



TRANSPLANTATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

Newsletter September 2010

Editorial Comment

Dear Members,

Welcome to the September Newsletter. As I was going through the editing process (with the invaluable assistance of Sommer and Aviva in the TSANZ office) and reading through the various contributions, I couldn't help but think what a great society this is to be a member of. We have a dedicated and forward-looking Council; money in the bank, and forthright members who put in their two cents worth on how that money should be spent; a (the) major input in the application and regulation of transplantation in this country; a consistently strong annual scientific meeting and postgraduate training course; and last but not least, great support for scientist and clinician investigators in the form of travel and research awards. You may choose to skim through the reports of Council office-bearers – of course I hope you don't – but I encourage you to read the reports of the many travel grant awardees to see what a positive impact these awards make, particularly for our student members.

Finally, with my Education Officer hat on, can I remind members of the special TSANZ-sponsored symposium at the AHMRC meeting in Melbourne in November. We have 3 excellent speakers, Lori West from Edmonton and our own Shane Grey and Toby Coates. There are other sessions during the meeting that are bound to be of interest to members, but even if you can only attend on the day of the symposium, I am sure that it will be worthwhile. I will be sending further information in the near future.

Good luck to those of you awaiting the outcome of NHMRC applications

Peter Cowan

In This Issue

Editorial Comment	1
President's Message	2
Secretary's Report	3
Treasurer's Report	3
Standing Committees	3
Education & Science Report	4
Membership	5
Awards and Grants	5
Travel Grant Awards	5
Calendar of Events	15
TSANZ Council	16
Standing Committee Chairs	16

Transplantation Society of Australia & New Zealand

145 Macquarie St

Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: +61 2 9256 5461

Fax: +61 2 9241 4083

Email: tsanz@racp.edu.au

www.tsanz.com.au

President's Message

It is important that TSANZ Council works toward consolidating the growth and increased activity of our Society, which has been evident over the last few years. The future of TSANZ continues to look very healthy from an academic, governance and financial perspective; however several key areas need ongoing attention and work.

The 2010 TSANZ Annual Scientific Meeting continued in the footsteps of previous years with a very high quality meeting and was ably organised by Kate Wyburn and Nick Shackel. Attendance was excellent and the Manning Clark Centre has proven to be a successful move. The spirit of our meeting remains a feature with very interactive sessions and contribution by our International Speakers, and presentations that highlight our young investigators. Abstract numbers were high and the quality of the science was excellent, which reflects the standard of research in Australia. Bill Mulley and Glen Westall convened another comprehensive Postgraduate Course, and TSANZ continues to work towards a more formal curriculum. Our affiliation with The Transplantation Society, which has been facilitated by Jeremy Chapman, will provide links to additional education material and another arm to our Education facilities. Since the Manning Clark Centre has worked well for our Annual Scientific Meeting, Council has decided to keep the same venue for 2011, and the immediate future years. The Annual Scientific Meeting and Postgraduate Course will be held from the 27th June – 1st July in 2011 and we should all note the dates in our diary for next year.

The Executive Committee of TTS headed by Jeremy Chapman and Local Organising Committee should be congratulated for another productive and well-organised meeting in Vancouver. Australia should be very proud of its high level of attendance and share of awards. Jeremy has strongly promoted the affiliation of TSANZ with TTS and I attended a Section and Affiliate Society Meeting in Vancouver, which outlined ideas and future pathways to strengthen links between TSANZ and TTS. TSANZ Members should be encouraged to take advantage of the affiliate membership opportunity between TSANZ and TTS. Although TSANZ has an international presence, the importance of this link to the TTS should not be under-estimated and will provide benefits in terms of promoting educational and research collaborations, and also continuing to showcase our science, clinical excellence and young investigators

At a local level, the new structure of the TSANZ Subcommittees is working well and has improved the way Council functions, which is particularly important in times of an ever-growing workload.

The new Subcommittees include the Council Executive, Research and Education Committee, Awards Committee, Liaison Committee and the pre-existing Standing Committees. Two other Subcommittees that Council is developing include (a) Ethics Subcommittee and (b) History. Note that each Subcommittee has a Chair who will recruit individuals from the TSANZ Membership to be part of the Subcommittee and I would urge all the younger Members to consider such positions as they arise. Although the Subcommittee positions are not official positions on Council, these subcommittee positions will help "groom" individuals for officially elected positions on TSANZ Council. It is also a good way of directly involving the wider membership in TSANZ matters.

We had a very productive AGM this year. We initiated constitutional changes and reviewed the strategic plans for TSANZ. I will not overview the entire details however it is clear that Council must find a balance between using the financial assets of TSANZ for long-term investments (and the future financial security of our Society), and also ensuring that part of the money is used for the current needs and benefits of our Society.

Peter Macdonald will report on the work of the Standing Committees, however, I wanted to point out that TSANZ continues to work closely with the National Transplant Authority. The "final version" of the National Eligibility Guidelines and Allocation criteria was ratified and accepted by TSANZ Council. Further development and continued updating of this document will be required. The work by the Standing Committees is far from finished and Council needs to make sure this ongoing work is supported financially. This will require ongoing negotiations with the National Transplant Authority. We should congratulate Professor Paolo Ferrari and his team for the establishment of the Australian Paired Kidney Exchange Program, which is about to run live. We also thank the National Transplant Authority for supporting the establishment of this Program.

Finally I wanted highlight Council's strong support of our Investigators. TSANZ has a wide range of awards and this year 21 International Travel awards to attend scientific meetings were given out, which was mainly to attend the TTS meeting in Vancouver. Similar awards and research grants given by TSANZ underscores our commitment to supporting our Education and Research activities, which remains a focal point of our future efforts.

Take time to read this Newsletter as it provides an essential means of communication and we welcome ongoing feedback from our Membership throughout the year.

Frank Ierino
President, TSANZ



From left to right; TSANZ President A/Professor Frank Ierino, Winner of the Presidents Prize Ms Natasha Rogers & Parliamentary Secretary for Health Mr Mark Butler

Secretary's Report

Since the last newsletter there has been a very successful TSANZ meeting in Canberra. At the Annual General Meeting the membership voted to change the constitution to formally recognise the voting rights of members of the society and to update various aspects of the constitution. It is pleasing that these amendments passed were passed and the constitution has been updated.

As reported by Geoff McCaughan, the society awarded a large number of International Travel awards to the Transplantation Society Meeting in Vancouver, which ensured an excellent representation of Australian Transplantation clinical and basic science at this key international meeting. The return to the members of travel grants makes TSANZ one of the most generous societies to belong to, and as always I encourage all members to apply for the awards that the society offers. It is a sign of the great strength of Australian Transplantation research that our young society members Helena Smith-Hurst, Sid Rajakumar and Min Hu were awarded mentee-mentor awards through the International Society. I'm sure that all members of the society would extend their congratulations to these worthy winners.

I would like to remind the members of the upcoming TSANZ council election, which hopefully will be concluded in a more timely manner than the recent federal election! A call for nominations for 1 new council position and a new president elect will be issued for election by February 2011. In line with the previous constitutional change, election of a surgical representative to the council will be required. It is also timely to remind the membership of the Ian McKenzie Prize for Outstanding Contribution to Transplantation Research. I would strongly encourage all members of the society to consider greater involvement in the society and to

nominate outstanding society members for the Ian McKenzie prize. Details of the travel awards, prizes and other society benefits can all be found on our website, www.tsanz.com.au.

