Welcome to the August Issue of the MASCC Society News

Message from the Editor, Toni Clark

This month, we feature the resource touchONCOLOGY.com, home of two journals that regularly include articles on supportive care. We highlight recent publications of several MASCC members and congratulate MASCC member Maria Lapid on her recent Collaborative Travel Award to participate in a multidisciplinary project in palliative care at the Karolinska Institute. We bring you news of upcoming conferences on supportive cancer care and registration reminders. And we extend a warm welcome to 20 new members who joined us in May!

As always, you can find the current and older issues of the MASCC Society News online at www.mascc.org/newsletters or in the back pages of our journal, Supportive Care in Cancer.

A Collaboration to Improve Palliative Care:
Mayo Clinic and Karolinska Institute

MASCC member Maria Lapid, MD, and her colleague Elise Carey, MD, both of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, USA, have received a 2016 Mayo Clinic-Karolinska Institutet Collaborative Travel Award to participate in a multidisciplinary project in palliative care. The two will travel to Stockholm, Sweden, to work with Carol Tishelman, RN, PhD, and her research team at Karolinska Institutet on a project designed to improve both the quality and breadth of palliative care for severely ill patients and their families. According to the World Health Organization, patients with cancer make up more than a third of adults in need of palliative care.

Maria Lapid has clinical subspecialty training in geriatric psychiatry and hospice and palliative medicine, and is an Associate Medical Director of Mayo Clinic Hospice. Elise Carey is trained and board-certified in palliative medicine, internal medicine, and geriatric medicine. She established the Section of Palliative Medicine at Mayo Clinic Rochester and serves as Chair of the Education and Training Strategic Coordinating Committee for the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM). Carol Tishelman heads Innovative Care Research group at Karolinska Institutet’s Department of Learning, Informatics, Management and Ethics. The focus of Innovative Care is to conduct high-quality research through multidisciplinary collaborations with prominent researchers, both nationally and internationally, and to promote links between research, education, and practice. A focus of the research group is studying the experience of cancer and other life-threatening or chronic conditions along the sickness trajectory and through the end of life.

Supportive Care in Cancer Meeting in Belgrade, Serbia

The First Regional Education Meeting on Supportive Care in Cancer Patients for Eastern European and Balkan Regions will be held in Belgrade, Serbia, from December 2-3, 2016 in collaboration with MASCC and the European School of Oncology, and with support of the European Society of Gynecological Oncology. The aim of the meeting is to promote supportive care as an integral part of comprehensive cancer care, present supportive care guidelines, and facilitate their clinical interpretation and implementation in routine practice. The prevention and management of major adverse effects of cancer and its treatment will be discussed by leading international experts.

Dorothy Keeffe (Australia) will deliver the opening lecture titled “Supportive Care Makes Excellent Cancer Care Possible.” Snežana Sušnjar (Serbia) and Carla Ripamonti (Italy) will present “Integrated Models of Supportive Care Service.” Other speakers include MASCC members Petra Feyer, Matti Aapro, Fausto Roila, Jørn Herrstedt, Sam Ahmedzai, and Marija Ristic. Presentations will feature advances in the prevention and management of treatment adverse effects (nausea and vomiting, neuropathy, oral and gastrointestinal mucosal injury, dyspnea, cachexia), treatments (bone-modifying agents, immune checkpoint antibodies, non-opioid and opioid analgesics), inoperable bowel obstruction, pregnancy and fertility, supportive care for older patients, febrile neutropenia, and care of patients with thyroid cancer. Continued on page 2.
Supportive Care in Cancer Meeting in Belgrade, continued

There will also be special workshop (pre-registration required) on “Availability of, and Access to, Medications Necessary for the Implementation of Supportive Care Guidelines: the Situation in the Region.” The workshop will include a presentation and small-group country-specific discussions.

