



ascia

australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy inc.



Annual Report 2013

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 (APAAACI) and the World Allergy Organisation (WAO)

www.allergy.org.au

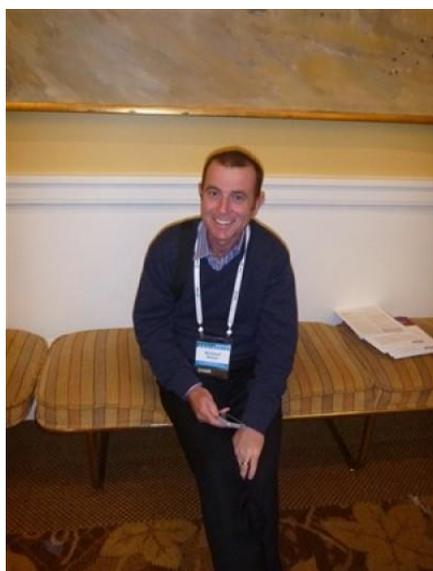
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ASCIA 2013 Conference

Jill Smith

ASCIA 2013, the 24th Annual Conference of the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) was held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from Tuesday 10th to Saturday 14th September 2013.

Congratulations and thank you to the ASCIA 2013 Conference Chair, Dr Richard Nolan for coordinating a very successful conference, both in terms of the scientific and social programs, which have received excellent feedback. It was a pleasure to work with Richard throughout the organising process and the conference itself.



I also take this opportunity to thank the:

Organising committee; Dr John Bandouvakis, Dr Christine Bundell, Rachael Dunn, A/Prof Peter Hollingsworth, Monica Kemp, A/Prof Richard Loh, Dr Andrew McLean-Tooke, Val Noble, Prof Elizabeth Phillips, Ingrid Roche, Prof Susan Prescott, Sandra Vale.

International speakers and Basten Orator; Prof Abul Abbas, Dr Linda Cox, Prof Josep Dalmau, Prof Raif Geha, Prof Ruby Pawankar, Prof Harald Renz, Prof Susan Prescott.

Other speakers and chairs; There was a total of 79 speakers (37) and chairs (42) from Australia and New Zealand, in addition to 40 presenters of posters and Clinical Grand Round (CGR) cases.

Delegates; There were 456 registrations in total, comprising 352 delegates and 104 exhibitor delegates.

Sponsors and exhibitors; Continued support of ASCIA annual conferences and other educational initiatives is greatly appreciated.

ASCIA and ICMSA staff;

Last but not least, a huge thank you to Michelle Haskard, Sandra Vale, Rebecca Hardman and Helene Doyle.

Highlights of the ASCIA 2013 Annual Conference included:

Involvement of 6 current Presidents from international or national allergy and/or immunology organisations (an Australasian first); Prof Abul Abbas (FOCIS), Dr Linda Cox (AAAAI), Prof Connie Katelaris (APAAACI), A/Prof Richard Loh (ASCIA), Prof Ruby Pawankar (WAO), Prof Harald Renz (GSACI).

Postgraduate Immunology Course, run by Prof Abul Abbas, held for the 2nd time as part of an ASCIA conference.

A record high total of 79 **speakers and chairs** from Australia and New Zealand in addition to oral presentations of 26 posters and 14 CGR cases.

A total of 78 abstracts (64 posters and 14 CGR cases) published in the online Internal Medicine Journal (IMJ), accessible from the ASCIA website. www.allergy.org.au/conferences/ascia-annual-conference/published-abstracts-ascia

A total of \$20,000 AUD (another record) of poster and CGR awards and travel scholarships, comprising 9 awards (ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,500) and 20 advanced trainee travel scholarships of \$500 each. Congratulations to the award winners, who are also listed on the ASCIA website: www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/awards-grants/ascia-award-grant-scholarship-recipients

Extremely popular social functions on each evening, and in particular the Gala Dinner held at State Reception Centre, Fraser's Restaurant, with magnificent views of Perth and the Swan River from King's Park.

ASCIA members can view the ASCIA 2013 photographs on the members section of the ASCIA website (login is required to view the photos). ■

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President's Report



Clinical A/Professor Richard Loh

Thank you for participating in the ASCIA Annual Conference and we appreciate your attendance at the Annual General Meeting. My report reflects back on the last 12 months and what we hope to achieve in the next 12 months and beyond.

It has been an extremely busy year for ASCIA culminating with the launch of the Allergy and Immunology Foundation of Australasia (AIFA) on Monday 9th September.

It has also been a year of what I loosely call "re-structure" for ASCIA.

Organisations, as with most systems, go through life cycles. ASCIA has been a small organisation, heavily reliant on an Executive Officer. ASCIA has been fortunate to have been based out of the home of our Executive Officer (and in Jill's own words "very comfortably and happily") providing a cost saving to the organisation. However, ASCIA has grown over the past few years, with a current membership of more than 500.

It is important to build a strong administrative base, strengthen our infrastructure and accounting systems, and develop medium and long term plans. In July this year ASCIA Council approved a 10 year Sustainability Plan which includes the relocation of the ASCIA office in October 2013 to Brookvale (NSW) and employment of a part-time administrative assistant who will also assist with book-keeping and implementation of XERO cloud based accounting software.