Toby Coates
Honorary Secretary, TSANZ

Treasurers Report

The major news from the AGM this year was discussion about a proposal to establish a fund using a significant portion of the profits from the TTS Meeting in Sydney 2008. The idea of this fund would be to grow (hopefully with donations and bequests) and to provide a secure source of future funding for the Society's future research and educational goals.

There was a lot of support for the principle, but also some suggestions that more of the money should be spent on workshops and other educational events. Council will consider this feedback at our next Meeting. It may be that some type of balanced approach, combining an early event or two, might be combined with the establishment of a Security Fund. More information will follow, hopefully shortly.

Scott Campbell
Treasurer, TSANZ

Standing Committees

National Transplant Authority Project

The Consensus Statement on Eligibility Criteria and Allocation Protocols for Organ Transplantation from Deceased Donors has been submitted to the AOTA. It is understood that the document will be submitted to AHMAC for further consideration and (hopefully) endorsement. There have been ongoing informal discussions between myself, Liz Cain (Acting CEO of the AOTA) and Gerry O'Callaghan (Medical Director, AOTA) regarding implementation of the Consensus Statement and development of audit mechanisms to monitor adherence to the Eligibility Criteria and Allocation Protocols. Liz Cain has flagged the possibility of forming a committee to oversee implementation of the Consensus Statement.

A number of contentious issues were identified in the Consensus Statement (eg formal appeal mechanisms, alternate listing) which are likely to need ongoing discussion with the AOTA and other stakeholders. There has also been preliminary discussion with representatives of the NHMRC regarding future development of the Consensus Statement into a formal guideline.

Peter Macdonald
Chair, Standing Committees

Education & Science Report

Meetings

Report from Kate Wyburn Organiser of the 2010 ASM (Nick Shakel was co-organiser)

This year the Annual Scientific Meeting was held in June at the Manning Clarke Centre at The ANU. The venue was used for a second year in a row and proved to be spacious and suitable. In a bid not to be outdone Canberra staged an historical political leadership challenge, adding to the atmosphere of the week.

We were fortunate to have excellent international speakers attend who all contributed generously to the meeting; not only through their engaging presentations, but also by sharing their thoughts and experiences, stimulating discussions, judging of the President's prize and making entertaining dinner party guests. They were as diverse as they were interesting and provocative. There were 3 formally invited international speakers and fortuitously we were able to attract an additional 2 speakers that were in Australia at the time of the meeting.

Prof M Sarwal from Stanford University opened the meeting describing her work in the evolving field of 'Omics in transplantation and in a later session discussed the role of B cells in transplantation.

Prof J Lake, a Hepatologist from The University of Minnesota, Minneapolis discussed viral hepatitis in transplantation, while in a second session elucidated the indications and controversies of combined liver-kidney transplants.

Prof R Merion, a surgeon from The University of Michigan and Director of the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR), headed the ATCA session with a stimulating and timely talk on Registry Data. He also spoke at the Presidents lecture "Lies, Damn Lies and Transplant Statistics" bringing a thought provoking close to the meeting.

Prof J Fung a surgeon from Cleveland discussed new innovations and insights into organ perfusion. Mr Mirza from Birmingham UK who was visiting Melbourne provided valuable insights into the development of small bowel transplantation. This proved to be timely as Mr Mirza assisted with the first small bowel transplant perform in Australia in the weeks immediately after the meeting.

We again held a joint ATCA/TSANZ session with erudite speakers including Dr Gerry O'Callaghan, Prof P Macdonald, Prof P Ferrari and Prof J Chapman. We hope that this collaboration between the two societies at the ASM continues to build.

Our local invited speakers were again a strong suit, those that presented at the Plenaries, not already mentioned, included Prof O'Connell, Dr S Grey, Dr D Gracey, Prof J Bishop, Prof A Glanville and Prof C Vinuesa. Whilst we made extensive use of society members and our international speakers to present in the State of the Art sessions we also managed to attract Australians with major international standing including Prof Sprent and A/Prof Barry.

In addition to the 2 State of The Art Sessions there were 3 concurrent sessions and 132 abstracts were presented either as oral or mini orals. We are grateful to the chairs of each session and robust questions and discussions generated by the audience.

Dinner was held at Old Parliament House and our speaker The Hon Mark Butler MP was entertaining, informative and gave insight into the tumultuous events of the week.

We are grateful for the input and guidance from all members of TSANZ council, and as always the indefatigable efforts of Aviva Rosenfeld. The assistance from Sally Cowan and Michael Fink and Tony Malloy in the production of the program book and abstract submissions was indispensable. We are also grateful to the many other members of the society who assisted including those who reviewed abstracts.

It was pleasure to be involved in the organization of this meeting, and we are thankful for the opportunities and support we received.

Training

The convenors of this year's TSANZ post-graduate course (PGC), Bill Mulley and Glen Westall, send the following message to members.

"This year's post-graduate course trialed a new format wherein basic science and clinical features of a topic were mixed in the same session. The intent was to give attendees a broader understanding of each area by progressing through the scientific basis for current clinical practice. Overall the new format appeared to be well received and kept attention focused. Housed in a cozy lecture theatre, 54 attendees crammed in to take in a dazzling array of topics from a dazzling array of speakers on broad ranging topics. Without deliberate forethought the area of antibodies in transplantation became a particular focus of the 2 day course reflecting the importance of this area in current basic science and clinical research.

Organs other than the kidneys were given an occasional airing with topics covering some aspects of bone marrow, lung and liver

transplantation. At the end of the 2 days attendees knew that they had been at a course but buoyed by a headful of new knowledge they were well placed to attack the meeting proper. An excellent dinner was arranged by Aviva and was well attended by attendees and speakers alike with numbers boosted by international speakers who contributed to the PGC as strongly as they did later at the annual scientific meeting. The meeting ran as smoothly as could possibly have been hoped, largely due to all speakers giving generously of their time, enthusiasm and wisdom."

Special Symposium

TSANZ is sponsoring a symposium titled "B cells and antibodies in transplantation" at the Australian Health and Medical Research Congress (AHMRC), 14-19 November 2010, New Melbourne Convention Centre (www.asmr.org.au/Conferences.html)

The keynote speaker will be Prof Lori West (University of Alberta, Canada), who is famous for describing ABO tolerance in neonatal heart transplantation. The symposium will be held on the morning of Thursday 18 November, and we strongly encourage members to attend what should be an interesting and informative session.