The Scientific Committee includes MASCC members Matti Aapro, Dorothy Keefe, and David Warr; The Organizational Committee includes MASCC members Åge Schultz and Marija Ristic. See the conference website for more information and registration: http://suppcare2016.fogg.rs

RESOURCE FEATURE:
Supporting Best Practice for Busy Healthcare Professionals

touchONCOLOGY.com is an independent information resource that supports oncology physicians, clinicians, and other healthcare professionals in developing their knowledge, effectiveness, and productivity. The website provides open-access peer-reviewed articles, videos, and podcasts (all free of charge) on diagnosis, treatment, and supportive care in many specific cancer contexts. The European Editorial Board includes MASCC members Matti Aapro, Agnes Glaus, Jørn Herrstedt, Bernardo Rapoport, Cynthia Rittenberg, Fausto Roila, and David Warr. Matti Aapro also serves on the US Editorial Board.

touchONCOLOGY.com publishes two journals: European Oncology & Haematology and Oncology & Hematology Review (US). Both are peer-reviewed and open-access and are published twice each year. The focus of both publications is on providing comprehensive review articles by leading authorities with the aim of translating the science from data-rich primary papers in order to provide practical advice and opinion relevant to day-to-day application in clinical settings. The journals also feature editorials, special reports, case reports, and original research articles.

The Spring 2016 issue of Oncology & Hematology Review features articles on cancer stem cells and inhibitors in gastrointestinal cancers, an overview of recent updates in the management of triple negative breast cancer, and many other topics. The Summer 2016 issue of European Oncology & Haematology features two articles on supportive care: “Supporting Older People with Cancer – Merging Geriatric and Oncological Knowledge” by Ingalill Rahm Hallberg (Eur Oncol Haematol 2016;12(1):23–4) and “Supportive Care of Patients Undergoing Immunotherapy” (see the summary below), an editorial by Ronwyn van Eeden and Bernardo I. Rapoport (Eur Oncol Haematol 2016;12(1):25–7).

Other recent supportive care titles include the following:


The Editor of touchONCOLOGY.com commissions articles with guidance from the Editorial Boards. Unsolicited articles are also welcome. Author instructions are available at the website (http://www.touchoncology.com/), and submissions can be made directly to the Editor. You are also welcome to contact the Editor to discuss potential submissions (editor@touchmedicalmedia.com).

Supportive Care Highlighted at NCCN Annual Congress

The (US) National Cancer Care Network® (NCCN®) will hold its 11th Annual Congress from September 30th to October 1st in New York City.* This year’s program includes 11 educational sessions on hematologic malignancies and 3 case-based panel discussions. Two of the educational sessions will focus on supportive care: “Getting Patients through Therapy: Supportive Care in Myeloma” and “Supportive Care in the Management of T-cell Lymphomas.” The NCCN is a not-for-profit alliance of 27 leading cancer centers devoted to patient care, research, and education. For more information and registration, see the NCCN website: www.nccn.org.

*The Annual Congress is a different event from the NCCN Annual Conference. The 22nd Annual Conference will be held in Orlando, Florida, USA, from March 23-25, 2017.
Supportive Care of Patients Undergoing Immunotherapy

MASCC members Ronwyn Irene van Eeden and Bernardo L. Rapoport* are the authors of an editorial on management of immune-related adverse events in the Summer 2016 issue of European Oncology & Haematology.

Immunotherapy was the most important advance in cancer treatment in 2015, according to the American Society of Clinical Oncology. The immunotherapy drug ipilimumab (Yervoy) was the first such treatment for people with advanced melanoma. The array of immune checkpoint inhibitors is rapidly expanding. Last year, the US Food and Drug Administration approved immune checkpoint inhibitors for the treatment of advanced-stage lung and kidney cancers. And clinical trials have supported the use of immunotherapies that block the programmed cell death protein 1 (PD-1)/programmed death ligand 1 (PD-L1) immune checkpoint for many people with bladder, liver, kidney, and head and neck cancers, as well as Hodgkin lymphoma.