ASCIA will also be co-located with AIFA.

As ASCIA continues to grow and as our needs change, a new work environment provides greater potential, particularly with increasing staff and projects.

It is important during rapid growth, that ASCIA does not lose focus of our mission and vision.

ASCIA committees have been very productive and it is important to develop a growth strategy that is sustainable and aligned to ASCIA's mission and vision. Each committee has developed plans for the next three years. The main purpose of the plans is to provide information to:

- Inform and update ASCIA Executive and Council members on what each committee is currently doing or planning to do;
- Highlight projects that require assistance from the ASCIA staff and/or other ASCIA committees;
- Assist the ASCIA Executive Officer to identify opportunities for funding; and
- Ensure that ASCIA is not over committed and has adequate staff and funds to support the committees.

Each committee should ideally have a Deputy Chair, to support the current Chair, but also for succession planning.

The importance of the **ASCIA Anaphylaxis committee** (previously a Working Party) has been recognised, as a particularly productive group over the past 10 years. The importance of this committee's work was highlighted over a 3 month period in late 2012 and in early 2013 when more than 70,000 teachers and

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childcare staff undertook ASCIA online training.

At the 2012 ASCIA Annual General Meeting (AGM), ASCIA committed to the enormous task of working on the concept of an Allergy and Immunology Model of Care. After the establishment of a Working Party, it was clear that the first step was the development of advocacy documents.

As a result the **Allergy and Immune Diseases in Australia (AIDA) Report** and **ASCIA Education Resources (AER) Report** were developed and distributed to key federal and state politicians, director generals of Health and stakeholder organisations.

The main aim of the AIDA Report is to have Allergy and other Immune Diseases recognised as a National Health Priority Area, whilst the AER Report highlights many of ASCIA's education initiatives and the fact that most of these are not funded by government.

Although the documents were only distributed in August 2013, ASCIA received invitations to meet with 3 health ministers, 1 senator, a number of Chief Medical Officers, and key advisers to health ministers in most of the other regions. I believe establishing dialogue with health ministers and their advisers is critical and I am delighted with the positive responses from most regions across Australia and New Zealand. It is our intention to develop a similar report for New Zealand and will be guided by members from that region.

I would like to acknowledge members of the AIDA Working Party and ASCIA Council for their time and expertise in developing the AIDA Report, which has resulted in its launch within 12 months of the initial discussion.

The **Allergy and Immunology Foundation of Australasia (AIFA)** has now been launched this week. It has been an enormous task to establish the Foundation and I would like to acknowledge Jill Smith and Michelle Haskard for their persistence and commitment to ensuring that the Foundation was established correctly and within the timeframe for the launch. Michelle has been appointed as the AIFA Project Officer and we look

forward to working with her in this capacity to grow the Foundation. Ray Mullins has kindly agreed to be the first Chair of the Board of Directors which will also consist of current ASCIA Executive and Jill Smith.

The aim of the Foundation is to increase the capacity to raise funds for research and education initiatives for allergy and other immune diseases. Whilst we hope to achieve funding support from government, the Foundation provides another opportunity to raise funds to improve the quality of life for our patients. I hope that you will promote the foundation when you interact with your patients, organizations and community.

ASCIA is developing a declaration of potential conflicts of interest (COI) based on the RACP model, for members of Council to complete. Committee members will also be asked at the beginning of each meeting if there any potential COI to declare. This is good governance and will be implemented in 2014.

In 2014 the challenges for ASCIA will include:

- Continued advocacy to ensure that patients with allergy and other immune diseases have access to appropriate medical care and treatments.
- Obtaining Medicare funding for key procedures such a food challenges and laboratory investigations.
- Development of PID transplantation support resources via the ASCIA TAPID (Transplantation and PID) Project.
- Development of a new ASCIA immunodeficiency Register.
- Development of a new ASCIA food allergen challenge database.
- Continued revision of existing e-training courses and development of new courses.
- Major revision of the ASCIA website, coordinated by the team at Impagination.

With all the work that we hope to achieve, I am mindful that many ASCIA members donate a great deal of time and expertise. We need to ensure a balance between productivity and achievement, whilst not overburdening the membership and staff.

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I would like to take this opportunity to thank:

- Richard Nolan and the committee for organizing the ASCIA 2013 conference.
- The many ASCIA members who give so much to ASCIA in time and expertise. It is pleasing to have many younger members in our committees as well as “older” members including several past Presidents who are actively involved.
- ASCIA Executive for their support and guidance, and in particular to Melanie Wong who provides excellent counsel as President Elect, William Smith for providing insightful comments as Secretary and Sam Mehr who has worked tirelessly as Treasurer.
- Other ASCIA Council members, including Area and other representatives as well as Chairs of ASCIA committees and Working Parties – a lot of the ASCIA’s work simply could not be done without the leadership you provide.
- Past Presidents and in particular the last 2 past Presidents, Jo Douglass and Ray Mullins who are “always there” if needed.
- ASCIA webmasters led by Suzanne and Jeff Grainger at Impagination.
- ASCIA Education Project Officer, Sandra Vale, who has taken on an expanded role in 2013 and her work on the AIDA Report is to be commended.
- AIFA Project Officer, Michelle Haskard who also provides administration support for ASCIA. Michelle has done a tremendous job in the development of the Foundation.
- ASCIA Executive Officer, Jill Smith, who ensures that ASCIA continues to function and provides valued support to Council, our committees, members and staff. ■

