



australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy inc.



annual report 2010

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

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ASCIA 2010

Congratulations to **Dr David Gillis** and committee members, **Dr Richard Wong**, **Dr David Heyworth-Smith**, **Dr Daman Langguth**, **Dr Jane Peake** and **A/Prof Pete Smith** on the outstanding success of ASCIA 2010, the 21st ASCIA Annual Scientific Meeting.

ASCIA 2010 attracted a record number of delegates over all 5 days. The scientific program was extremely well attended and included presentations by 5 international and 44 local speakers. This was complimented by a very popular social program.

A highlight of the opening debate was the casual attire worn by David Gillis, in keeping with the setting of the venue.

The Welcome function featured a Beach Boys tribute band, whilst the Gala Dinner was held in the Sofitel Hotel and included an insightful and entertaining dinner speaker, Prof John Pearn AM.

It has been encouraging to receive so much positive feedback from delegates and we look forward to welcoming you all to Sydney in September 2011. ▼



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A/Prof Jo Douglass

The first task I have is to thank **Dr Ray Mullins** for his tremendous and energetic leadership in the past years and his abiding contribution to ASCIA in its public profile and initiatives with Government and the community. In particular the Access Economic Report, which was very largely Ray's work, has become a vital tool to enable the involvement of ASCIA in advocacy for Clinical Immunology and Allergy services at the level of individual departments and at all levels of Government. Under Ray's leadership, ASCIA has also built on the educational legacy, ASCIA Education Resources, given to us by past and current members of ASCIA, to claim the place of ASCIA offering world class educational initiatives to Australia, New Zealand and increasingly the international community. Thank you Ray for your support, guidance, patience, leadership and boundless energy in serving ASCIA over the past years.

The second person I need to thank is **Jill Smith**. Guest speakers at ASCIA 2010 spontaneously mentioned to me about the fantastic welcome, organization and generosity they have experienced from Jill. Under Jill's leadership ASCIA has continued to flourish and it is her personal knowledge of ASCIA members and excellent service to the Society that enabled us to celebrate our 21st ASCIA meeting in 2010 in such amazing style

and with such a diverse array of accomplishments and future interests.

I personally wish to thank you and I'm sure I speak for the members of ASCIA more broadly in owing you a very heartfelt thanks for support and vision that often exceeds the realm of duty. Thank you also to **Michelle Haskard** who has provided much needed and valued administrative support since 2007.

Regarding the ASCIA Presidency, Prof Rebecca Buckley told me at the ASCIA 2010 Gala Dinner that she has learned so much from her involvement as a member of the Executives and President of the many associations and groups she has headed in her professional life. I am very grateful and more than a bit daunted by the opportunity given to me as a member of ASCIA Executive and now as President and I'm also sure I will learn so much in the process.

My membership of ASCIA goes back nearly 20 years and I can still remember those early days, soon after the union of the Australian College of Allergy with the Clinical Immunology Group of the Australasian Society of Immunology (ASI), to form the organization we have today. Over that time I have observed the evolution of the specialty of Clinical Immunology and Allergy from the fledgling, adventurous, and sometimes challenged merger of two organizations, into the vibrant Society we have today.

I have also witnessed the evolution of Specialist physicians and pathologists in this society encompass Allergy, Autoimmune disease, Immunodeficiencies and Immunopathology.

The legacy we have received, that guides future direction of the Society is the strong grounding we have been given by the achievements made by so many of our members and former members, in the science of immunology and the translation of this to clinical practice and service to the community. In my view this is the broadest mission of ASCIA.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACING ASCIA IN NEXT FEW YEARS?

The first challenge is the education of Specialists in Allergy/Clinical Immunology.

As a Society we owe a debt of gratitude for those individuals such as **Dr Tiffany Hughes, Dr Melanie Wong, A/Prof Bob Heddle, A/Prof Matthew Cook, A/Prof David Fulcher** and others who have supervised the Speciality training programs and accreditation and have drafted, revised and re-drafted the Curriculum for training for specialists in Clinical Immunology and Allergy. This curriculum was available for review by ASCIA member in late 2010 and the feedback received was extremely useful in finalising this most important document. Whilst it has been a long time in gestation, the future of our profession lies in the training and quality of trainees in this speciality and the Curriculum must be reflective of the membership and future of our Society.

