President’s Message

I hope many of you have now checked out the new website look. I have been diving into various spots looking at how it will function and there is still more to come. Thank you Felice and your team, which now includes Etisbew support, for this smooth transition. Thank you again to Jeff Barnett, our retiring webmaster, for his input, extension of service and support over many years. As an international society this website linkage for ease of communication is critical.

I will be travelling extensively August through October and I hope to see many of you at the conferences coming up in Australia, UK, Poland and Canada. Please introduce yourself to me as ISOPP truly is a network based organization and I would appreciate the opportunity to put another face to the name. It is also not to soon to start planning to be in Prague in May 2010 for our next ISOPP symposium, whether as a presenter, sharing a poster, or an active participant.

Carole

Upcoming local meetings

ISOPP Australasian Regional Symposium 2009
August 28 – 30, 2009
The Sebel and Citigate
Albert Park, Melbourne, Australia

British Oncology Pharmacy Association (BOPA)
The 12th Annual BOPA Symposium; will take place at the Hilton Brighton Metropole Hotel UK from Friday 16th October – Sunday 18th October 2009. This year (BOPA) joins with the UK Oncology Nurses Society (UKONS).

Canadian National Oncology Pharmacy Symposium 2009
October 23 – 25, 2009
Fairmont Château Laurier
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

ISOPP XII – May 5-8, 2010

ISOPP XII early bird symposium registration opens soon and closes on 5 December 09.
To get the cheapest member rates, register before this date. To receive the membership rate, you must be a member in 2009 and remain a member in 2010.
Visit the symposium website on www.isopp2010.com for all details of registration and hotel bookings.

Site of ISOPP XII – Clarion Congress Hotel Prague, Prague, Czech Republic
Editorial

Along with five Melbourne colleagues I have been organising the programme for the upcoming ISOPP Australasian Regional Symposium. Because of this, I have the utmost respect for the work being done by Franca Goffredo and her Scientific Committee in developing the programme for ISOPP XII to be held in Prague in May 2010. It is not easy providing something for everyone – and is even more difficult considering the differences in practice around our world. A great deal of volunteer time is spent determining the most appropriate topics to include and then identifying the best speaker for the topic. Many of our members give an amazing amount of time to ISOPP activities because they believe in the philosophy of ISOPP – sharing oncology pharmacy practice with all our colleagues around the world to improve practice everywhere and thus improve the quality of life of cancer patients. Thank-you to all ISOPP volunteers.

Introducing Education Co-Chair Lynne Nakashima

My name is Lynne Nakashima and I am one of the co-chairs of the Education Committee. I graduated from the University of BC in 1988 and then went on to receive my Pharm.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (USA) in 1990. I am currently the Pharmacy Professional Practice Leader for the BC Cancer Agency in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, where I have worked since 1990. I started here as the Clinical Coordinator, and became the Pharmacy Leader in 1997.

Oncology Pharmacy is my passion, and I have been involved in numerous national committees, including a term as the President of the Canadian Association of Pharmacy in Oncology. I have been privileged to be a member of ISOPP Publications Committee in the past, and am now very excited to be working on educational needs for ISOPP.

For the Education Committee, my particular role is to work on educational needs outside of the ISOPP biannual meetings. The goal is to use the new ISOPP website to begin facilitating educational opportunities for Pharmacists around the world. The computer and the internet have really opened up educational opportunities for health care professionals and they allow individuals to access educational programs at their convenience. One of the first tasks will be for us to identify educational programs that we can evaluate and list on the ISOPP website. Eventually I hope that we might be able to start developing educational programs of our own. This subcommittee is in its infancy and we are looking for members from around the world, and especially need someone with computer expertise to assist us. If you are interested, please contact me at lnakas@bccancer.bc.ca or via phone at +1 - 604 - 707 - 5989 Lynne
Hi, my name is Franca Goffredo. I’m currently responsible for the organisation of the Scientific Programme of ISOPP symposium to be held in Prague in 2010. Actually it is not my first experience in this job, as I was co-chair of the organisation of the ISOPP XII Symposium in Torino, Italy in 2004. I have been a member of the Education Committee ever since. When Carole Chambers asked me to consider taking on the Committee Chair for planning Prague 2010, I was honoured for her thinking of me but at the same time I was aware of the big commitment I had to face and I was worried about that. However, I felt comfortable because Lynne Nakashima was appointed as Co.Chair of the Education Committee. I was sure I would find other strong contributors who would help me in accomplishing this task, and I did. Now we have a big Committee which is representative of many countries and is working very hard in order to organise an excellent meeting together with the local organisers. Irena Netikova from Prague is working very hard in order to welcome all the participants in the best way. The Committee is very active and we have interesting discussions. Sometimes different ideas and different points of view arise, but diversity is a precious point that cannot be given up and that represents the very power of an international society. I’m sure we will be able to offer good answers to all colleagues’ needs.