Membership

Since the last newsletter, Council welcomed the following new members:

TSANZ

Mariea Bosco, Muhammad Choudhry, Sussan Davies, Ronald de Roo, Barbara Fazekas De St Groth, Ross Francis, Christopher Hope, Katie Hor, Patrick Lan, Christoph Langenberg, Yik Loh, Thida Maung Maung Myint, Michael Musk, Daniella Penko, Veena Roberts, Timothy Searcy, Sushee Sharma, Sven Tan, Adam Testro, Melanie Wyld, Fang Fang Yuan, Lawrence Yuen, Georgia Whitmore, Yeoung Cho, Rebecca Croke, Ahmed Kaithal-Shahir, Darren Roberts, Robert Shaw, Philip Sprott, Daisuke Toki, Zuopeng Wu, Kate Ireland

ATCA/TSANZ

Erin Brown, Lynne Calman, Sumon Chanda, Nicola Dykes, Hayley Furniss, Josephine Reoch, Allison Schischica, Anne Shipp, Marianne Smith, Amy Williams

RESIGNATIONS

Since the last newsletter, Council has accepted the following resignations:

Robert Atkins, Claudine Bonder, Gary Brooke, Melissa Craft, Dhammika Gunasekara, Yuqin Li, Austin Milton, Maureen Rogers, Peter Tran, Peng Wang, Richard Baer, Jeffrey Fletcher

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:

<http://www.tsanz.com.au/awardsandfellowships/index.asp>

Travel Grant Awards

**International Liver Transplantation Society Annual Congress, June 16-19th, 2010
Hong Kong, China**

Emilia Prakoso

This was my first ILTS meeting and I found the entire meeting was interesting. There was a relatively balanced medical and surgical topics, in addition these topics were relevant and essential. The followings are the meeting highlights from my perspective.

Liver transplantation (LTx) has progressed significantly since its commencement in 1960s and is currently being done worldwide with patient and graft outcomes are improving. Asian countries performed living donor LTx while western countries mostly performed cadaveric LTx in adults. Much efforts have been done to improve access to LTx as the demand for LTx is increasing worldwide especially with the limited availability of donor organs. There are now various splitting liver techniques to allow more recipients benefit from a single liver. In addition, the selection criteria for patients with hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) are expanding and may include biomarkers. Other method to expand the donor pool that was discussed included ABO-incompatible donors. Furthermore, living donor hepatectomy is going laparoscopic with the novel "hybrid" procedures. The emphasis however remains safety and good outcomes, for both donor and recipient.

Methods to improve patient outcomes, especially patients with viral hepatitis and HCC, were discussed. The issue of long term hepatitis B immunoglobulin (HBIg) in hepatitis B virus (HBV) - positive recipients was a hot topic. Studies showed anti-HBV alone is effective to prevent HBV recurrence, comparable to HBIg, but less costly and more practical. Avoidance of long term HBIg is probably the future especially with the availability of

new and potent anti-HBV. In recipients with hepatitis C, cyclosporine (CSA) may be the immunosuppression of choice with more studies now showing antiviral properties of CSA in vitro and those who received CSA had a better response to antiviral therapy post LTx. The choice of immunosuppression, especially sirolimus, again may have a role in altering the prognosis in patients with HCC post LTx by reducing the rate of recurrence.

Research was also put centre stage. A thorough but easy to understand review on liver tolerance was discussed by Professor Geoff McCaughan from Australia. Important research topics with potential clinical application such as stem cells, microRNA, reperfusion injury and cancer recurrence, were also discussed in different sessions. The rising star session was inspiring and the free paper sessions were stimulating. And lastly, I had the opportunity to show case my research at one of the free paper sessions and peer-reviewed by world class professionals.

XXIII International Congress of The Transplantation Society, August 15-19, 2010 Vancouver, Canada

Katherine Barraclough

I would like to thank TSANZ for the provision of a travel grant that allowed me the opportunity to attend the XXIII International Congress of the Transplantation Society held in Vancouver over the period August 15-19 this year.

I attended the Postgraduate Training Course on the weekend prior to the main scientific meeting. Given that my research involves investigation into risk factors for BK nephropathy with a focus on novel means of measuring immunosuppression burden, I found the sessions discussing therapeutic drug monitoring (Tuen can Gelder, The Netherlands), pharmacogenomics (Eric Thervet, France) and pharmacodynamics (Iain MacPhee, UK) particularly relevant and interesting. The pharmacogenetic lecture discussed influence of single nucleotide polymorphisms in the genes responsible for calcineurin inhibitor, mycophenolate and sirolimus distribution, metabolism and effects on the response of an individual to these drugs. There was also the discussion of the role of genetics in influencing the occurrence of acute rejection and recurrence of diseases such as FSGS and HUS. The pharmacodynamic lecture presented an overview of the various methodologies that exist for measuring immune cell function. However, the take-home message from the talk was that translation of pharmacodynamic approaches into clinical practice has proved challenging, and as yet there is insufficient data to suggest a place for

these methodologies in clinical practice. Hans Hirsch of Switzerland presented a nice overview of the polyoma viruses (JC, SV40, KI, WU and MCC in addition to BK). In relation to BK virus, he presented data from the DIRECT study pertaining to the incidence of BK viraemia according to calcineurin inhibitor administered, and also discussed interesting results from his own work relating to the cellular immune response to BK.

There were multiple highlights from the main scientific meeting, with the majority of plenary session and state of the art symposia being of extremely high standard. I found the sessions on induction immunosuppression, the role of non-HLA antibodies in transplantation, and on transplant genomics to be of particular interest. There was a morning symposium dedicated solely to BK virus, again specifically relevant to my area of research. From this, the discussions of the role of combination sirolimus/leflunomide therapy in treating BK viraemia, the role of ureteric stents in increasing risk for BK replication, and the influence of pre-transplant BK virus infection on post-transplant BK viraemia were highlights.

On the closing day of the conference I presented some of results of work carried out as part of my PhD studies. Specifically, I presented data on limited sampling strategies for estimation of tacrolimus, mycophenolate mofetil and prednisolone exposure in adult kidney transplant recipients in the form of two mini-oral and two poster presentations.

Beyond the science, I thoroughly enjoyed the chance to spend some time in Vancouver, an easy, incredibly friendly and beautiful city. We (my husband, baby boy and I) made sure that we had our fill of sushi (reported to be the best outside of Japan, and very cheap!), ate 'Japdogs' by the harbour, spent time on the beach, and made a trip to the mountains.

Again, I would like to express my thanks to the society for allowing me the opportunity to attend this conference, present my research and simultaneously experience a great city.

Carolyn Clark

Arriving in Vancouver in a heatwave, you could easily be convinced it is the best city in the world. The juxtaposition of the skyscrapers against the mountains and the sea is somehow magical. The convention centre is a short walk from Stanley Park, seaplanes, shops and seaside bars. Attending the postgraduate course took iron will, and fortunately the meeting rooms didn't come with outside windows. However, the Transplantation Society International Congress is a perfect meeting for a clinician / PhD student, and the biggest disappointment lies in wanting to go to too many sessions at the same time. The "Primer in Transplant Immunology" of the postgraduate course was really an opportunity to hear Fadi