Aligned with this are issues of medical workforce. Many ASCIA members have told me how they are being overwhelmed by an avalanche of allergic disease. How do we address this? ASCIA needs to consider and support initiatives in training specialists and to consider its role in supporting clinicians to deliver excellent care for allergic disease. The role of ASCIA in developing a curriculum for medical student education is something that I would personally like to see given the lack of access to specialist teaching in Allergy and Clinical Immunology in many medical schools. The efforts of **Deryn Thompson and Prof Connie Katelaris** in exploring other formalized methods of increasing workforce capacity in Allergy practice are to be applauded and supported.

A major role of ASCIA has been the provision of education to health professionals and the wider community, through ASCIA Education Resources (AER) information. This has been fostered by the recent efforts of **A/Prof Richard Loh** and colleagues in developing and delivering Anaphylaxis training programs. Future educational initiatives in supporting health professional training and community awareness of Allergic and Immunological diseases is a major focus of ASCIA and one

that has enabled the employment of a new ASCIA Education Project Officer, **Sandra Vale**. These activities are likely to continue in the next few years and will raise the profile of ASCIA. How we invest in these initiatives in the future is an important question for the Membership.

The second challenge before us is, I believe, sustainability as a society.

Whilst we continue to grow, ASCIA, like many institutions has been hit by the financial crisis. In addition the Society's growth is likely to translate to a need for a dedicated office in the next few years. As a Council and Executive we need to work on this financial and physical sustainability.

My final point is that the achievements of ASCIA are so often dependent on the consistent and generous contributions of a few. Like many other groups we rely on time-poor and often overworked members and supporters to achieve our aim. It is critical that the direction of ASCIA is consistent with the needs and aims of its membership and for this reason we will be developing an online membership and workforce survey in 2011, once the ASCIA website is revised. We anticipate that the results of these surveys will assist in determining what are the most important needs of our community and to see if we can augment our Coalition of the Willing by ensuring we are marching in the right direction. Thank you for this opportunity. ▼

ASCIA COUNCIL 2010-2011

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 Clin Immunol & Allergy
Dr Tiffany Hughes

Immediate Past President
Dr Raymond Mullins

Advanced Trainee Representative
Dr Alisa Kane

Welcome to all the new ASCIA Council members listed above and thank you to the following outgoing ASCIA Council members, for their valued contributions to ASCIA:

Dr Louise Evans
Dr Carolyn Hawkins
Dr Peter Hollingsworth
Prof Andrew Kemp
Prof Dominic Mallon
Dr Patrick Quinn
Dr Victoria Smith
Deryn Thompson
Dr Gary Unglik
A/Prof Ron Walls AM



OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr Raymond Mullins

It is with pleasure that I highlight some of the achievements of ASCIA over the last year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ASCIA 2010 local organising committee chaired by **Dr David Gillis, Dr Richard Wong** as Chair of the Neuroimmunology & Immunopathology Update and the organising committee of the Allergy & Immunology Update, chaired by **Merryn Netting and Rachael Dunn**. All of these ASCIA members helped to make ASCIA 2010 an enriching experience. Thank you also to all the speakers and chairs for giving up their time for this meeting and to sponsors and exhibitors for their continued support, particularly in these challenging economic times.

We were all privileged to hear and meet some wonderful **international speakers: Prof Rebecca Buckley, Dr Moises Calderon, A/Prof Carlos Camargo, A/Prof Martin Desrosiers and Prof Robert Naclerio**.

It was also a pleasure to partake of the terrific food, wine and warm hospitality that Queensland offers, and the insights offered by our Gala Dinner speaker, **Prof John Pearn AM**.

ASCIA Committees and Working Parties continue to work hard on developing educational resources, which enhance patient care, and help to increase our credibility when

liaising with government. In this regard, I would like to highlight the work of **A/Prof Richard Loh** and the members of the ASCIA Anaphylaxis Working Party, with the launch of online educational resources for anaphylaxis education in our schools and childcare services. This group aims to develop similar programs for health professionals.