With these advances have come new and unique side effects, commonly called immune-related adverse events (irAEs), which include numerous toxicities that differ from those associated with chemotherapy and targeted agents. Because they are often unpredictable and severe, irAEs require heightened awareness, early recognition, and aggressive management. In their editorial, van Eeden and Rapoport point out that, when recognized early and managed promptly and correctly, most irAEs are reversible. Therapies may be either supportive (for mild irAEs) or immunosuppressive (for moderate irAEs). The latter usually require stopping treatment and administering oral corticosteroids, then resuming treatment. Severe irAEs usually require treatment discontinuation, hospitalization, high-dose intravenous corticosteroids, and occasionally in very severe cases, immunosuppressive therapy such as infliximab.

The authors discuss specific approaches for several types of adverse events: dermatological, gastrointestinal, hepatic, endocrine, pulmonary, ophthalmological, neurological, and hematological. They also look at the severity of irAEs and its correlation with treatment response rates. They stress the importance of individualized patient management of these irAEs, including a workup of each separate side effect. And they note that, while most irAEs are self-limiting, they have been associated with life-threatening complications and death. Early recognition and aggressive treatment are vital for minimizing morbidity and mortality.

*Ronwyn van Eeden, MD, and Bernardo Rapoport, MD, are medical oncologists at the Medical Oncology Centre of Rosebank, South Africa. Bernardo is Vice-Chair of MASCC’s Antiemetics Study Group.

Supportive Care for Older Adults with Cancer

Christopher Steer,* MASCC Geriatric Study Group Leader, was a featured author in the April issue of the ASCO Post, with an article titled “Supportive Care in the Older Adult With Cancer: What You Need to Know.” The majority of adults with cancer are older adults, with a median age at diagnosis of 65. And we know that age often involves comorbidities, disabilities, greater vulnerability to treatment toxicities, and social isolation — all of which pose challenges for disease management and supportive care. Christopher highlights the important roles played by MASCC and the International Society of Geriatric Oncology (SIOG) in addressing the effects of cancer and its treatment and in optimizing care for older cancer patients. He reviews four crucial domains of geriatric assessment for improving targeted interventions, supportive care in the absence of geriatric assessment, and practical considerations in caring for older cancer patients. Christopher concludes that adequate supportive care is crucial to the appropriate management of older adults with cancer. Both MASCC and SIOG are working toward this end and welcome collaboration in achieving this goal. See the full text at http://www.ascopost.com/issues/april-25-2016/.

*Christopher Steer, MBBS, FRACP, is a Consultant Medical Oncologist at Border Medical Oncology in Wodonga, Australia. He is also a Conjoint Senior Lecturer at the University of New South Wales and Honorary Consultant in the Department of Medical Oncology and Clinical Haematology, Royal Melbourne Hospital. Steer’s article was one in a series called Geriatrics for the Oncologist, guest-edited by Stuart Lichtman, MD, and developed in collaboration with the International Society of Geriatric Oncology (SIOG).
Easing Psychological Distress: The Role of Oncology Nurses in Supportive Care

Schapira, Mellar Davis, David Hui, Paz Fernandez-Ortega, Judy Phillips, Manon Lemonde, Massey Nematollahi, and Alex Molasiotis. This month, we include a summary of an article by Lidia Schapira and Leeat Granek on the psychosocial dimensions of supportive care— for nurses themselves, as well as for their patients.*

Schapira and Granek discuss the nurse-patient-family relationship and stress the importance of placing the patient and the family at the center of the treatment plan throughout the course of the illness. As the authors point out, patients with cancer worry about their disease course and outcome, about their relationships with friends, the well-being of family members, and financial considerations. Schapira and Granek also stress the important role of oncology nurses in addressing all of the patient’s needs. Besides their expertise in symptom assessment and management, oncology nurses are uniquely qualified, and are often in the best position, to recognize and address psychological distress. And they are essential members of the palliative care team, as well.

Both physical and psychological distress (especially anxiety and depression) are common at the time of initial diagnosis and during subsequent transitions, such as the end of active treatment or cancer relapse. Yet healthcare providers often fail to recognize and address patients’ psychological needs. The authors suggest several ways that nurses can ease patients’ anxieties, while reminding them to attend to important aspects of self-care. Oncology nurses can encourage patients to develop a social support system and provide suggestions for doing so. They can also help patients to identify reputable sources of medical information, formulate questions, and weigh the pros and cons of treatment choices.

