



TSANZ

The Transplantation Society of Australia and New Zealand

Annual Newsletter 2019

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Editorial Comment

Dear TSANZ Members,

I am pleased to welcome you to this year's edition of the Society newsletter.

Haere mai tangata whenua.

I would also like to acknowledge the people and the Elders of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations who are the Traditional Owners of the land and seas of Australia.

Bill Mulley and I had an enjoyable time organising 2019's annual scientific meeting, and we would like to thank SPEC for their crucial input. We learned some valuable lessons about seating comfort and ensuring that audio-visual equipment remained functional during the talks. This year's international visitors from the Mayo Clinic (Mark Stegall), University of Toronto (Deepali Kumar), and University of Pittsburgh (Adriana Larregina and Adrian Morelli) presented a range of noteworthy basic and clinical science research. They were joined by a variety of national speakers who we were pleased to welcome to the meeting. Abstract submissions and attendance were up compared

to previous years, which is very encouraging. I am sure this was helped by the concurrent meetings run by the Society. Karen Keung and Michael Collins compiled an outstanding PGC, and Karen Dwyer and Leyla Aouad organised a terrific Masterclass. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Bronwyn Levvey and Andrew Jabbour who coordinated the cardiothoracic symposium at short notice. This provided an opportunity for heart/lung physicians to be part of the "transplant" TSANZ, and we hope this will lead to a broader interest in the Society in subsequent meetings.

TSANZ has been lucky to maintain sponsorship for the ASM and associated awards. Congratulations to all the award recipients at this year's meeting. Bill Mulley and I worked hard to provide a gender balance in the meeting, as well as providing opportunities for junior researchers and clinical fellows to chair sessions with senior colleagues. TSANZ Council has now created a Young Investigator committee, which provides younger members an opportunity to contribute to organising the ASM. I also hope to get continued support from Novartis for mentor-mentee networking opportunities. We have held several sessions in Sydney, but we recognise the difficulties posed arranging these workshops during the week. The ASM does provide a captive audience and we anticipate expanding on this year's informal session about research opportunities and experiences. We continue to have significantly reduced student membership rates, and I hope senior faculty will continue to encourage their junior researchers and trainees to join the Society, experience the conference, and present their research. We also hope to foster a broader representation of transplant-based research. TSANZ membership has been traditionally Nephrology-based, however we welcome everyone in transplant- and immunology-based research, regardless of organ (solid or not, above or below the diaphragm).

A further initiative for TSANZ to embrace is that of consumer engagement at the ASM. This is an important and new area for the Society to navigate, requiring a balance between broad accessibility of the meeting to consumers and maintaining the scientific integrity. We look forward to working with consumer groups to develop, attend and participate in TSANZ.

On behalf of Council I would also like to acknowledge the hard work, long hours and dedication of Nieves Piaggio and Kim Rawson. Roslyn Davies has joined TSANZ as the Admin Officer and we welcome her to this new role. We were also grateful to Sommer Twycross for dropping into the ASM and lending her considerable organisational expertise.

The 2020 ASM will be held in Adelaide from March 22-24 at the Convention Centre. This meeting will be in conjunction with the Transplant Nurses' Association meeting, an Astellas-funded liver meeting and a Machine Perfusion workshop. The PGC will be held on Saturday March 21 and the Masterclass on Sunday March 22. We recognise the rapid turn-around time from 2019's ASM, but we hope that does not diminish interest in what is likely to be an exciting amalgamation of meetings.

I look forward to seeing you in Adelaide next year

Natasha Rogers

President's Message

Dear Membership,

It's a great honour for me to be writing to you all as TSANZ President with a great new council and outstanding president elect Associate Professor Helen Pilmore from Auckland. The TSANZ is the premier society that represents the interests of all who are active in the field of transplantation from basic scientists, tissue typers, expert transplant nurses, transplant co-ordinators, organ donation specialists, transplant physicians and surgeons. We all come together to advance organ transplantation across our disciplines ultimately for the benefit of our patients and the TSANZ provides the framework to allow transplantation to advance in Australia and New Zealand. The new council representing the Transplant Field is Dr Chris Russell (surgical rep), Associate Professor Kate Wyburn, A/Prof Bronwyn Levvey (Honorary Treasurer), Associate Professor Natasha Rogers (Honorary Secretary), Associate Professor Kelli

MacDonald, Associate Professor Andrew Jabbour, Dr Fiona Mackie, Dr Phil Clayton, Dr Nick Cross (ex-officio NZ) and Mr Nigel Palk (ATCA Representative)

At the outset I'd particularly like to thank Professor Steve Alexander as the immediate past president for his hard work with the society and his ongoing commitment to our field and our society. Steve has been a huge advocate for paediatric transplantation and for basic transplantation science.

There are many initiatives and new goals for the society in the next two years that your council will be following. Firstly, TSANZ has been at the forefront of attempts to improve access to transplantation for our first nations people. This year at the World Congress of Nephrology TSANZ hosted the first ever satellite on First Nations transplantation, which drew participants from Canada and New Zealand to share their expertise in improving access to indigenous transplantation. This event was so successful that the International Society of Nephrology has convened another similar satellite at the upcoming meeting in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

The process began when TSANZ generated a Performance Report on Indigenous Transplantation, which made 35 recommendations to address evidence gaps and practice gaps to improve access to Transplantation. The report was well received and subsequently TSANZ was awarded over \$2.3 million dollars from the Federal Government to establish the National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT) which aims to address the disparity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non ATSI Australians in terms of access to kidney transplantation. I'd particularly like to acknowledge Professor Stephen McDonald and Dr Jaqui Hughes – chair and deputy chair of the Taskforce – very ably assisted by Eleanor Garrard and Kim Rawson, who have rapidly translated the research agenda into action. A very comprehensive group of clinicians attended the Alice Springs NIKTT workshop organised by Dr Paul Lawton to start addressing the key points from the Performance report. The three areas to be addressed initially in the first 12 months of the program are:

1. Enhanced data collection and processing aiming to collect extra information on pre transplant factors affecting access
2. Pilot initiative to improve equity and access – including patient navigators, establishment of indigenous reference groups and models of care that improve pre-transplant coordination.
3. Reviewing cultural bias within the health care system.