The **ASCIA website** continues to be an important source of credible information, attracting over 70,000 visitors per month. The major challenge is to ensure the website articles remain up to date and represent best current practice. The ASCIA Education committee, in conjunction with other ASCIA committees and working parties continues to expand and update the large amount of resources available on our website. These serve as an important source of evidence-based information to the public, media and other organisations.

It is also encouraging to see the setting up of working parties to address specific issues, such as the ASCIA HAE Working Party chaired by **Prof Connie Katelaris**, which has developed guidelines for the management of patients with hereditary angioedema. Collaborations with other medical organisations with interests in common with ASCIA are also in development.

ASCIA Guidelines for influenza vaccination of the egg allergic patient were launched in September 2010, with a parallel editorial written by **Prof Andrew Kemp, A/Prof Mike Gold and myself**. Thank you to all who have contributed unpublished data and their time spent reviewing the drafts.

In 2010 **ASCIA annual advanced training meetings** continued their previous success with the APPID (Asia Pacific Primary Immunodeficiency) summer school held in May 2010. Thank you in particular to **Dr Joanne Smart, Dr Karl Bleasel and Dr Melanie Wong** for their contributions to this meeting as well as CSL Biotherapies for their generous support. The next ASCIA advanced training meeting will focus on allergy and is planned for May 2011, immediately after the continually successful ICPMR

Immunopathology Course organised each year by **A/Prof David Fulcher**.

I am pleased to report that the **ASCIA membership** continues to grow, with over 450 members, compared to 280 at the end of 2007. Over the last ten years the membership has doubled. Whilst we are still a relatively small Society, our constituency comprises 1 in 5 individuals in Australia and New Zealand with immune and allergic disease. These individuals do not have equitable access to proven therapies and there is an increasing divide between service demand and service availability. To address the ability of some of our non-specialist colleagues to deal with more complex cases, some ASCIA members are developing courses to up-skill generalists. One example is the university-based postgraduate course being established by **Prof Connie Katelaris**.

Our long-term challenges remain the same:

- Training of specialists needs to be complemented by up-skilling of frontline clinicians involved in the care of patients with allergic/immune disorders.
- Increasing the number and security of training places for our speciality.
- Ensuring ASCIA is appropriately and adequately represented in the public debate on how best to allocate resources in health care..
- Establishing a working relationship with Federal Bureaucrats in Canberra who are important in the administration of our profession.

There is also the opportunity to enhance ties with our sister organisation, the **Australasian Society for Immunology**, and this liaison has been dormant for so long. In the future, we will ask our respective meeting committees to keep each other informed of planned events, to facilitate provision of speakers that may enhance the ASM of both groups. As a practical aside, recent discussions with ASI facilitated a request from a contact at an Australian Embassy in Europe (at the beginning of our meeting) for information on the Australian contribution to immunology. This was quickly passed onto ASI representatives in Europe, who were able to

deliver comprehensive speaker notes delivered to the Australian ambassador in time for a speech, which enhanced ASI's now successful bid to hold the IUIS meeting in 2016 in Australia.

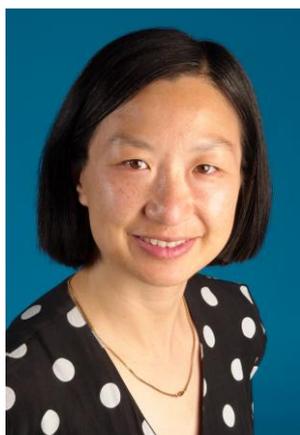
I would like to acknowledge the retirement of **A/Prof Ron Walls** AM in 2011. He has played an extremely active role in ASCIA as a founding member when it was established in 1991, as the ASCIA Delegate to the World Allergy Organisation from 1985 until 2000 and more recently as an advisor on several ASCIA projects. During his term as ASCIA President from 1998 to 2000, ASCIA hosted and organised the highly successful World Allergy Congress in Sydney in the year 2000. It was also during his term as ASCIA President that a Strategic Plan for ASCIA was developed, resulting in an education project that is still relevant and of significant benefit to ASCIA. He has also contributed greatly to the disciplines of allergy and clinical immunology as an author of numerous publications including textbooks on asthma and allergies.

