



Epworth Breast Service

Newsletter Winter 2014

We genuinely strive to continually improve the level of care we provide to our patients with breast problems, with the ongoing goal of providing our patients with the best breast care possible. We aim to support and empower our patients to navigate the breast cancer journey and a vital component of our role is to educate and inform ourselves, and update our patients and their ageneral practitioners on a regular ongoing basis.



Miss Jane O'Brien
MBBS FRACS
Specialist Breast and
Oncoplastic Surgeon
Epworth Breast Service

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Annual Scientific Congress (ASC), Singapore, May 2014

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) is the College's major annual educational activity. The 2014 ASC was held in Singapore at the spectacular Marina Bay Sands facility. The biggest hotel complex in Singapore, it comprises three 55-storey towers with 2,500 rooms and crowning the three hotel towers, 200 metres in the sky is a 150-metre infinity-edged swimming pool, which proved popular with conference delegates.



Each participating specialty invites eminent authorities as "Distinguished Visitors", around whom the specialty program is built. Epworth Breast Service Breast Surgeon, Melanie Walker was co convener of the "Breast Section", and the college visitors were Professor Jerome Pereira, Consultant Surgeon James Paget University Hospital, UK and Professor Monica Morrow, Chief, Breast Service, Memorial Sloane Kettering, New York.

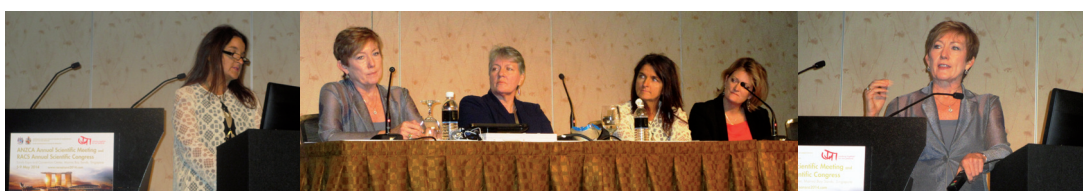
Professor Jerome Pereira, (below left, with Melanie Walker) a UK national trainer for consultants and surgical trainees in breast oncoplastic and reconstructive surgery, conducted a one day Oncoplastic Breast Surgery Workshop prior to the meeting, providing the 50 participants, including Jane O'Brien and Melanie Walker, with the opportunity to increase their knowledge and surgical skills in oncoplastic breast surgery. He also gave an insight into oncoplastic training in the UK, including the range of online learning activities and methods of assessment.



During a session devoted to breast conserving surgery, Professor Monica Morrow (above right with Melanie Walker) delivered a lecture entitled "Margins: Bigger is not Better", outlining some of the evidence considered in the development of recently published margin guidelines. These consensus guidelines, based on the results of a systematic review of 33 studies, suggest that "no ink on tumour" be the standard for an adequate margin in patients with invasive cancer undergoing breast conserving surgery.

Currently, about one in four women in the United States undergoes re-excision after lumpectomy, and nearly half of these procedures are performed with the rationale of obtaining wider margins in women whose tumour cells do not touch the inked margin. The new approach is expected to reduce re-excision rates, improve cosmetic outcomes and also potentially cut health care costs.

During the same session Epworth Breast Service Breast Surgeon Jane O'Brien (below left and centre, panel discussion) spoke on some of the surgical strategies to improve cosmesis in breast conserving surgery. Professor Morrow (below right and centre) also gave valuable perspectives on the management of the axilla and current mastectomy rates.



Level 7, 32 Erin St, Richmond. 3121

T: 9421 4218 F: 9421 5148

www.melbournebreastcancersurgery.com.au

Epworth Breast Service Multidisciplinary Team Member honoured for anti-tobacco lobbying

Epworth Breast Service Multidisciplinary team member, Radiation Oncologist Dr Bronwyn King, was recently awarded the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) prestigious President's Award for her work in founding the 'Tobacco-Free Super' campaign in Australia, which aims to reduce financial investment in the tobacco industry.



Bronwyn King, Radiation Oncologist with her award trophy

In 2010 Bronwyn discovered that she had been unwittingly investing in tobacco, via her superannuation investments. As she learned more about the super industry, she became aware that having a small percentage of total assets invested in 'big tobacco' was a standard investment strategy. Since then Bronwyn has engaged with super fund executives, investment teams and boards to discuss the case for tobacco divestment. This has contributed to fifteen large Australian super funds divesting tobacco stocks worth more than \$1.2 billion dollars.

With approximately \$7 billion of Australians' super investments remaining in the tobacco industry, Bronwyn is committed to 'starting the conversation' with Australian super fund executives, investment managers and boards as well as superannuation industry peak bodies. In the past year she has delivered more than forty presentations to various industry groups including at the Australian Government Super Funds meeting, the Funds Executive Association Limited conference, the Conference of Major Super Funds and multiple Australian Superannuation Fund Association forums and at present she is actively working with twenty more Australian super funds.

Update: Breast Cancer Rehabilitation Pilot Programme

Trish Calder, our specialist breast care nurse, has been the driving force behind the development and implementation of a rehabilitation programme for our breast cancer patients after they have completed their primary treatment. An eight week pilot program was conducted in late 2013 at Epworth Camberwell, helping our breast cancer patients to cope with the residual effects of breast cancer and treatment. Trish, pictured below with Epworth Group CEO Alan Kinkade during the recent 2014 Epworth Research Week in front of research poster "Developing a Rehabilitation Framework for Cancer Survivorship" has received overwhelmingly supportive pilot focus group feedback, and a further program is currently running at Epworth Camberwell.

The aim of the programme is to assist patients in obtaining maximal physical, social, psychological and vocational functioning within the limits created by the cancer and subsequent treatment, and has physical reconditioning and psycho-education components. The program involves weekly two-hour sessions; an hour of individualised exercise and an hour of supportive care education sessions. Topics include: benefits of exercise, finance, managing anxiety, intimacy, relationships, self esteem and healthy eating, and provides tools and strategies to empower breast cancer patients to take control of their own health. Patients also have access to personalised therapy, where individual concerns may be addressed.

Whilst patients are undergoing active treatment for breast cancer, they report that they feel supported by the treating team, but after completion of treatment they report feeling anxious about being "abandoned". It is also widely recognised that breast cancer patients often express an overwhelming desire to improve their overall health, and demonstrate an enhanced motivation to change lifestyle behaviours, especially within the year after diagnosis and health care professionals are ideally placed to take advantage of this "teachable moment".

Referrals for the programme may be directed to Epworth Camberwell, Rehabilitation Consultants or to Trish.Calder@epworth.org.au



Epworth Breast Service Specialist Breast and Oncoplastic Surgeons

Fewer than 8% of Australian surgeons are female, and the Epworth Breast Service is therefore very fortunate and proud to be able to offer our breast patients the expertise of two highly trained and extremely experienced female specialist breast and oncoplastic surgeons, both of whom have extensive international training and experience.



Miss Jane O'Brien
MBBS 1985
University of Melbourne
FRACS 1995



Miss Melanie Walker
MBBS 1994
Monash University
FRACS 2002

Copies of this newsletter may be downloaded from www.melbournebreastcancersurgery.com.au

Epworth Breast Service
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