Lakkis and Ron Gill espouse their theories of immunology based on evidence gathered over many years – theories which produce the kind of “Aha!” moments that make you glad to be inside despite the perfect weather. The meeting structure – a combination of plenaries, symposia and short oral presentations – ensures that there is always something different to do and learn. The highlight plenary for me was watching Doris Taylor present her incredible work on decellularised organs, some of which is recently published in *Nature Medicine*, where her lab has recellularised the heart and the liver with stem cells from the rat, pig and human, and bioengineered human organs suddenly don't seem so far away. I could not regret getting up to attend the early morning symposium where, among others, Kathryn Wood gave a beautiful talk on non HLA antibodies in acute rejection. The talk by Toronto Cardiologist Heather Ross at the Women in Transplantation Networking Meeting was an absolute meeting highlight, as she described her fundraising trip (with cardiac transplant recipient) to the North Pole, a challenging and life threatening experience that was astounding to hear about. The sheer number of sessions on my PhD-relevant topics such as ischaemia reperfusion injury, delayed graft function, cellular therapy and innate immunity meant that I didn't have as much time as I would have liked to attend clinical transplantation updates. However, I'm sure I can catch up on the other side of transplantation at the Berlin meeting in 2012! Left on my own for two days in Vancouver after the meeting finished, I had time to wander through the markets, walk over to Kitsilano beach, catch the ferries back along False Creek and take the Gondola up a mountain, to eat lunch at the top of The Grind looking down over the stunning city. At the end of the day, the only factor holding me back from moving there is that the locals keep talking about all the rain they usually get – although I'm wondering if this is just misinformation to stop the hordes from immigrating. I'm certainly grateful to the TSANZ for sponsoring me to this fantastic meeting in this beautiful city, and have returned home re-energised for what (I hope) will be the final year of my PhD

Philip Clayton

I would like to thank TSANZ for their generous support for me to attend the XXIII International Congress of The Transplantation Society in Vancouver, August 2010. It was a very valuable experience in a beautiful setting.

There were many themes in the meeting. Donor-specific antibodies continue to generate much interest and debate, with detection, quantification, role in deciding immunosuppressive strategy and treatment all the focus of several presentations. There were several interesting presentations on the use of newer agents such as bortezomib and

eculizumab to reduce DSA titres and treat antibody-mediated rejection.

As described in a fascinating presentation from Texas, a third of the unit's living kidney donor transplants are the result of paired kidney exchanges. Definitely food for thought and a reminder that developing better treatments for DSAs and antibody-mediated rejection is not the only way to tackle the problem of the highly sensitised recipient.

There were innumerable presentations on the recent BENEFIT and BENEFIT-EXT trials, and it is clear that we are on the verge of a new era in transplantation with effective agents that produce less nephrotoxicity than calcineurin inhibitors. This is certainly an exciting time to be in the field of clinical transplantation!

Some interesting epidemiologic research was presented including an elegant registry analysis from the UK analysing the outcomes of kidney transplants from non heart beating donors, and another from UNOS studying the effects of both donor and recipient age on the risk of acute rejection.

I was also fortunate to be able to present some of my own epidemiologic research, which was my first presentation at an international meeting and therefore an invaluable experience. Naturally the meeting also provided the opportunity to meet many people from around the world and to put faces to some of the famous names within the field.

Although I generally attended clinical science sessions, I also saw several very interesting basic science presentations. It is exciting to see so many different people from around the world working in different areas to advance the field, and indeed there was very noticeable progress in the field compared with my first TTS attendance in Sydney 2008.

Of course there was more to the meeting than scientific presentations. I took the opportunity to see some of the lovely (almost as nice as Sydney) Vancouver, to sample some of its restaurants and to socialise with friends old and new.

Overall the meeting was a wonderful experience and once again I am very grateful to TSANZ for supporting my attendance.

Amy Hughes

I would like to thank TSANZ for the travel grant which enabled me to attend the XXIII International Congress of the Transplantation Society. The meeting was held August 15 – 19 2010 at the Vancouver Convention Centre, Canada. At this congress I was able to present two ePosters on my

most recent PhD research which focuses on genetic modification of pancreatic islets to promote islet survival and viability post-transplantation. The ePoster booths allowed me to easily locate similar titled abstracts through the use of keywords, I was able to see presentations from other authors that are working on related projects geared towards a common goal of enhancing islet survival post-transplantation.

In addition to this, I was impressed with the large numbers of mini-oral and oral presentations directly related to islet transplantation. I noticed many of these sessions focused on the early protection of islets and how this is critical for successful islet transplantation. The use of anti-oxidants such as lactiva and Rock-inhibitor to improve function of isolated human islets in pre-transplant culture gave an insight into novel approaches for reducing peri-transplant injury and improving graft outcomes. Furthermore, I was interested to learn more about macroporous bioengineered scaffolds for islet transplantation, and the potential for their use in supporting islet engraftment and function. It will be particularly interesting to apply these scaffolds for allowing localized immunosuppression to the islet graft and thus reducing adverse side effects of systemic immunosuppression.

In conclusion, I would like to thank TSANZ once again for providing me with this grant and the opportunity to attend such a cutting edge, innovative and informative congress in amazing Vancouver.

Svjetlana Kireta

My sincere thanks to TSANZ for awarding me a travel grant that enabled me to attend the XXIII International Congress of The Transplantation Society in Vancouver, Canada, August 15-19, 2010.

The Congress was held in the newly built Convention Centre designed to be an environmentally friendly building with 6 acres green "living roof" covered with grass and indigenous plants acting as an insulator.

The extensive program covered both clinical and scientific advances in transplantation and was divided into several concurrent sessions within each group, starting with a 7am Sunrise Symposia followed by Plenary sessions and afternoon State of the Art Symposia. The remainder of the each day was allocated for the numerous concurrent oral and poster presentations.

My work was accepted as an electronic poster (a total of 1600 ePosters were displayed) and titled: "Upregulation of mesangial matrix specific gene megsin and pAKT activation by anti-HLA antibodies in human mesangial cells: implication for transplant

glomerulopathy". This poster was selected as one of the top rated ePosters in the category and given the opportunity to be orally presented and discussed with delegates.

At a number of sessions a very relevant topic of antibody mediated rejection and the role and importance of anti-HLA antibodies for the graft outcome was presented. In particular, the Sunrise symposium "Antibody Mediated rejection – An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure" consisted of four presentations and gave an overview of many important aspects determining antibody mediated immunity. William M. Baldwin, Cleveland, USA, discussed how alloantibodies damage an allograft and how antibody-mediated immunity may influence the development of cellular rejection. Howard M. Gebel, Atlanta, USA discussed new technologies developed for assessing the antibody-mediated immune response including beads and luminex technologies. Presentations by Denis Glotz, Paris, France and Adam W. Bingaman, San Antonio, USA addressed protocols and options for highly sensitized patients with incompatible donors describing novel possibilities in improving live organ donation applying kidney-paired donation program.

I was particularly excited to hear the presentation of Elaine F. Reed, University of California, USA, "Determinants of biological function of anti-donor antibodies" as our studies of the effect of anti-HLA antibodies on mesangial cells are closely related to their work on endothelial cells. Elaine presented some new unpublished research on the antibody mediated intracellular signaling mechanisms and highlighted some important issues we need to consider in designing our future experiments.

Excellent plenary sessions were presented throughout the conference. Most interesting to me were T cell guru Philippa Marrack's (MD, USA) exceptional talk "Why is the alloresponse so strong" which gave us more insight into complex $\alpha\beta$ T cell receptor-MHC interaction and mechanisms of positive and negative selection of T cells in the thymus. Doris Taylor's (MN, USA) breaking talk on "Advances in Regenerative Biology and Organ Biogenesis" demonstrated how they build bioartificial organs (heart, liver, kidney, bladder, tongue, whole body – mouse) by a perfusing process of removing the cell content leaving just the outside structure, then re-introducing the cells into the organ and re-establishing the function of the organ. Fascinating!