Finally, I would like to offer personal thanks to members of the **Executive and Council**, who have worked so hard over the last year, and in particular to **Dr Louise Evans, Dr Carolyn Hawkins, Dr Peter Hollingsworth, Prof Andrew Kemp, Prof Dominic Mallon, Dr Patrick Quinn, Dr Victoria Smith, Deryn Thompson, Dr Gary Unglik** and **A/Prof Ron Walls AM** who are retiring from their current roles on Council at this meeting.

I cannot let the opportunity go to thank **Jill Smith, Michelle Haskard** and **Sandra Vale** as well as the *staff from ICMSA* who do so much work behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running and success of ASCIA and in particular our Annual Scientific Meeting.

I also offer both thanks and apologies to those to whom thanks are due, who I have omitted in this report.

The ASCIA 2011 organising committee has developed an interesting program that reflects the diversity within our Society. I look forward to seeing you all again at ASCIA 2011, the 22nd Annual Scientific Meeting of ASCIA. ▼



TREASURER'S REPORT

Dr Melanie Wong

In the 2009-2010 financial year ASCIA had a loss of \$21,940 (table 1) which was in part due to the loss on disposal of investments held with Macquarie Private Portfolio Management (MPPM) of \$20,155 as well as reduced revenue.

Compared to the previous financial year:

- Revenue has decreased by 26%
- Expenses have decreased by 29%
- Cash held by ASCIA has increased by \$104,348
- Equity has increased by \$40,015

TABLE 1

OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY

	09-10	08-09
Revenue	\$519,870	\$705,596
Expenses	\$541,810	\$758,460
Net loss	(\$21,940)	(\$52,865)

TABLE 2

CASH FLOW STATEMENT SUMMARY

	09-10	08-09
End of yr	\$702,900	\$598,552

TABLE 3

FINANCIAL POSITION SUMMARY

	09-10	08-09
Assets	\$1,301,405	\$1,157,983
Liabilities	\$341,849	\$238,442
Equity	\$959,556	\$919,541

FUTURE SOURCES OF INCOME

ASCIA income is dependent on ASCIA Annual Scientific Meetings, educational initiatives and annual membership fees. An annual increase in the ASCIA membership fee, consistent with the CPI increase, will be implemented from 2011 onwards. The CPI increase is around 7% since fees were previously increased in November 2007), therefore this increase will apply for 2011.

ASCIA MPPM INVESTMENT 2004-2010

The loss from the ASCIA investment held with MPPM has decreased since the large losses incurred from June 2008 to June 2009. This is reflected in the diminishing losses since the 2007-2008 financial year.

There was still a significant difference between the current market value of **\$682,672** and the book cost of \$796,550 at 30 June 2010. It should however be noted that the original investment amount was **\$1,089,832** and out of these funds ASCIA has withdrawn a total of around **\$500,000** to provide grants, awards and endowments from 2004 to 2007.

Grants and awards provided by ASCIA in 2008-2010 have been supported by companies and this will continue to be the case until the ASCIA MPPM investment value increases significantly and ASCIA has a consistent surplus and income source. ▼



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Jill Smith

It is now just over ten years since I was originally contracted to work with ASCIA as a part time ASCIA Education Project Officer, by the ASCIA President (1999-2000), **A/Prof Ron Walls AM**. A/Prof Walls initiated the development of the ASCIA Strategic Plan (my first task in this role) which resulted in the ASCIA Education Resources (AER) project that is still a significant and ongoing ASCIA project.

In this role I initially worked closely with the **late Dr John Ruhno**, in his role as Chair of the ASCIA Computer committee. Dr Ruhno embraced the challenge of reconfiguring the ASCIA website to accommodate the AER project and attracting significant sponsorship. I also worked closely with **Dr Diana Bass**, who very generously gave up a lot of her time in her retirement to take on the role of Chair of the ASCIA Education committee.

In 2001 **Dr Ray Mullins** took on the role of Chair of the ASCIA Education Committee for several years, and made enormous contributions to AER. It therefore seems appropriate in 2009-2010, with Ray as ASCIA President, that ASCIA has entered into a new decade of educational initiatives, with the launch of its first e-training courses.