TSANZ aims to be at the forefront of new innovations and provide our members with access to cutting edge information about the latest developments in the principles and practice of transplantation. At next year's ASM in Adelaide the Society will host a pre meeting workshop on machine perfusion which has been convened by Associate Professor Natasha Rogers and Professor Henry Pleass. This workshop will bring international expertise to our region to discuss machine perfusion science and clinical applications. The workshop will take place on Friday 20th March, 2020 and to my mind is a must see for Australian transplant clinicians and hopefully also some hospital administrators!

Next year the TSANZ Liver meeting is also being held in Adelaide at the same time as the ASM and post graduate course. The ATCA and the TNA are also holding their meetings at the same time in the Adelaide Convention Centre.

The ASM itself is being organised locally by Dr Phil Clayton and Dr Eu Ling Neo. The scientific program itself is being developed by SPEC under the charge of Dr Wai Lim and Dr Lucy Sullivan. The program is a fantastic mix of clinical and basic science, with overseas invited expert's Dr Timucin Taner from the Mayo Clinic, Associate Professor Marina Berenguer Haym from the University of Valencia, Professor Megan Levings from the University of British Columbia, Professor Chris Watson from Cambridge University Hospitals, Associate Professor Ina Jochmans and Associate Professor Kiran Khush from the Stanford University Medical Center. So overall March in Adelaide 2020 will be a feast for all things transplantation and I urge you all to come down for the 5 days from the Friday to see it all. It's probably the best time of the year to visit Adelaide weather wise as well.

The TSANZ council is also pleased to announce a new initiative to increase involvement of our younger members in the Society. We were

delighted to receive 13 expressions of interest to join the new Young Investigators committee of the TSANZ. The idea behind the committee is to give younger investigators some input into the ASM program design and running a scientific meeting. They will organise specific Young Investigator social functions and meet and greet our international visitors. The future of the Society is with its youth and it was great to see the mixture of basic science and clinical trainees joining the new committee. And again, a great time to remind everyone of the society travel grants and awards which help our members get to meetings and stay current in the field.

One of the next challenges for all of us in clinical transplantation will be the changes with tissue typing necessitated by the disappearance of CDC cross matching. The ARCBS is implementing on the night high sensitivity flow cytometric crossmatching, with the protocols being finalised shortly. Coupled with the new OrganMatch system there will be a much greater functionality that the new system will have. The precision of the flow cross match will, however, come at the cost that we will be unable to routinely cross match the large numbers of patients on the current cross match trays. A greater reliance on virtual crossmatch will be needed and this will alter the way transplant allocation is performed. These changes will affect not only renal allocation but also non renal allocation. The TSANZ renal transplant advisory committee (RTAC) under its new chair A/Prof Kate Wyburn will be playing a key role in the introduction of the new technology. A new committee for non-renal allocation is also planned.

Finally, of course the work of transplantation goes on. TSANZ Advisory Committees (chaired by Associate Professor Helen Pilmore) provide advice to Government and Organ and Tissue Authority through the Transplant Liaison Reference Group (TLRG) chaired by previous TSANZ President Professor Steve Chadban. The Society updates and maintains the TSANZ Guidelines on Transplantation and published the updated infection guideline in transplantation this year – written by Dr Sarah White.

Toby Coates
President, TSANZ

Secretary's Report

Toby Coates has assumed the mantle of TSANZ president, and Helen Pilmore joins Council as President Elect. We bid a fond farewell to Steve Alexander and thank him for superb leadership - unfortunately the Greater Western Sydney football jersey presented to him at the ASM did not bode favourably several months later at the Grand Final. Nicholas Shackel also departed from Council. Rob Carroll stepped down as Treasurer – he has guided TSANZ to a strong financial position over the last 4 years and has been ably succeeded by Bronwyn Levvey. Nick Cross remains the *ex officio* NZ representative until the next round of elections – we encourage our NZ members to (self) nominate. Council has also been joined by Kate Wyburn, Phil Clayton, Andrew Jabbour and Fiona Mackie.

We have 599 current members, which has improved over the last year. There is an equal gender split. Student membership continues to lag behind full membership – please encourage all students to join as we are maintaining substantially reduced membership fees which will still allow them take advantage of financial incentives such as early investigator awards and travel grants. Nursing staff also have access to membership at reduced rates and we hope this will also prompt a broader range of members.

The annual scientific meeting was held in Sydney this year, in conjunction with the PGC, Masterclass and Cardiothoracic Symposium. The highlights from the meeting, including prize-winners, are featured in this newsletter. The annual general meeting held during the ASM ratified several constitutional changes – importantly, the issue of equal gender representation on Council was passed unanimously.

