would like to invite all ASCIA members to participate in ASCIA 2013, which is being held in Perth, Western Australia (see photo below) next September, chaired by Dr Richard Nolan. This promises to be another successful conference, and yet another ASCIA event not to be missed. ■



ASCIA Council 2012-2013

EXECUTIVE

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

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

NSW	Dr Alisa Kane
NZ	Dr Jan Sinclair
QLD	Dr David Gillis
SA	Dr Anthony Smith
VIC	Dr Jeremy McComish
WA	Dr Andrew McLean-Tookey

OTHER REPRESENTATIVES

Associate Representative
Merryn Netting

Clinical Practice Committee Chair
Dr Joanne Smart

Education Committee Chair
Dr Sara Barnes

Laboratory Practice Committee Chair
Robert Wilson

Paediatric Committee Chair
Prof Dianne Campbell

Immunodeficiency Committee Chair
Dr Jane Peake

Anaphylaxis Working Party Chair
Dr Raymond Mullins

GP Liaison Representative
Dr Alison Cunningham

Joint Specialist Advisory Committee (JSAC)
for Clinical Immunology and Allergy
Dr Melanie Wong

Immediate Past President
Prof Jo Douglass

Advanced Trainee Representative
Dr Andrew Whyte

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ASCIA 2012 Photo Gallery



Dr Shannon Brothers, Dr Miriam Hurst, Dr Lucinda Berglund, Prof Andrew Cant



Prof Innes Asher, A/Prof Richard Loh, Prof Ulrich Wahn



Dr Ray Mullins, Prof Carlos Camargo



Prof Ulrich Wahn, Dr Jorg Kleine-Tebbe



Dr Melanie Wong, Dr Marianne Empson



Prof Ulrich Wahn, Prof Mimi Tang, Prof Connie Katelaris, Dr Richard Nolan

For more photos go to
www.allergy.org.au/members/photographs-taken-at-ascia-2012