ASCIA E-TRAINING

Launched in March 2010, ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for schools and childcare services has already proven to be a great success, with a much greater uptake than expected.

This indicates that there was considerable demand for this information in an e-training format and feedback has been very positive. In fact the number of users was so large in early September 2010 that it was necessary to transfer the courses to a new server, which has the capacity to cope with future demand.

Thank you especially to **A/Prof Richard Loh**, for his vision and achievement of this remarkable outcome in a relatively short timeframe.

Thank you also to our website managers, **Suzanne and Jeff Grainger** from **Impagination**, who have the important task of developing and maintaining ASCIA e-training. In 2011 they will also redesign the ASCIA website to improve accessibility to e-training as well as other ASCIA resources.



ASCIA e-training launch March 2010

Richard Loh, Sandra Vale, Jill Smith, Suzanne Grainger, Ray Mullins, Geraldine Dunne

In early 2010 ASCIA identified that there was a need for online anaphylaxis education for health professionals, particularly in general practice and primary care. Financial support was sought for this project and we were successful in receiving funding from NSW Health, WA Health and Alphapharm.

Once funding was confirmed ASCIA contracted the services of **Sandra Vale** in June 2010, as a part time ASCIA Education Project Officer to assist in the development of ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for health

professionals. Sandra's skills as a medical writer and her great enthusiasm has ensured that these projects are viable for ASCIA to pursue, without affecting other ASCIA activities.

ASCIA EDUCATION RESOURCES

In early 2010 there was a substantial review of ASCIA Education Resources patient information on the ASCIA website. Two new patient articles were developed in the area of primary immunodeficiency and autoimmunity. The ASCIA disclaimer was also updated to emphasise the independence of the ASCIA information development process. Once reviewed, all the revised articles with new disclaimers were converted to pdfs and the ASCIA website was completely updated. Some of the information has now been converted into brochures, and these have are being printed and distributed by companies (ASCIA sponsors) and organisations. ASCIA still uses the graphic design services of **Versa** (run by **Kathy Guerts, nee Wong**) to design the eye-catching AER brochures and ASCIA Action Plans.

ASCIA 2010

ASCIA 2010, the 21st Annual Scientific Meeting of ASCIA was an outstanding success. It was a pleasure to work with **Dr David Gillis** and members of the ASCIA 2010 organising committee, in conjunction with the wonderful staff at ICMSA. Thank you also to all the speakers, chairs, delegates, sponsors and exhibitors for their support.

It is only since 2006 that ASCIA has run its own Annual Scientific Meetings and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the 2005-2006 President, **Dr Karl Baumgart** for his strong leadership as Chair of ASCIA 2006, the 17th Annual Scientific Meeting of ASCIA and the first of the ASCIA run meetings.

It was during the organising of ASCIA 2006 that we realised that we needed to contract a professional conference organiser for registrations and abstract submissions, and ICMSA have been fulfilling that role for ASCIA since 2007.

ASCIA ADMINISTRATION

An extremely important aspect of ASCIA administration is the development and implementation of procedures. Many of these were developed and implemented during the 2007-2008 presidency of **Prof Dominic Mallon**. His vision for sustainability of ASCIA has resulted in a range of objective and transparent procedures, that have been of great benefit to ASCIA. For example, the regular rotation of Chairs is a procedure that has revitalised and improved the output of ASCIA committee and working party groups.

Since 2007, ASCIA has contracted a part time administration assistant, **Michelle Haskard**, who has a wide range of skills and assists over a range of areas. In particular Michelle maintains all the ASCIA databases (finances, sponsorship and membership), assists with the ASCIA Annual Scientific Meeting, proofreads and edits ASCIA documents and updates some sections of the ASCIA website. Michelle's assistance has been vital to enabling ASCIA to expand its activities over the last four years and it would be impossible for ASCIA projects to be accomplished without having this support.

I look forward to seeing you at ASCIA 2011 next September, in Sydney. ▼



ASCIA 2011
Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre
Darling Harbour, Sydney
6-10 September 2011