TSANZ has made some progress this year in addressing the lack of equity faced by Indigenous Australians and access to transplantation. The Society is also very pleased to be spearheading the National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT), led by Stephen McDonald (Chair) and Jaquelyne Hughes (Deputy). This is a concrete and fundamental response by the Australia Government that we hope will allow us to drive necessary change for Indigenous Australians and their care in multiple aspects of Nephrology. The National Indigenous Dialysis and Transplantation Conference is being held in

Alice Springs in October – we hope many of you had the chance to attend this important meeting. Eleanor Garrard (Executive Officer, NIKTT) and Kim Rawson (Senior Project Officer, TSANZ) have been instrumental in organising this meeting. Additional meetings of interest to society members are also listed in the Newsletter.

Please feel free to reach out to the Society with any comments or questions related to TSANZ activities.

Natasha Rogers
Honorary Secretary, TSANZ

Treasurer's Report

The financial position of the TSANZ has remained stable over the past year, with a slight increase in total assets up to \$1.44 million (2019) compared to \$1.3 million in 2018. We have continued to keep the majority of funds spread equally invested in 4 term deposits across the 4 major banks (ANZ, NAB, Westpac & CBA), however with interest rates for bank term deposits dropping from 2.5 % to only 1.75-2.0%, other options to optimise earnings will be considered in the year ahead.

The 2019 ASM registration revenue was close to \$180 K (same as 2018) but pleasingly we had an increased in sponsorship to \$265K including an additional \$35k specifically for the inaugural Cardiothoracic Symposium (up a total \$100K from 2018). Costs for ASM were kept just under the budget aim of \$200K, and the ASM organising committee and TSANZ Admin team should be congratulated for their diligence and hard work in attracting the extra sponsorship and excellent financial management running the ASM.

In June 2019, the Federal Government agreed to provide \$2.3 million for a National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT). These funds will be managed by the TSANZ who, in conjunction with NIKTT Expert Advisory Committee, will ensure the funding for all the NIKTT activities are appropriately budgeted and utilised.

Bronwyn Levvey
Treasurer, TSANZ

Advisory Committees & Working Groups

In the last 12 months there has been significant work accomplished by the Advisory Committee's and Working Groups, including the following projects; *National Review of Paediatric Kidney Transplant recipients; review of Renal Allocation; review of Non-renal allocation, machine perfusion; review of the clinical guidelines and the continuation of the Improving access and outcomes to kidney transplantation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.*

TSANZ held a Satellite Symposium in April 2019 during the World Congress of Nephrology in Melbourne that focussed on transplantation for First Nations people. First Nation patients from Australia, New Zealand and Canada spoke about their experiences and can be found [here](#). Also, as part of the Symposia, the [TSANZ performance report](#) that provided the government with recommendations for improving access and outcomes kidney transplantation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was discussed as well as collaborations on clinical trials and transplant outcomes for First Nations people between Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

As part of the additional funding that TSANZ received from the Department of Health in March 2019 for Indigenous Health, the National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT) was established to address the inequities that detrimentally affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with kidney disease. Recent data from the Australia and New Zealand Dialysis and Transplant registry shows that at five years post-transplant, 84% of Indigenous recipients were alive compared to 91% of non-Indigenous recipients, and transplant kidney function was maintained in 71% of Indigenous recipients compared with 83% of non-Indigenous recipients. Addressing this inequity is the primary aim of the NIKTT, which will develop, catalyse and implement a range of targeted initiatives across data, practice and policy domains.

[The National Indigenous Dialysis and Transplantation Conference \(NIDTC\)](#) was held in Alice Springs in October 2019 and provided an opportunity for a diverse group of delegates to come together with the shared aim of improving kidney care for Indigenous

Australians. The NIDTC promoted effective knowledge exchange, where community representatives learnt from the health care sector and the health care sector learnt from the community. This will enable the identification of new shared priorities held by both community and health care sectors. Coming together in this way also fosters the formation of multidisciplinary networks, capable of generating innovative approaches to tackling kidney disease inequities that detrimentally affect Indigenous Australians.

The Advisory Committees & Working Groups continue to work closely with the Transplant Liaison Reference Group (TLRG) to keep clear lines of communication between the transplant sector and the Organ and Tissue Authority. TSANZ and OTA have an excellent relationship and will continue to work together on important matters.

The Uluru Statement was unanimously endorsed by the members of TSANZ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Kidney Transplant Expert Panel. The Uluru statement can be found on our website [here](#).

OrganMatch (OM) replaced the organ matching application NOMS while retaining the functionality to deliver patient specific outcomes and being adaptable for future scientific advancements. OM successfully went live on the 2nd April 2019. OrganMatch will provide increased transparency to clinicians and transplant coordinators by enabling direct access to information through a web-based application. The clinical portal was rolled out on the 28th August 2019. The clinical portal has enabled clinicians to have access to real time patient reports electronically via web interface.

The TSANZ is a signatory to the [Declaration of Istanbul](#), an international consortium dedicated to preventing the trafficking of organs and transplant tourism around the world.

The contribution of all of the working groups to the ongoing business of Australian transplantation is gratefully acknowledged.

Associate Professor Helen Pilmore
Chair, TSANZ Advisory Committees & Working Groups

SPEC Report

In 2019, we saw the ASM go back to Sydney, this time to the University of Sydney. Registrations continued the upward trend, with 304 in attendance, up from 272 in Melbourne in 2018. Convened by Natasha Rogers and Bill Mulley, the meeting showcased amazing international speakers, including Professor Mark Stegall, (Professor of Surgery Research, Mayo Clinic), Professor Adriana Larregina (Professor of Dermatology and Immunology, University of Pittsburgh), Professor Adrian Morelli (Professor of Surgery and Immunology, University of Pittsburgh) and Dr Deepali Kumar (Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto). Their presentations were fantastic and covered diverse topics ranging from dendritic cells through to clinical trials in transplantation. The dinner venue at the Grand Hall was a beautiful venue and it was great to see some of our more senior members strutting their stuff on the dance floor late into the night! The Great Debate “Transplant Clinicians Focus too Much on Rejection and Not Enough on Infection” saw two of our international invitees go head-to-head (Dr Deepali Kumar and Professor Mark Stegall). The debate again was the perfect way to finish the ASM with lots of laughs, although Professor Stegall seemed to be picked on more than others!! Of note, it is encouraging to see the junior members and future leaders of the society showcasing their high-quality research work, ranging from basic laboratory, epidemiological to clinical trial research.

