Welcome to the first edition of 2014 MASCCL Society News

Message from Editors Anna Ugalde and Anna Boltong

As always, we are delighted to present news of achievements by MASCCL members. This month we profile Dr Siri Beier Jensen who recently won the Zendium award for her work in oral medicine. We also bring some news of MASCCL through representation at the 2013 European Cancer Congress. Finally, we profile the MASCCL Psychosocial Study Group and introduce two new MASCCL members. This edition of our newsletter concludes with a piece on selected academic works of MASCCL’s immediate past president, Dr Steven Grunberg, whom you know sadly passed away in September of last year. We are reminded of his wonderful contributions to MASCCL and to our field. If you’d like your publications added to the list, or have other stories or news, please email us at anna.ugalde@svhm.org.au or anna.boltong@cancervic.org.au

From your editors,
Anna & Anna

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Interview with Associate Professor Siri Beier Jensen, MASCCL Member and Zendium Award Recipient

Congratulations to Siri who was recently awarded the Zendium award for her work in oral medicine. Siri is active in the MASCCL Oral Care Study Group, and this month we interviewed her to learn more about this important work and her achievement.

How you are involved in supportive care in your daily work?

I am an associate professor, DDS, PhD in the Section of Oral Medicine, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen. I am implementing supportive care in my research, my pre- and post-graduate teaching and my clinical practice of oral medicine. My research is focused on salivary gland dysfunction and oral complications of cancer therapies. I manage oral complications of head and neck radiation, chemotherapy and hematopoietic stem cell transplantation in our university referral clinic. I have focussed mainly on the late effects. I also have a close and highly prioritized interdisciplinary collaboration with oncologists, oncology nurses, nutritionists and physiotherapists in many of the Danish oncology departments. Together we are developing clinical practice guidelines on oral care in cancer patients.

You have obviously been a very active member of MASCCL over several years, including as Chair of the Oral Care Study Group - can you summarize the history of your involvement and any particular achievements you would like to highlight?

I attended my first MASCCL/ISOO Symposium in Boston 2002 with my academic advisor as an invited speaker. Then I got involved in the systematic reviews on oral complications of cancer therapies in the Oral Care Study Group, MASCCL/ISOO. I functioned as the Section Head of the Salivary Gland Hypofunction/Xerostomia group and the two systematic reviews that came out of that work addressing the prevalence, severity, impact on quality of life and management strategies of salivary gland dysfunction in cancer therapies were a huge achievement, all based on a marvelous collaboration of 23 multidisciplinary reviewers from all over the globe. I now serve as the Chair of the Oral Care Study Group (co-chairs Drs. Deborah P. Saunders and Tuomas Waltimo) and have recently been involved as a reviewer in the development of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for oral mucositis published by the MASCCL/ISOO Mucositis Study Group chaired by my good colleagues Drs. Rajesh Lalla, Sharon Elad and Joanne Bowen. I find this work both very important and rewarding.
Interview with Associate Professor Siri Beier Jensen, continued

What does the next 12 months hold for the MASCC Oral Care Study Group?

We are currently updating the systematic reviews on oral complications of cancer therapies published in 2010 and are also looking into outcomes measures for use in the clinical and research setting. The plan is to develop evidence-based clinical practice guidelines. More than 70 volunteers from the Oral Care Study Group have volunteered to contribute to this huge task; core groups have been formed and section heads chosen for the subgroups of osteonecrosis (collaboration with Bone Study Group, MASCC/ISOO), oral viral infection, oral fungal infection, salivary gland hypofunction/xerostomia, orofacial pain, dysgeusia, trismus, pediatric oral complications, dental diseases, and oral mucositis (collaboration with Mucositis Study Group, MASCC/ISOO). The members of the Oral Care Study Group are very active, we also have ongoing projects headed by members: e.g. surveys on oral chronic GVHD and dysphagia, development of a position paper on oral care in hematopoietic stem cell transplant patients in collaboration with the European Group for Blood and Marrow Transplantation, and ORASTEM and PEDSORASTEM (research projects on oral complications of hematopoietic stem cell transplantations in adult and pediatric populations).

You recently received a Zendium award – what does this mean for your work?

The Zendium Research Award, valued at 50,000 Danish Kroner, was given for my work in the field of Oral Medicine/oral complications of cancer therapies and for my interdisciplinary sharing of knowledge. I feel very honoured and furthermore, it has helped put oral complications of cancer therapies into the limelight!

MASCC at the European Cancer Congress – Amsterdam 2013

MASCC had a booth at the European Cancer Congress (ECC) meeting in Amsterdam during 27 September – 1 October, 2013. The meeting was widely attended, with over 18,000 delegates from 120 countries with opportunities to learn from more than 3,300 abstracts presented. On display were two MASCC books - The MASCC Textbook of Cancer Supportive Care and Survivorship, edited by Ian Olver and New Challenges in Communication with Cancer Patients, edited by Antonella Surbone, Matjaž Zwitter, Mirjana Rajer and Richard Stiefel.