ASCIA Council 2013-2014

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

Education Committee Chair

Dr Sara Barnes

Laboratory Practice Committee Chair

Louise Wienholt

Paediatric Committee Chair

Prof Dianne Campbell

Immunodeficiency Committee Chair

Dr Jane Peake

Anaphylaxis Working Party Chair

Dr Ray 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 Lara Ford

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Treasurer's Report



Dr Sam Mehr

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 2 years (table 1).

The following results are from the audited ASCIA financial statements for 2012-2013:

- Equity has increased to a total of \$1,530,052 (table 2).
- This is the 3rd consecutive year that ASCIA has made a surplus (table 3).
- The relatively large surpluses in the previous 2 years reflect the high numbers of registrations at ASCIA annual conferences in 2010 and 2011, held on the east coast of Australia (QLD, NSW).
- With 2 consecutive ASCIA annual conferences held in more remote locations in 2012 and 2013 (NZ and WA) there are less registrations and therefore less revenue from these meetings.
- The reduction in revenue in 2012-2013 is also due to lower interest rates and therefore less return from the 2 term deposits of \$500,000 each invested by ASCIA.

**TABLE 1
CASH FLOW STATEMENT SUMMARY**

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Cash (start of yr)	1,551,384	919,232
Cash (end of yr)	1,539,880	1,551,384

**TABLE 2
FINANCIAL POSITION SUMMARY**

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Total Assets	1,751,391	1,598,048
Liabilities	221,339	156,540
Equity	1,530,052	1,441,508

**TABLE 3
OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY**

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Total Revenues	775,459	947,545
Total Expenses	687,135	727,728
Net surplus (loss)	88,324	219,817

THE FUTURE

- A Sustainability Plan for ASCIA was approved in July 2013 by ASCIA Council. This plan includes costing for ASCIA to lease an office and employ a part-time administration assistant. It also includes strategies to improve efficiency and ensure sustainability of ASCIA for at least the next 10 years.
- ASCIA will revise its financial management by reviewing investments, accountants and changing to XERO accounting software.
- ASCIA has now leased Suite 238 at 117 Old Pittwater Rd Brookvale NSW 2100, in the Lifestyle Working Brookvale complex www.lifestyleworking.com.au from October 2013.
- With the launch of the Allergy and Immunology Foundation of Australasia (AIFA) on 9th September 2013 there should be opportunities to attract further funding from more diverse sources for education and research into allergy and other immune diseases. ■

Executive Officer's Report



Jill Smith

ASCIA SUSTAINABILITY PLAN: SUMMARY

Aim

Ensure sustainability of ASCIA to allow for continued growth over the next ten years, from 2013 to 2023 and allow AIFA to develop at its full potential.

Objectives

- Document long term plans for all ASCIA committees (see note below).
- Establish infrastructure for ASCIA in 2013-2014 to ensure future sustainability (lease new office, appoint additional part-time administration staff member, update IT hardware and data storage, change accountants and implement XERO cloud based accounting software).
- Document key procedures for ASCIA in a user friendly and accessible format to enable upskilling of at least 2 ASCIA staff members in each of the critical areas for ASCIA, including finances, sponsorship, organising of meetings, education projects and AIFA.

Note: Draft committee plans were reviewed by the ASCIA Committees and finalised in August 2013. It will be important to keep these plans updated as situations change and new opportunities arise. Plans are not being developed for ASCIA Working Parties, Nurse and Dietitian subcommittees as issues are addressed as they arise.

With a dedicated office and additional staff there should be more time to develop other planning documents and reports as required.

Proposed Actions	Estimated Completion Date
1. Develop long term plans for each ASCIA committee	Aug-13
2. Change accountants and implement XERO software	Sep-13
3. Relocate office	Oct-13
4. Appoint additional staff for administration and book keeping	Nov-13
5. Document procedures and upskill staff	Jul-14

The main reasons for ASCIA and AIFA to require a new office are as follows:

- ASCIA has outgrown the home office space, particularly with a 3rd staff member based in Sydney.
- ASCIA and AIFA will both benefit from having a physical office, particularly for meetings with sponsors as this will save a lot of unproductive time spent driving to meetings. ASCIA meetings can potentially be hosted in the office meeting rooms, rather than at hotels or restaurants.
- An office suite that suits the needs of ASCIA and AIFA has been identified at 117 Old Pittwater Road Brookvale. This building is unique and has several advantages over other office space that has been previously considered.

I would also like take this opportunity to invite all ASCIA members to participate in the ASCIA 2014 Conference www.ascia2014.com which is being held in Melbourne in September 2014 and chaired by Prof Jo Douglass. This promises to be another successful conference, and yet another ASCIA event not to be missed. ■