The Postgraduate Course in 2019 was convened by Dr Michael Collins and Dr Karen Keung and also was attended by similar numbers of delegates as in Melbourne (111 in 2019 vs 117 in 2018). The PGC this year included excellent talks from TSANZ’s great and some of our international visitors. This year’s PGC also saw the addition of a new session on discussion of “hot science” and “hot clinical” manuscripts published in 2018/2019, which was highly informative and very well received.

The Masterclass was again a highlight, with similar number of attendees as in 2018 (107 in Sydney vs 118 in Melbourne in 2018). This year the Masterclass was convened by Professor Karen Dwyer and Dr Leyla Aouad and continued with the theme of a joint clinical session first up on post-transplant management, followed by concurrent sessions “Keeping Abreast of Changes in Transplantation” and “New Discoveries in Transplantation”. A highlight was the case-based interactive session with Dr Deepali Kumar, Associate Professor Shilpa Jesudason and Dr Eric

Au where the topic of long-term management of transplant recipients was discussed. After the break, the new discoveries session delivered fascinating insights into the use of functional genomics (Professor Shane Grey), the role of gut homeostasis in health (Associate Professor Laurence Macia) and chimeric antigen receptors (Dr Jesse Goyette).

Also, on Sunday, we saw the incorporation of the inaugural Cardiothoracic Symposium. This fantastic inclusion titled “Extra-Corporeal Heart & Lung Perfusion: Where are we now?” was convened by Associate Professor Bronwyn Levvey and Associate Professor Andrew Jabbour and was attended by a staggering 75 participants, an amazing achievement for the first event. A highlight was definitely the panel discussion on “To perfuse or not to perfuse: Challenging donors for challenging recipients” where everyone paused to consider and reflect on difficult clinical decision and outcomes of these decisions.

In 2020, ASM will be held in Adelaide for the first time and we are all very excited about coming to hometown of the TSANZ President! Next year’s event is a mammoth undertaking as it also includes several satellite events, namely the liver meeting, a machine perfusion workshop, the transplant nurse’s meeting and the transplant coordinators meeting. Phil Clayton and Eu-Ling Neo have been appointed convenors of the ASM, with Andrea Viecelli and Chien-Li Holmes-Liew organising the PGC and Darling Rojas-Canales and Sanda Stankovic in charge of the Masterclass program. These guys really have their work cut out for them with the event moving to a much earlier date of March 2020!

Although we have only been in the position for a very short time, we are thriving on the challenges of the role and really enjoying our interaction with a great group of people that make up SPEC and TSANZ. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Kelli McDonald and Dan Chambers, who have been tremendous in steering the SPEC over the last 6 years. We also owe our immense gratitude to TSANZ Executive Officer Nieves Piaggio. Following the departure of Sommer Twycross, Nieves has handled the increased workload (and perhaps stress!) like an absolute champion. We really could not run with you Nieves so thank you!!

Looking forward to seeing you all in Adelaide in March 2020!!

Lucy Sullivan and Wai Lim
Co-Chairs of SPEC

TSANZ Council

Prof Toby (Patrick) Coates

President

Email: toby.coates@sa.gov.au

A/Prof Helen Pilmore

President Elect / Chair Advisory Committees

Email: hpilmore@adhb.govt.nz

A/Prof Natasha Rogers

Honorary Secretary/Communications

Email: natasha.rogers@health.nsw.gov.au

A/Prof Bronwyn Levvey

Honorary Treasurer

Email: b.levvey@alfred.org.au

Dr Nick Cross

New Zealand Representative

Email: nick.cross@cdhb.health.nz

A/Prof Kelli MacDonald

Liaison with Scientific Societies

Email: Kelli.MacDonald@qimrberghofer.edu.au

Mr Nigel Palk

ATCA Representative

Email: Nigel.Palk@sa.gov.au

Dr Christine Russell

Surgical Rep

Email: christine.russell@sa.gov.au

A/Prof Kate Wyburn

Email: kate.wyburn@sydney.edu.au

Dr Philip Clayton

Email: philip.clayton@sa.gov.au

A/Prof Andrew Jabbour

Email: ajabbour@stvincents.com.au

Dr Fiona Mackie

Email: f.mackie@unsw.edu.au

Kim Rawson

TSANZ Project Officer

Email: projects@tsanz.com.au

Mrs Nieves Piaggio

TSANZ Executive Officer

Email: tsanz@tsanz.com.au

Roslyn Davies

TSANZ Administration Officer

Email: admin@tsanz.com.au

TSANZ SPEC

Joint Chairs – Dr Wai Lim and Dr Lucy

Sullivan

Dr Wai Lim (2019-2025)

Email: wai.lim@health.wa.gov.au

Dr Lucy Sullivan (2019-2025)

Email: lcsull@unimelb.edu.au

Dr Darren Lee (2017-2022)

Email: Darren.Lee2@easternhealth.org.au

Professor Henry Pleass (2017-2022)

Email: henry.pleass@sydney.edu.au

A/Professor William Mulley (2017-2022)

Email: Bill.Mulley@monashhealth.org

Dr Jeanette Villanueva (2019-2025)