Ravi Krishnan

I would like to thank TSANZ for supporting my travel to attend the 23rd International Congress of The Transplant Society in Vancouver.

The scientific program as expected was of a high standard and addressed new developments in the field of regenerative medicine, immunobiology, immunosuppression and molecular diagnosis of allograft tolerance and rejection.

As a basic scientist I had focused predominantly on the immunobiology section of the scientific program. Particularly, my current research interests are in the application of mesenchymal stem cells in the treatment of allograft transplantation in experimental models and I was impressed that there were increased number of papers that addressed this aspect of my research interests in a broad cross-section of presentations in this meeting. Since mesenchymal stem cells can be derived from different tissue sources with inherent immunomodulatory properties these cells serve as cell therapy agents with a potential to induce allograft tolerance. Our paper that was presented by my PhD student Tim Searcy "Synergistic Immunomodulation by Immunosuppressive agents and Human Mesenchymal Stem Cells on T-cell proliferation and Dendritic cell maturation" addressed the implications of cell therapy under the cover of immunosuppression and I was delighted that it received a Mentee/Mentor award. In addition, there were other papers presented by Carla Baan and Meindert Crop from Netherlands who addressed the immunomodulatory interactions between mesenchymal stem cells and regulatory T cells after kidney Transplantation. Of important relevance to translational research is the immunogenicity of allogeneic mesenchymal stem cells and these papers highlighted that these cells are susceptible to CD8+ T cell and NK mediated lysis. Surprisingly, even autologous mesenchymal stem cells are susceptible to *in vivo* lysis albeit mediated specifically by NK cells. The presentation by Hans-Dieter Volk at the State-of-art symposia on "Innovations in Regenerative Medicine" reported clinical data on the treatment of critical limb ischemia by intra-muscular injections of allogeneic placental-derived mesenchymal stem cells. The data showed significant improvement in the vasculature and blood flow in limbs treated with these cells. Furthermore, other investigators reported that mesenchymal stem cells from cord blood and fetal tissues had potential clinical application. Clara Tan-Tam, USA reported on the role of Mesenchymal stem cells in stabilizing pancreatic Islet Transplantation, which has important implications for clinical transplant outcomes.

We were also treated by excellent presentations by the "giants" in the field of T-regulatory cell biology in The State-of-the Art Symposia on "Biology and Therapeutic Potential of Regulatory cells" by Megan Levings and Rudensky. Tom Tedder provided key information on Regulatory B cells in this session. The plenary symposia on "Advances

in Regenerative biology and organ biogenesis" by Doris Taylor was groundbreaking and indeed the highlight of the meeting which demonstrated the construction of beating hearts following implantation of tissue-specific stem cells into tissue scaffolds of rodent hearts. The potential to grow 'tailor-made' whole organs for large animal and human transplantation is a feasible reality and may meet the shortage of solid organs for clinical transplantation.

Claire Lin

When I found out my application for the TSANZ travel scholarship was granted, I wondered how exciting this visit, to one of the most "liveable cities" in the world, could be, when I was already living in one, Melbourne. But after staying in Vancouver for a week, I soon understood why this city has the same reputation as Melbourne and it was certainly worth all the effort and time I had spent applying for two different visas and being put through the stringent US security process for transiting. Downtown Vancouver, where the XXIII International Congress of The Transplantation Society was held, has a great scenic location and is located next to one of the biggest urban parks in North America, Stanley Park. On one of the beautiful summer days that we enjoyed, the North Vancouver area, with snow-capped mountains over the Strait of Georgia can sometimes be seen from the park and even from the convention centre.

But that's not the only reason that made this trip memorable. The conference was wonderful. Hearing seminars and speeches from those prominent scientists/clinicians in their field has always excited me. Especially listening to the biologist, 2002 Nobel Prize winner Sydney Brenner at the age of 83, something truly inspiring to me. It gave me the latest updates in the transplantation area (though it might seem like it has not progressed much since the last conference) and also prompted me to think about and understand the big picture of my interested area; tolerance in transplantation, which is something I don't normally tend to do. The opportunity to ask the speakers questions after the presentations, and being able to hear details of experiments directly from that person, was no doubt a highlight for me. Being a third-year PhD student, learning about the progress in other areas, like "Stem cells and regeneration", corneal transplant, "current facial transplantation outcomes", etc., not only has opened up my eyes but has also helped me explore other areas of interest. As many people would agree, this is particularly precious and helpful to students who would like to consider research as their future career and I feel fortunate to have had this opportunity.

Of course I think there were a lot of other unforgettable moments. To be able to hear stories

of transplantation recipient and donor families was immensely touching and inspirational and it reminded me why there were so many scientists/clinicians attending this meeting, for the same ultimate goal we all share, that is, to help someone in need and make their life better. Other memorable moments included, hearing Dr. Heather Ross's great adventure with heart transplant recipient Dale Shippam to the North Pole to raise money for transplantation. It was these events that reminded me there is a lot more we still need to do in transplantation. That is, aside from working in the laboratory doing the research we enjoy so much, we also have a broader social responsibility to increase the public awareness of transplantation. It was the forum of "Women In Transplantation" and the extraordinary experiences of women doctors/researchers like Dr. Judy Lieberman, that revealed to me the difficulties women faced in their career/research 40-years ago; how much society has progressed in pursuing equality and how fortunate I am to have so many more opportunities than the women of that time. It was the dining experiences with clinicians & professors from Australia, the time spent listening to their stories, their enthusiastic discussions on those great presentations in the conference, reminded me of what drove them here and kept them working so hard in their fields; the good faith and the enthusiasm that a young researcher should also have in their mind.

This was more than just the first "overseas" international conference to me. Being able to attend such a wonderful conference like this one will always be one of the highlights in my PhD. I would sincerely like to thank TSANZ for giving me the fantastic opportunity to attend and participate at this meeting, to learn and also to be inspired.

David Lu

I left for Vancouver and reached there on 14/08/10. After the registration, the opening ceremony and welcome reception were held in the Vancouver convention centre from 18:00 to 20:30 on 15/08. The conference was held on the convention centre for the next four days. The delegates were from around the world.

The plenary sessions and the oral presentations were attractive. Firstly, Prof. Doris A. Taylor from the USA gave a talk regarding the advances in regenerative and organ biogenesis. Secondly, Dr. H.R. Scheolor talked about generation, programming and application of induced pluripotent stem cells. In addition, Prof. S Keshavjee from Canada talked about lung repair, regeneration and transplantation. The above studies gave the hope that one day autologous stem-cell-derived whole or partial donor organs might be generated, which represents the future direction of organ transplantation.

The concurrent sessions were also amazing. I was really interested in many reports, such as the Induction of Donor Specific Tolerance in Recipients of HLA Disparate Living Donor Kidney Allografts by Donor Stem Cell Infusion given by S.T. Ildstad's group from the USA.

Besides, I also attended the sessions of ischemia reperfusion injury, immuno-tolerance, advances in surgery and xenotransplantation etc.