The authors also discuss the great potential for fatigue, burnout, distress, and grief among oncology nurses, who on the front lines of care during patients’ most difficult and painful journeys. The authors provide several examples of self-care and strategies for preventing or reducing stress and burnout.

“On an aeroplane, we are taught to secure our own oxygen masks first before helping the person sitting next to us. This metaphor is apt for oncology nurses and other healthcare professionals working in the intensely interpersonal and high-pressure environment of cancer care. Without our oxygen—which that be social support, hobbies, taking time off, and taking good physical and emotional care of ourselves—we cannot help others.”

The medical expertise, psychosocial sensitivity, and compassion of oncology nurses help both patients and their loved ones through times of great physical and psychological suffering and loss.

*Lidia Schapira, MD, FASCO, chairs MASCC’s Psychosocial Study Group. She is a medical oncologist at the Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center and Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and is Editor-in-Chief of Cancer.Net, the premier patient information website of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). Leeat Granek, PhD, is Assistant Professor and Head of the Gerontology and Sociology of Health Programs in the Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel.

MASCC Member Announcements

Karis Cheng, PhD, RN, Martine Puts, PhD, RN, and Petra Stolz, RN, MA, have been elected to the leadership team of the SIOG Nursing and Allied Health Interest group for 2016-2018.

Navneet Singh, MD, DM, FACP, FCCP, has been appointed Chair-Elect (2016-18) and then Chair (2018-20) of ASCO’s International Development and Education Award (IDEA) Working Group. Navneet is also starting a 4-year term (2016-20) as a member of ASCO’s Thoracic Cancer Guideline Advisory Group.

MASCC Member Benefits

MASCC membership entitles you to many benefits: access to the online edition of our official journal, Supportive Care in Cancer; our Member Directory (easy to search using multiple criteria); discounts on books about supportive care; membership in up to three Study Groups; discounted registration for our Annual Meeting; and contact with researchers and clinicians around the world who share your commitment to supportive care in cancer.
Upcoming Conference Reminders: August - October

August 30 - September 2, 2016
11th Conference of the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners
Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia.

September 4-7, 2016
International Conference on Cancer Nursing (ICCN)
Hong Kong, China - http://www.isncc.org/

September 9-10, 2016
Palliative Care in Oncology Symposium
San Francisco, California, USA - http://pallonc.org

September 30 - October 2, 2016
First Congress on Head and Neck Cancer
Athens, Greece - http://headneckcancer.gr

October 1, 2016
5th Annual Meeting of Oral Oncology
Athens, Greece - http://www.oraloncology.gr

October 7-11, 2016
European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) 2016 Congress
Copenhagen, Denmark - http://www.esmo.org/Conferences/ESMO-2016-Congress

October 17-18, 2016
European Oncology Nursing Society: EONS-10

MASCC at ASCO
Several MASCC members attended the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, held June 3-7 in Chicago, Illinois, US. MASCC also had a booth at the meeting.

New MASCC Members
Nicole Armitage, Australia
Julie Campbell, Australia
Clay Couvillon, United States
Leanne Currie, Australia
Claire Doyle, Australia
Agnieszka Frydrych, Australia
Stephen Gatto, United States
Naba Ghosh, India
Abigail Haruna, Nigeria
Helen Herz, Australia
Elizabeth Hovey, Australia
Trine Jørgensen, Denmark
Charles Kelly, United Kingdom
Celia Palmer, New Zealand
Peter Poon, Australia
Pramod Sankar, India
Keng Soon Yeoh, Australia
Rey Tiquia, Australia
Melinda van Leeuwen, Australia
Marion Wright, Australia

MASCC welcomes the following new members who joined us in May.

Have any news items to share?
Please send contributions for the MASCC News to MASCCnews@mascc.org or to Toni Clark, Editor at tclark@mascc.org

For more information please contact: Åge Schultz, MASCC Executive Director: aschultz@mascc.org

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