Email: j.villanueva@victorchang.edu.au

TEMP MEMBERS:

Dr Philip Clayton (2020 ASM)

Email: Philip.clayton@sa.gov.au

Dr Eu Ling Neo (2020 ASM)

Email: eulingneo@gmail.com

A/Professor Chien-Li Holmes-Liew(2020 PGC)

Email: chien-li.holmes-liew@sa.gov.au

Dr Andrea Viecelli (2020 PGC)

Email: Andrea.Viecelli@health.qld.gov.au

Dr Darling Rojas-Canales (2020 Masterclass)

Email: Darling.Rojas@sa.gov.au

Dr Sanda Stankovic (2020 Masterclass)

Email: sandas@unimelb.edu.au

PRIZES AWARDED IN 2019

President's Prize (Basic Science)

Jennifer Li

President's Prize (Clinical)

Chris Anthony

Mark Cock Tx Research Scholarship

Deidre Hahn

Ian McKenzie Award

Allison Tong

KHA Award (Clinical)

Phil Clayton

KHA Award (Laboratory)

Anjan Bongoni

Aviva Rosenfeld Award for Excellence in Patient Care in Transplantation

Christine Ellis

Eastern Health

Early Career Researcher Awards Novartis

Chris Anthony, Karen Waller, Andrew Sunderland, Eric Au, Melanie Wyld, Samuel Chan, Mathew Sypek, Sarah Byrne, James Hedley, Amy Atkinson

Early Career Researcher Awards TSANZ

Sum Wing Christina Lai, Julian Singer, Jennifer Li, Nicholas Geraghty, Eric Son, Griffith Perkins, Peter Cuthbertson, Mario Leong, Aspasia Pefanis, Sam Adhikary

Best Poster Award (Basic Science)

Jeanette Villanueva

Best Poster Award (Clinical)

Mathew Sypek

Society Awards and Grants

The Society provides a number of benefits for members, which include support to attend national and international transplantation meetings and reduced fees at meetings sponsored by the society. The eligibility criteria for each award are outlined on the TSANZ website.

Travel Grant Award Reports

ISHLT 2019

April 3rd – 6th, 2019

Orlando, USA

ISHLT this year was an excellent discussion of ground-breaking technology as well as advancements in our management of problematic long-term complications limiting transplant outcomes. There was a great deal of focus on the developments in VAD technology as well as the decision making regarding when to perform concomitant procedures, particularly replacement of the aortic valve, as well as when a BIVAD is necessary. There were some excellent and robust discussions around when to permanently or temporarily support the RV when patients are undergoing an LVAD which are common dilemmas faced by transplant surgeons and physicians. Very interesting as well were the discussions regarding how to assess patients for potential LVAD explantation, and the difficulties around the assessment of an MCS supported ventricle.

It's also always very exciting to attend some of the basic science sessions to see what new discoveries might soon be impacting our clinical practice. I very much enjoyed the opportunity to share the pre-clinical work I've been doing in pharmacological conditioning of the donor heart, and found the breadth of work being presented by others fascinating and encouraging.

The final plenary session provided an incredible insight into the most recent and ground-breaking clinical and basic science work being performed in the area of transplantation. The final President's debate was also a fascinating insight into the often-debated issue of re-transplantation of patients, and highlighted both the advances we've made but also the stark reality of the limited supply of donor organs and the ethical dilemmas we face with regards to organ allocation. Overall, it was a wonderful and insightful meeting that embraced the difficult and controversial topics and was an absolute pleasure to attend.

Sarah Scheuer

**2019 American Transplant Congress
June 1st – 5th, 2019
Boston, USA**

The move (hopefully temporary) from clinical practice to basic science research has seen me increasingly surmounted with the threat of impending debt, it is with relief that the debt I now owe to the TSANZ is only one of immense gratitude. The support that TSANZ continues to give to early career researchers cannot to be understated, and I was exceptionally fortunate that their support enabled my travel to Boston to attend the American Transplant Congress (ATC) in 2019. I delivered an oral presentation of my research investigating the capacity of the gut microbiota to influence renal allograft outcomes in a murine model, and how the microbiota can be manipulated by diet to produce favourable transplant outcomes.

One of the immense benefits of attending international conferences, is seeing how research groups around the world are approaching topics relevant to your area or interest. In this regard, ATC did not disappoint. It has been roughly 15 years since the invisible world of the gut microbiome began to appear with some regularity in the scientific literature. It has now firmly established itself as a “hot topic”, and to borrow a phrase from another topical issue, it would appear the climate it only getting hotter. No fewer than 7 abstracts, including a plenary, discussed the interplay between microbiota and transplantation. Ongoing human observational studies from the Lee group in Seoul and the Suthanthiran group in New York continue to find correlations between gut microbiota and transplant outcomes, including acute rejection and the development of post-transplant diarrhoea. The most novel finding was presented by J. Kim from the Lee group, who found using living-donor pairs that the degree of difference in the microbiome composition between the recipient and donor was negatively associated with graft function at 1-year post-transplant. Moreover, their data suggested that for a specific cohort, microbiota divergence between donor and recipient was a better predictor of 1-year graft function than standard immunological parameters. Quite astonishing, although the theoretical basis for this observation remains elusive.

Outside of the microbiota, an interesting talk by J. Horwitz presented research on the protolerogenic effects of erythropoietin, using cardiac allografts in various murine models. Their data showed that EPO interacts with CTLA4-Ig to improve allograft survival through EPO-induced alterations in myeloid cells, indirectly enhancing Treg cell function. Whilst their findings were empowered by elegant trial design and mechanistic studies relying on the generation of multiple KO mice, the potential role in human transplantation makes their research an exciting prospect.