The gala dinner was a great event, which included activities in different venues. During the party, all the delegates submerged themselves in the Canadian cultures and enjoined the beautiful harbour view with tasty foods and good wines, in particular conversations amongst ourselves. This has been a successful congress. I have enriched my scientific knowledge on the transplantation world and got to know many new friends in my field. I have thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Vancouver. I would like to say thanks for the sponsorship of the Transplantation Society of Australia and New Zealand.

Jin Ma

I would like to thank the TSANZ for supporting my travel to Vancouver for XXIII international Congress of The Transplantation Society 2010. This was a great opportunity for me to learn more about "cutting edge" research in transplantation.

The meeting program was extensive, and covered a broad range of topics in transplantation, both scientific and clinical aspects. In the basic science session, the roles of Th17, Treg and TIM pathway in transplant rejection and tolerance, diagnostic and therapeutic opportunities of microRNAs in transplantation, and new therapeutics in transplantation were of particular interest for my current research.

My project involves targeting innate immune receptors in kidney ischemia reperfusion injury and allograft rejection, particularly TLRs. This conference gave me the opportunity to present my research entitled "High-mobility group box1 (HMGB1) contributes to kidney ischemia reperfusion injury through TLR4 signaling" in the session of ischemia reperfusion injury, which was one of several sessions looking at the role of innate immunity in transplantation. I was pleased to be able to meet and discuss with so many experts in the field related to my current research.

Attendance and presentation of my work at this meeting has hugely improved my knowledge of transplant immunology. Once again, I would like to thank the TSANZ for their support.

Natasha Rogers

I would like to thank the Transplantation Society of Australia and New Zealand for supporting my attendance at the XXIIIrd International Congress of the Transplantation Society. This was held in the beautiful city of Vancouver which has had a significant face-lift as a result of hosting the Winter Olympics. This conference had the largest attendance of any congress so far (nearly 5000 registrants) with a substantial antipodean presence.

The conference was extremely well organised, although the only problem was having to decide which sessions to attend. The plenary symposia were outstanding, particularly Philippa Marrack who outlined amino acid similarities in T-cell receptor complexes between different species to explain stringency of the alloimmune response, in addition to David Sachs and Christian Larsen who outlined progress in the field of transplant tolerance in humans and non-human primate models respectively. The state-of-art symposium on the biology of regulatory cells was also an intellectual treat: Megan Levings discussed new work on the lipid phosphatase SHIP and the protein phosphatase PHLPP on regulation of Treg development, and Tom Tedder expanded on CD1a+CD5+ IL-10 producing regulatory B-cells now known to be associated with TIM-1 expression.

My oral presentation "Liposomal curcumin ameliorates renal ischaemia-reperfusion injury via NFkappaB inhibition and reduced oxidative stress" included novel mechanisms for the action of curcumin in protecting renal tubular epithelial cells from oxidative stress, including downregulation of TXNIP expression. It was interesting to be preceded by a group from France presenting work on the addition of curcumin to organ preservation solutions resulting in improvements in graft outcome in a porcine model. I also presented a poster entitled "Curcumin induces clinically applicable maturation-arrested dendritic cells and expands regulatory T cells in vitro and in vivo" in a session dedicated to experimental tolerance. It was interesting to see the breadth of techniques, immunomodulatory agents and cell phenotypes utilised *ex vivo* to generate immune hyporesponsiveness.

Clinically, the role of microRNA and microarray profiling are becoming increasingly important in terms of post-transplant patient monitoring, although have yet to be reliably translated to the patient setting.

This travel grant also provided me with an opportunity to travel to Pittsburgh and visit the Thomas E. Starzl Transplantation Institute. This branch of the University of Pittsburgh remains at the forefront of organ transplantation research. I

was lucky enough to meet Fadi Lakkis, David Rothstein, Angus Thomson, David Cooper and Adrian Morelli, in addition to postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers, and was given the opportunity to present aspect of my PhD at a morning seminar.

Darling Rojas

First of all I would like to give my sincere thank you to TSANZ for giving me the opportunity to attend the XXIII International Congress of the Transplantation Society in Vancouver, which proved to be a very successful international conference from which I gained valuable knowledge. At this conference I was given the opportunity to present my work on Fast-DC in a mini oral session. This part of my work aims to prevent transplant rejection through the generation of specialised therapeutic immune cells 'tolerogenic dendritic cells'. I also had an e-poster, which was on the genetic modification of human islets with PD-1 Ligand-2 for protection against immune attack to prolong transplanted islet survival. By having the opportunity to present my work at this international forum I was able to discuss my work with other experts in the field to help further my research. Overall I received positive feedback and I was able to expand my knowledge. In particular at the conference Dr. Chong highlighted the important role of B cells in allograft rejection and Dr. Tedder gave a great review on the current and emerging field of B regulatory cells. I was also privileged to attend the post graduate weekend. One of the main highlights for me was the presentation given by Dr. Manikkam Suthanthiran, in which he gave a valuable lecture on how to get your paper published. The funds also provided me the opportunity to visit the Thomas E. Starzl Transplantation Institute at the University of Pittsburgh, where I was able to network and see the opportunity for potential post-doctoral positions.

Shaundee Sen

I wish to thank the council and members of the TSANZ for a travel grant to attend the 23rd International Congress of the Transplantation Society in Vancouver. With the funds, I was able to attend the Post-Graduate course from August 14-15, and the conference proper from the 15th till the 19th.

A large contingent from the Royal Adelaide and Queen Elizabeth Hospitals in South Australia made the trip, and were well represented in oral, mini-oral and poster presentations. I was able to present our work on cardiovascular outcomes in KRT groups in a mini-oral session on epidemiology and clinical outcomes.

There were a number of excellent plenary sessions as well as state of the art symposia. There was certainly an emphasis on high-risk transplantation

and strategies for induction therapy with multiple agents, non-invasive surveillance, and immune tolerance. As with all large conferences, it was interesting to listen to speakers with quite differing opinions, underpinning how much more needs to be understood in this difficult area.

From the basic science perspective, the highlight was certainly the amazing work of Doris Taylor in the production of tissue scaffolds from animal organs, with the future aim to repopulate the scaffolds with human cells for transplantation.

There unfortunately was not a great emphasis on cardiovascular disease post transplantation, but this was made up for by the multiple other topics and concurrent sessions.

The social component of the conference was augmented by unseasonably warm weather in the city, which made Vancouver even more visitor-friendly than it already is. With 30°C+ temperatures most days and sunset after 9pm, we were able to enjoy much of the outdoor activities of the city. This included exploring the world's largest city park (Stanley Park) and its coastline by foot and bike, and taking a day prior to the conference starting to tackle the "Grouse Grind" with colleagues from the lab.

I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to travel to Vancouver for the TTS, from both a professional and personal perspective, and once again thank the TSANZ for their financial support.