On display at the booth:
- MASCC USB sticks that held abstracts from the 2013 annual meeting in Berlin
- The Supportive Care in Cancer journal (the 50 copies went in two hours!)
- The MASCC Antiemesis Tool mouse pad
- The MASCC Oral Agent Teaching Tool brochure
- Springer brochures
- Information on the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care
- Information on the European Oncology Nurses Society
- Brochures about MASCC and the flyers for the Miami 2014 meeting

Participation in this and other cancer and cancer-related conferences is important as it really helps to profile our Society and its message that excellent cancer care includes evidence-based supportive cancer care fully integrated into the discussions with and role of patients in treatment planning.

Meet a new MASCC Member – Fábio Morgado Gomes

I'm a medical oncologist (trainee) and I work at the Lisbon Hospital Central in Portugal. As a medical oncologist, I'm involved in supportive care on a daily basis: before, during and after oncological treatments. As a junior oncologist I've invested a great amount of time developing a bridge between the Oncology and Stomatology departments at my hospital and implementing hospital protocols on oral and gastro-intestinal mucositis and cancer cachexia. I'm also developing a study about neutropenia and the use of G-CSF in breast cancer patients whose first results I've presented at last year's MASCC/ISOO Symposium. I am pleased to be involved with MASCC as I respect the hard work of the community. I want to be involved with MASCC to help reach its goals.
Profile of the Psychosocial Study Group

This month we profile the Psychosocial Study Group, which comprises over 140 international members.

Why does MASCC need a psychosocial group?

Oncology has made progress leading to improved outcomes measured both as increases in survival and improvements in the quality of life of patients with cancer. A dominant biomedical model of disease, which focuses on measurable aspects of the illness experience, still prevails. As a consequence of this paradigm, we tend to overlook or underestimate the important subjective and relational dimensions of cancer medicine. Most training programs offer scant opportunities for education in psychosocial oncology and communication skills; thus oncology professionals are often ill prepared to face complex emotional and existential aspects of cancer care when interacting with patients, family members and caregivers. As oncology professionals involved in, and dedicated to, supportive care, MASCC members recognize that the psychosocial and spiritual dimensions of care are integral to the delivery of optimal cancer care. Psychosocial and spiritual issues are as important as genomic profiling for identification of high-risk groups or personalized treatment decisions. Current cancer care delivery paradigms that embrace psychosocial care offer what patients require and deserve to optimize outcomes.

Who are important contributors to the psychosocial study group?
The Psychosocial Study Group is chaired by Antonella Surbone MD PhD FACP, medical oncologist and bioethicist, Associate Editor of Supportive Care in Cancer, and co-chaired by Lea Baider, PhD, psycho-oncologist and co-founder and past President of the International Society of Psycho-Oncology (IPOS), and Lois M. Ramondetta MD, gynecologic oncologist who is also board certified in palliative care.

How many members are in the psychosocial study group?
The Group has 140 members worldwide, including oncology professionals from different specialties, who meet yearly at the MASCC annual meeting and plan and prioritize the future year’s activities. Of the members, one-third are from the USA, with the remaining 68% from various countries around the world.

What are recent achievements of the psychosocial study group?

In 2011, the Group designed and conducted a survey of MASCC Members regarding spiritual care. Preliminary results were presented by Dr. Ramondetta at the MASCC meeting in 2012. Additionally, group chairs collaborated to The MASCC Textbook of Cancer Supportive Care and Survivorship, with a chapter on “Spirituality in cancer care” by Surbone A, Tatsuya K, Baider L. (edited by Ian Olver, Springer Verlag 2011, pp 419-425).

In 2013, the Group published a paper entitled “Surprising results regarding MASCC members’ beliefs about spiritual care” by Ramondetta L, Sun C, Surbone A, Olver I, Ripamonti C, Konishi T, Baider L, Johnson J. (Supportive Care Cancer, E-Pub June 18th 2013).

Do you have any resources currently in development?
During our 2013 Group meeting in Berlin, we agreed to further develop MASCC education on addressing existing barriers to spiritual care in an international perspective and to start two new projects to address how to handle uncertainty in clinical encounters with cancer patients and families regarding psychosocial needs of family caregivers. We expect to have data to present at the MASCC meeting in Miami.

We welcome new voices in our Psychosocial Study Group. Join us and give us your feedback and suggestions. If you wish to become a member of the MASCC Psychosocial Study Group, please visit http://www.mascc.org/join-study-groups. Remember that you can join up to three study groups as a part of your MASCC membership.
Publications for the month – in Honor of Steven Grunberg

In September last year, we all received the sad news that Steven Grunberg, Immediate Past President of MASCC, passed away. He was a highly respected clinician, researcher and author, and in honor of Steven's contribution to the field, we are bringing you a list of some of his important publications. As an author of several journal articles, and many more guidelines and conference presentations, this list herein is only a small selection of his work and cannot possibly do justice to all that he has done to advance supportive cancer care. However we hope this is a reminder of the enormous contribution he made in so many areas. We will miss Steve, but his legacy lives on through this work and all he has done for MASCC and his impact on cancer patient care around the world.


Grunberg Publications continued


SAVE THE DATE
June 26-28, 2014 • Miami, Florida

Have any news items to share?
Please send contributions for the MASCC News to
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