Overall an abundance of clinical and basic science presentations, thoughtfully collated into intriguing sessions and exceptionally well organised ensured that no matter what your transplant interest, there would always be a rewarding session to attend. The conference offered me a great deal of insight into my research area, and opened new directions for future study.

Outside of academia, Boston did not disappoint and presented us with all the quintessential experiences one associates with America; cheese the “color” of traffic cones, the “delightful” Boston accent, a random midday shooting outside the exhibition centre, and the excessive taking of finger prints at airports. Overall, a truly exceptional learning experience, and I must once again thank TSANZ for their support.

Julian Singer

American Transplant Congress was held in Boston this summer where exciting, innovative research from across the globe was showcased over several days.

The inclusion of compatible pairs (CP) in kidney paired exchange (KPE) was discussed. Inclusion of CP has been suggested as a means to improve match quality for poorly matched pairs and to improve transplant outcomes. A retrospective review of US data was presented. This assessed the impact of compatible pairs in KPE, 151 CP entered into KPE between 2008 and 2018 with 296 additional recipients transplanted, with a substantial proportion of these being blood group O and highly sensitised recipients. Each CP allowed for 2 additional transplants with approximately 25% cPRA >80% and 11% with a cPRA >95%. The Australian experience with KPE was described

in a poster presentation. They found 17 compatible pairs out of 159 were involved in match runs. 14/16 received an offer in first match run with improved eplet matching, particularly in those who initially had poor eplet matching.

In order for compatible pairs to participate in KPE, wait times need to be low and pairs need to be aware of the potential benefit of entering as a compatible pair. A small patient survey asked both donors (16) and recipients (15) prior to compatibility testing, how long would they be willing to wait for PKE related benefits. Donors said they would wait an average of 12 additional months to improve allograft survival by 1 yr and 18 months to improve allograft survival by 10 yr compared with 9.1 months and 18.6 months in the recipients surveyed.

The Advanced Donation Program in the US was the topic of a logistic and ethical debate session. They provide a standard voucher (voucher recipient is on dialysis or imminent need of transplant) or the family voucher (intended recipients are currently not in need of transplant and may never need a transplant but are named) which allows donors to donate many years before their intended recipient may need a kidney. This has been implemented in the US as a means to increase kidney supply.

There was an in-depth symposia on the challenges and opportunities of managing patients post kidney allograft failure. These patients often have a significant burden of morbidity and high mortality after returning to dialysis. They described the inter-centre and inter-individual variation in immunosuppression management post allograft failure. Weaning off immunosuppression is associated with increased risk of allosensitisation. It is necessary however to ensure an individualised approach to balance an individual's risk and benefit considering age, infection, malignancy, re transplantation potential, urine output and immunological characteristics of first transplant.

The 15 year outcomes of a double blind RCT comparing early steroid withdrawal to long-term continued steroid therapy was presented at the plenary sessions. They performed data linkage with UNOS/OPTN data with almost complete data for both groups. It was complicated, however, by 30% of patients discontinuing their trial assigned treatment

protocol by 5 years post-transplant. Time to allograft failure from any cause including death, death censored graft loss and death with functioning graft were similar in both groups. Estimated GFR by MDRD were similar in both groups after 15 years. This study supports the notion that early corticosteroid withdrawal may be appropriate in selected patients.

I would like to extend my appreciation to TSANZ for their provision of this travel award.

Sine Donnellan

17th World Congress of International Pancreas and Islet Transplant Association

July 2nd – 5th, 2019 Lyon, France

This travel award enabled me to attend the 17th World Congress of International Pancreas and Islet Transplant Association in Lyon, France. This was my first time attending this meeting, and I would like to thank TSANZ very much for the opportunity.

I was chosen to present an 'elevator pitch' in a new session introduced this congress to replace the more passive poster format. We each had strictly 1 minute to pitch our research topics, which was a challenge, but certainly more engaging than standing by a poster. I presented on "IL-10 production by *in vitro* expanded human B cells".

IPITA has a heavy clinical/translational focus, which was great exposure for me as a basic scientist engaging in clinical research. I was surprised to find that I got a lot out of several informal session run on the first day of the conference intended for practising clinicians to discuss variations in routine patient care and immune monitoring practices between islet and pancreas transplant centres. I realise that I was lacking a good understanding of the monitoring/decision making processes applied to the treatment of transplant recipients, and can better see how outcomes of my research might fit into these processes.

There were 4 *State of the Art* sessions hosting invited speakers from around the world. The highlight for me was a talk on genome editing by Danwei Huangfu from New York, whose group is doing unbelievable work dissecting the developmental networks responsible for the generation of beta cells from stem cells using CRISPR-Cas9-based high-throughput

screening techniques. There was even a very well received lecture delivered by Christian Lovis from Geneva on artificial intelligence in medicine.

I particularly enjoyed a session called SciPub where we all gathered informally to question a panel of leaders in the islet transplant field. The panellists represented the major alternative approaches to classical islet transplantation, and fielded questions like *Who will be the first take their approach to the clinic?*

My general impression after attending this conference is that the increasingly multidisciplinary approach being taken to tackling the issues in transplant medicine is producing some very exciting research in the field. I would like to thank TSANZ again for the opportunity to experience it.

Griffin Perkins

I would like to thank TSANZ for the International travel award which allowed me to attend the 17th World Congress of International Pancreas and Islet Transplant Association in Lyon, France.