Allison Tong

I am very grateful to the Transplantation Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) who awarded me with a generous travel grant to attend the XXIII International Congress of The Transplantation Society in Vancouver 15th – 19th August 2010. Presenters from around the world gave interesting and informative talks on a diverse range of topics including organ donation and allocation, clinical and ethical aspects of living donation, strategies to improve deceased organ donation, quality of life, altruistic donation, societal issues and public policy, and patient care. The presentations generated fascinating discussion and debate, and it was exciting to hear researchers willing to explore, challenge and face some confronting and complex issues in transplantation. I was able to take a wealth of relevant information, ideas and issues to incorporate in my current and future research. Also, it was inspiring to listen to groundbreaking work being done by experts in the field of transplantation.

Three of my abstracts were accepted at the Congress and I had the opportunity to discuss my research projects, and to receive positive and constructive feedback from other Congress

delegates. The Congress also gave me an opportunity to meet with national and international collaborators to discuss and develop research projects.

A highlight was cruising on Sunset Bay, a beautiful triple deck yacht, enjoying the sunset and views of the Vancouver shoreline with colleagues and friends - a Gala Evening that will be remembered. Again, I would like to thank the TSANZ for the opportunity to attend the Congress of the Transplantation Society. It was an educational, inspirational and memorable experience!

Chuanmin Wang

I am delighted and very much appreciate the Council of the TSANZ providing me with a travel grant, which enabled me to attend the XXIII International Congress of the Transplantation Society being held from 15th to 19th August 2010 in Vancouver Canada.

The congress was well organized with up to 5000 experts in basic and clinical sciences from all regions of the world attending. In attending this conference, I presented the abstract "T cell subset transcription factors in acceptance of mouse kidney transplants compared to rejection of hearts" from our group at the conference.

In addition to our focus on research in this meeting, there were some interesting research directions that attracted me, in particular, donor specific transfusion (DST)-induced immunisation which induced activation of alloreactive cells. This was followed by clonal deletion of the alloreactive cells with the drug Bortezomib, which kills proliferating and activated cells. In the living-related kidney transplant patients this resulted in drug free or "drugs added when needed" (DAWN) clinical renal transplantation with 3 of 30 patients accepting their kidney without requirement for immunosuppression and 10 maintained with only low-dose corticosteroids and no other drugs. This work was presented by Dr Terasaki at the Sunrise Symposium on clinical transplant tolerance which also included very interesting presentations on mixed hematopoietic chimerism-induced tolerance by Drs Strober and Sachs.

Some other very interesting talks were on the generation of artificial organs using self stem cells. This involved the reprogramming of somatic cells to germline stem cells presented by Dr Scheoler; stem cell or cell treatment in organ engineering via perfusion recellularization of a decellularized organ presented by Dr Taylor; and organ repair presented by Dr Keshavjee. These studies describe replacement, repair and regeneration by organ engineering to expand and optimize donor organs for transplantation.

In a word, I would like to thank the TSANZ for the travel grant, which made me attending the conference possible. The conference offered me a great deal of up-to-date information in my research areas, and opens some new directions for my future study.

Shouan Yi

I would like to take this opportunity to thank for the Travel Award from the TSANZ Council to support me to attend the above meeting to give an oral presentation on our human regulatory T cell study. This was one of the best TTS conferences with more than 4000 delegates and a large number of excellent presentations. Presentations on regulatory T cells (Tregs) were still one of highlights at this conference. There were eleven sessions, including the state of the art symposia, oral and mini-oral presentation containing the topics of Tregs. Some of these presentations really interested me and will be helpful in our Treg study.

There was an interesting humanised mouse work done by Megan Levings' group from UBC, Canada, which aimed to test suppressive capacity of Foxp3-transduced T cells in human islet allograft recipient NOD-SCID mice. They have developed an effective expansion protocol for ex vivo CD4+CD25+CD45RA+ Tregs with 90% Foxp3+. They have also successfully generated human Tregs by transducing conventional T cells with lentivirus encoding the transcription factor Foxp3. As Foxp3-transduced T cells are a homogeneous population of cells that possess phenotype and in vitro function of ex vivo Tregs, and can be generated in sufficient numbers they presumed these cells could be used as a cellular therapy for transplant patients. Their results showed that the engraftment of human PBMC, Foxp3-transduced T cells and expanded Tregs was achieved in NOD-SCID mice two weeks after IP injection of human cells. When transferred with up to 1×10^8 human PBMC by IP injection NOD-SCID recipients rejected human islet allografts four to five weeks after human cell transfer. Their on-going experiments to determine the optimal ratio of expanded ex vivo Tregs and/or Foxp3-transduced T cells:PBMC necessary to prevent allograft rejection, thereby evaluating the relative efficacy of Foxp3-transduced T cells are being performed. Based on our experience I would expect that their study would eventually provide evidence that human Tregs can prevent rejection of human islets in their humanised mouse model. At this conference I presented our Treg study using a similar humanised mouse model but in a islet xenotransplantation setting, in which a high engraftment of both human PBMC and in vitro expanded natural Tregs was achieved in NOD-SCID IL2r^{-/-} mice that are superior to NOD-SCID mice for human cell engraftment due to being deficient in T, B and NK cells and IL2 receptor -

chain. 1×10^7 human PBMC were sufficient to cause porcine islet xenograft rejection in NOD-SCID IL2r^{-/-} recipients within four weeks after human cell transfer by IV injection, and this rejection was significantly suppressed in the presence of 2×10^6 in vitro expanded human CD4+CD25+Foxp3+CD127lo Tregs. The human Treg provided islet xenograft protection in humanised mice was associated with the presence of Foxp3+ human CD4+ T cells coexpressing IL-10 in the graft, blood and spleen of recipient mice. My presentation won a good feedback from the audience that will encourage us to continue our study. Another excellent study on human Tregs was presented by Fadi Issa from Kathryn Wood's lab at University of Oxford, UK. In their study the potential of ex vivo expanded human Tregs to extend survival of human skin allograft was investigated using humanised Balb/c Rag2^{-/-}cgamma^{-/-} mice, which lack T, B and NK cells. IP Injection of human skin graft recipient Balb/c Rag2^{-/-}cgamma^{-/-} mice with 5×10^6 human PBMC led to rejection of human skin allografts 32 days after human cell transfer. Co-transfer of recipient mice with human PBMC and Tregs at a ratio of 1:1 (5×10^6 : 5×10^6) induced long-term survival of skin grafts (>100 days after human cell reconstitution), indicating the ability of ex vivo expanded CD4+CD25+CD127lo human Tregs to prevent allograft rejection in a humanised mouse model. Taken together, our own presentation and all other Treg studies presented at this meeting demonstrated the powerful suppressive activity of Tregs in both allo- and xeno-genetic immune responses, and the potential of Treg-based therapy for the induction of tolerance in both allo- and xeno-transplantation.

Overall, this was a very successful and impressive conference. I would like to appreciate again the support from the TSANZ Council for me to learn valuable experience and obtain useful information from international colleagues, which I believe will help us achieve more promising results from our Treg study.

Geoff Zhang

I would like to express my gratitude to the Society for providing generous support which allowed me to attend the World Transplantation Congress in Vancouver 2010. The meeting provided me with the opportunities to present our data on transplantation outcomes of cystinosis patients and also to attend the presentations by numerous world experts in the field of transplantation research.