I presented my work entitled “Assessment of 3D-Bioprinted Human Regulatory T-cells using IL-2 and CCL1 Supplemented Alginate-GelMA Bioink” on the last day of the congress at the Experimental beta-cell replacement session. The format of this session was 8 minutes presentation followed by 2 minutes of questions. All the presentations in this session were very interesting.

At IPITA congress, I focused on going to sessions that were related to my research topic. On the first day of the congress, there was a session dedicated to 3D-bioprinting called (Bio)artificial pancreas and stem cells. This session was extremely helpful with significant amount of new data in the field of 3D-bioprinting. Furthermore, on the last day, a plenary talk, entitled “Challenges and opportunities in bioengineering, advanced microfabrication, 3D printing and beta cell replacement devices” was presented by Professor Aart van Appeldorn. This talk showcased unpublished data from their laboratory, and I learnt a lot from this talk.

At this IPITA congress, they decided to replace poster sessions with a new format of presentation called pitch sessions. Each presenter had one minute to “pitch” their project

to the audience and judges using a single slide and two winners from each pitch session did 5-minute presentations on the last day of the congress. These sessions were very interesting, and people seemed to enjoy these sessions.

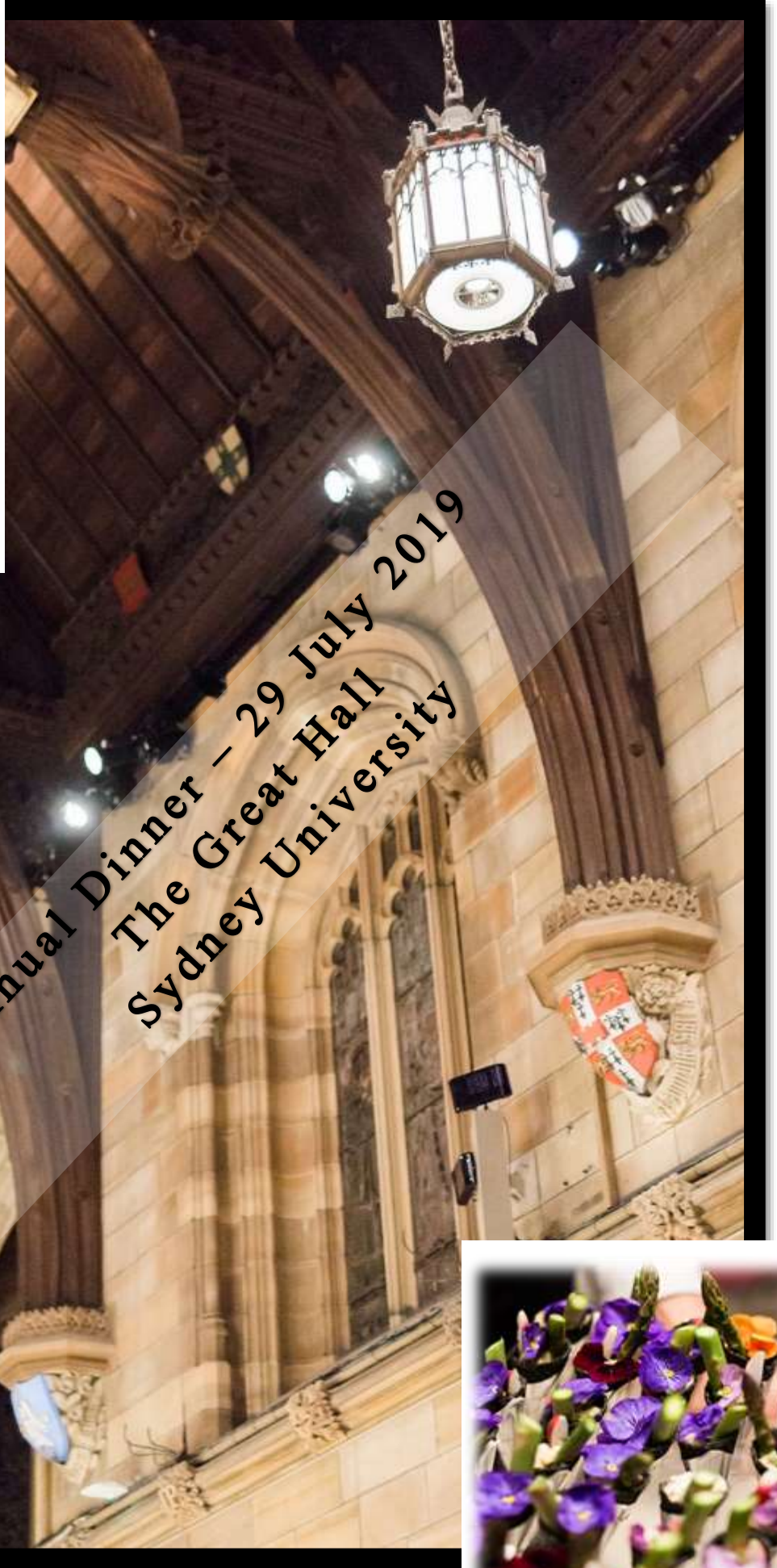
Another aspect of the congress I enjoyed was the networking event. Unfortunately, I could not attend the young investigators networking event as the tickets were sold out, but the congress dinner was extremely well planned at an amazing venue (Musee des Confluences). Again, I would like to show my gratitude and appreciation to TSANZ for this amazing opportunity.

Juewan Kim

European Society of Organ Transplantation September 15th – 18th, 2019 Copenhagen, Denmark

I attended the European Society for Organ Transplantation Congress in Copenhagen in September 2019, where I gave an oral presentation entitled “The self-peptide repertoire plays a critical role in transplant tolerance induction”. This was an invaluable opportunity to gain exposure for our work and to network with potential academic and industry collaborators. While in Copenhagen, I met with the group of Sine Reker Hadrup at the Danish Technical University, and with scientific staff from Immudex ApS. Among the highlights of the congress for me were presentations from Menna Clatworthy, Ekaterine Berishvili and Lauren Brasile. Menna Clatworthy spoke about the Human Cell Atlas project and her group’s contribution to defining the cellular components of the kidney in adulthood and at different stages of foetal and postnatal development, and to understanding the spatial and temporal relationships between these cell types. Ekaterine Berishvili presented about the use of decellularized human amnion as a scaffold for pancreatic islet engraftment. The impressive results of this work are now the basis of a large European Consortium project funded through the Horizon 2020 programme. Lauren Brasile showed how a bioengineered vascular cloaking material “immunocloak” could prevent interactions between the graft vasculature and recipient immune system. Thanks to TSANZ for supporting me to attend this excellent meeting.

Alexandra Sharland



Annual Dinner - 29 July 2019
The Great Hall
Sydney University



The Internationals



The Awards

Presidents Prize
Andrew Jabbour for Chris Anthony



Presidents Prize
Jennifer Li



Ian Mackenzie Award
Allison Tong



Josette Eris Award
Sponsored by Astellas
for Angela Webster



Mark Cocks Award
Sponsored by Transplant Australia
for Deidre Hahn



**Young Investigator Award
Sponsored by Astellas
Vietnam Society of Transplantation
Nguyen Than Tuan**



**Aviva Rosenfeld Award
Christine Ellis**



**KHA Award – Clinical Research
Phil Clayton**



**KHA Award – Laboratory
Research - Anjan Bongoni**



Early Career Research Awards – Basic Science

Christina Lai



Julian Singer



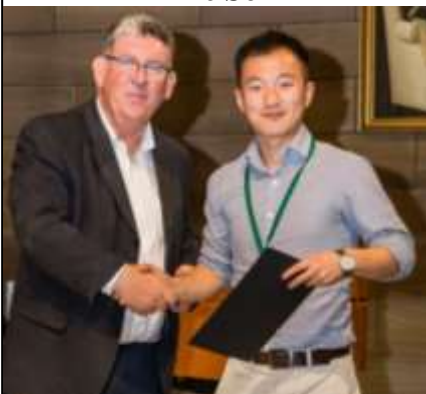
Jennifer Li



Nicholas Gerahty



Eric Son



Griffith Perkins



Phil Cuthbertson



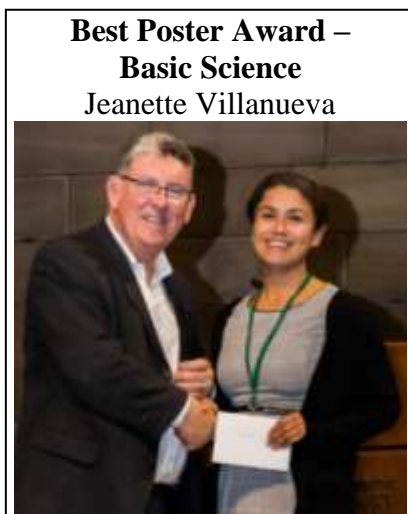
Aspasia Pefanis



Sam Adhikary



Early Career Research Awards – Clinical Science Sponsored by Novartis



Passing the Baton



The Conversations







See you in Adelaide March 22 – 24, 2020

ADVISORY Committees

Chairperson – A/Prof Helen Pilmore

Email: hpilmore@adhb.govt.nz

TSANZ Project Officer- Kim Rawson

projects@tsanz.com.au

Cardiac

Dr Robert Larbalestier

Email: rlarb@iinet.net.au | [More Information](#)

ATCA Rep: Jo Maddicks-Law - joanne.maddicks-law@health.qld.gov.au

Donor Surgeons & Co-ordinators

Professor Henry Pleass

Email: henry.pleass@sydney.edu.au

Ms Christine Ross

christinemaree.ross@health.nsw.gov.au | [More Information](#)

ATCA Rep: Christine Ross

Immune Tolerance

Professor Frank Ierino

Email: frank.ierino@svha.org.au | [More Information](#)

Liver & Intestinal

Professor Robert Jones

Email: robert.jones@austin.org.au | [More Information](#)

ATCA Rep: Libby John -

libby.john@health.sa.gov.au

Lung

Professor Greg Snell

Email: g.snell@alfred.org.au | [More Information](#)

ATCA Rep: Michelle Harkess -

mharkess@stvincents.com.au

Paediatric Transplant

Dr Joshua Kausman | [More Information](#)

Email: Joshua.Kausman@rch.org.au

Pancreas & Islet

Dr David Goodman

Email: goodman@svhm.org.au | [More Information](#)

ATCA Rep: Paul Robertson -

paul.robertson@health.nsw.gov.au

Renal

A/Professor Kate Wyburn

Email: kate.wyburn@sydney.edu.au | [More Information](#)

ATCA Rep: Luke Datson -

luke.datson@health.nsw.gov.au

Vascular Composite Allograft

Dr Sharon Ford

Email: sharon.ford@svha.org.au | [More Information](#)

Working Groups

Chairperson – A/Prof Helen Pilmore

Email: hpilmore@adhb.govt.nz

Paediatric (PDWG)

Dr Joshua Kausman

Email: Joshua.Kausman@rch.org.au | [More Information](#)

ATCA Rep: Kathe Beyerle -

kathe.beyerle@rch.org.au

Xenotransplantation (XTWG)

Professor Peter Cowan

Email: peter.cowan@svhm.org.au | [More Information](#)