There were many presentations by leading groups in the field of laboratory research. Among these, a research presentation on humanised mouse model is of particular interest to me. Dr Wood's group from Oxford has shown that in vitro expanded human Tregs prolonged skin graft survival in a

humanised mouse model. This work has direct relevance to my planned work of using an in vivo T reg induction strategy to combat allograft rejection in a humanised mouse model. Another research focus of mine is on immunological mechanism on donor specific transfusion induced skin graft tolerance. The sections on immune regulation and tolerance were both informative and stimulating in this regard. Of particular interest were new insights on induced T regs or antigen specific T regs. The role of rapamycin, retinoic acid in Treg induction has been highlighted by the work presented by Dr Roseblatt from Oxford and Dr Zheng's group from Pittsburgh. The role of humoral response in allograft rejection and tolerance attracts an increased interest in recent years. Dr Chong from Chicago summarised her years work in this area. Dr Tedder's presentation in State of the Art Symposia outlined the properties of regulatory B cells, a newly defined IL10 secreting cell within the CD1d hi and CD5+ B cell subset with regulatory capacity. The updated information in these areas certainly broadened my understanding of transplantation immunology in which both cellular and humoral responses are involved.

Overall I benefited greatly from attending the World Transplantation Congress in Vancouver 2010 and again I would like to thank the society for making my attendance possible.

American Transplant Congress, 1-5 May, 2010 San Diego, USA

Michael Collins

With the generous support of a TSANZ Travel Grant award, I was able to attend the American Transplant Congress in San Diego, USA in May 2010. This was the first time I had attended an international transplant scientific meeting outside Australia and it proved to be a very useful educational experience.

I presented a poster at the meeting entitled "Screening for Colorectal Cancer in Kidney Transplant Recipients: a Prospective Cross-Sectional Study of Faecal Immunochemical Testing versus Colonoscopy. This work generated some interest and I had a number of useful discussions with investigators in the USA interested in post-transplant malignancy. Notably, there has been little interest in post-transplant malignancy outside PTL, which provides an opportunity for this type of work to raise its profile internationally. I also attended an early morning workshop on this topic and got useful ideas and feedback regarding the potential interaction of viral infection, microRNA and malignancy in transplant recipients.

During the congress itself, there were a number of sessions that were of considerable interest, in particular in the areas of immunosuppression and treatment of antibody mediated rejection. The results of the BENEFIT and BENEFIT-Extend studies investigating Belatacept vs Cyclosporin were presented, showing improved GFR in the Belatacept groups, despite some concerns regarding acute rejection and excess PTL in EBV negative recipients. These agents may well come into clinical practice at some stage in the future. There was also discussion of the two novel agents CP-690,550 and AEB that have been trialled in standard kidney transplant recipients, with some promising results. In the area of antibody mediated rejection and HLA sensitization, there is considerable interest in the use of the proteasome inhibitor Bortezomib, and more recently the terminal complement inhibitor Ecalzumab. Both agents show promise in the prevention and treatment of AMR, but are yet to be evaluated formally in randomised studies.

Other congress highlights for me included presentations on novel treatments in non-human primate models of tolerance, including islet transplantation and vascularised composite tissue allografts. One particular paper from Emory looking at combination treatment with anti-CD28 and anti-LFA-1 to target co-stimulation blockade resistant rejection induced by memory cells prevented islet allograft rejection was a highlight. One other highlight I would like to mention was a presentation on the North American experience of transplant recipients who developed H1N1 influenza, which provided some interesting insights into the different problems experienced in the immunosuppressed population.

Overall, the meeting was an outstanding experience; of course with the number of interesting sessions and wide variety of choice it is impossible to either attend everything that would be of value, or report on it adequately afterwards. However, I would like to take this opportunity to thank TSANZ for the opportunity to attend the conference, and I look forward to having the opportunity to go to ATC again at some stage in the future.

Calendar of Events

TSANZ Annual Scientific Meeting

Manning Clark Centre
ANU, Canberra
29th June, 2011 – 1st July, 2011
Website: www.tsanz.com.au

TSANZ Post Graduate Training Course

Manning Clark Centre
ANU, Canberra
27th – 28th June, 2011
Website: www.tsanz.com.au

Tissue Engineering & Regenerative Medicine International 2010 Asia Pacific Meeting (TERMIS AP 2010)

September 15, 2010 - September 17, 2010
Sheraton on the Park, Sydney, Australia
TERMIS AP 2010 Secretariat
Ms Rebecca Southcott, C/- Conference Action Pty
Ltd, PO Box 576, Crows Nest NSW 1585
Phone: +61 2 9431 8699
Fax: +61 2 9431 8677
Email: termis2010@conferenceaction.com.au

23rd Scientific Meeting of the International Society of Hypertension 2010 (ISH 2010)

September 26, 2010 - September 30, 2010
Vancouver, Canada
Conference Organizer
Sea to Sky Meeting Management Inc.
Ph: +1 604-984-6455
Fax: +1 604-984-6434
Email: kazia@seatoskymeetings.com
Website: www.VancouverHypertension2010.com



australian transplant games 2010 CANBERRA

October 2, 2010 – October 10, 2010
Canberra, ACT

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TSANZ Council

A/Professor Frank Ierino

President

frank.ierino@austin.org

A/Professor Peter Macdonald

Vice President & President Elect
Standing Committees Chair

pmacdonald@stvincents.com.au

A/Professor Patrick (Toby) Coates

Honorary Secretary

Toby.Coates@health.sa.gov.au

Dr Scott Campbell

Treasurer

Nephrology SAC Rep

scottb_campbell@health.qld.gov.au

A/Professor Steve Alexander

Education & PGC Curriculum

stephena@chw.edu.au

Professor Peter Cowan

Communications

Education & PGC Curriculum

Liaison with Scientific Societies

Peter.cowan@svhm.org.au

Professor Geoffrey McCaughan

RACP Liaison

Membership Benefits, Awards & Grants

g.mccaughan@centenary.usyd.edu.au

Dr Michael Fink

Surgical Representative

mafink@unimelb.edu.au

Ms Francesca Rourke

ATCA Representative

fran_rourke@health.qld.gov.au

Ms Aviva Rosenfeld

TSANZ Executive Officer

tsanz@racp.edu.au

Ms Sommer Twycross

TSANZ Administrative Officer

Sommer.Twycross@racp.edu.au

TSANZ Standing Committees

Chairperson – Peter Macdonald

Cardiac:

Dr Paul Jansz

pjansz@stvincents.com.au

Cornea:

Dr John Males

jmales@eye.usyd.edu.au

Donor Surgeons & Coordinators:

Professor Richard Allen

transplant@med.usyd.edu.au

Ms Tina Coco

tina_coco@health.qld.gov.au

Liver:

Professor Stephen Munn

Smunn@adhb.govt.nz

Lung:

Professor Greg Snell

G.Snell@alfred.org.au

Paediatric:

Dr Steven McTaggart

steven_mctaggart@health.qld.gov.au

Pancreas & Islet:

A/Professor John Kanellis

john.kanellis@med.monash.edu.au

Renal:

Dr Scott Campbell

scottb_campbell@health.qld.gov.au

Tissues:

Ms Anne Cowie

acowie@cyllene.uwa.edu.au

Xenotransplantation:

Professor Peter Cowan

peter.cowan@svhm.org.au