I joined ISOPP in 1993, when I attended the meeting in Toronto. It was the first time I could attend an oncology meeting specifically addressed to oncology pharmacists. I started my oncological activity in 1990, working in an oncological hospital in Torino where I moved from community pharmacy, and where I had to organise the centralised preparation of chemotherapy in the Pharmacy. In Italy we had only a few locations at the time and they were set up in small hospitals. I was really very keen to share doubts, enthusiasm and activities with other colleagues who might have had the problems I had and I was excited to know that in some part of the world somebody, who I could meet later and consider one of the founding fathers of ISOPP, Larry Broadfield, (Canada) was just offering us an international event ie ISOPP III. Since that time, I have always been very involved in oncology and in ISOPP. I was elected twice as a Secretariat member. I have also worked very hard to spread oncology pharmacy in Italy and I led the Oncological Area inside the Italian Society of Health System Pharmacy (SIFO) for ten years. I have organised many meetings and educational events and I’m still part of many Committees at the regional and national level. Oncology Pharmacy is now well recognised in Italy. We have good relationships with oncologists and haematologists, particularly now that economic problems related to new drug use requires cooperation among the various professional care providers involved in antineoplastic therapy management.

I’m also liaison for Italy for the European Society of Oncology Pharmacy. I join colleagues in Hamburg for the yearly January meeting and in Luxembourg where we have the consensus meeting on European Quality Standard in Oncology. I have always been very interested in supportive care. I think oncology pharmacists may give their important professional contribution to improve patients’ care. Recently I have also joined the Multinational Association on Cancer Supportive Care (MASCC) whose recent meeting was held in Rome in June [Ed. A report of the MASCC meeting will appear in a future newsletter]. Of course SIFO is also very important to me. I was a member of the National Board for four years and I’m still the regional representative. My current position is Director of Pharmacy at the Institution for Cancer Research and Treatment in Candiolo, four kilometres from Torino. I live in the countryside in a small town, where my family moved from Apulia, in the South of Italy when I was a child. I like to have a moment’s rest far from work commitments. I like travelling, reading, gardening and share my time with friends every time I can. In my small garden I have old English roses and camellias. I’m very fond of mountain walks. We have beautiful mountains in Piedmont. I’m looking forward to seeing you in Prague in May 2009.

Franca on holiday near Gran Sasso, Abruzzo
All ISOPP members at universities, hospitals and research institutions are invited to submit applications for research grants focused on oncology pharmacy research – either pre-clinical, clinical, or practice related areas.

Potential applicants should submit the required administrative information and a Letter of Intent addressed to the Research Committee Chair summarizing the proposed studies electronically via our online system at http://www.isopp.org. On-line submission process will begin, June 15, 2009.

The Letter of Intent must include the following information in this order:
1. The objective.
2. The relevance to oncology pharmacy practice.
3. The hypothesis or hypotheses to be tested.
4. Preliminary data.
5. A statement of the methods of procedure.
6. A plan for evaluating the results.
7. Current financial support: list each current grant or contract for the conduct of this research. If there are no other grants, state “NONE.”

The online process must be completed by Friday, September 4th, 2009 at 5 PM (USA, EST).

There is a total of 15,000 euros available to fund these grant applications and we plan on awarding up to two grants for this year. Grant will cover direct cost only; no indirect fees/charges will be covered.

The Letters of Intent will be evaluated by the ISOPP Research Committee, and applications will be invited from those whom the committee recommends. Our decision will be transmitted to the candidates no later than Saturday, October 3rd, 2009, and those who are invited to apply will have to do so by Friday, January 15th, 2010. A member of the Research Committee will be assigned to each application to facilitate the grant application preparation and submission process. The applicants will be informed of the decisions regarding their applications as soon as they have been made, but no later than March 1st 2010.

Research Awards will be presented at the ISOPP XII Annual Conference, May 5-8th, 2010, Clarion Congress Hotel Prague, Prague, Czech Republic. Funding will be initiated in July 2010.

Any questions or clarifications need, please contact the Research Committee Chair, Kellie Jones at kjones14@clarian.org or +1-317-278-5331.

The South African Society of Oncology Pharmacists have launched a website and newsletter

“We believe this will create an interest in Oncology Pharmacy Practice in South Africa” says Chairman Michael Conidaris

To subscribe visit http://www.pacificbreeze353.com/index.cfm?x=subscribe&COMPANY=15

South African Society of Oncology Pharmacists
Michael Conidaris, Chairman
P.O.Box 891192 Lyndhurst 2106 South Africa. Mobile/Cell 082 880 4547
This meeting was particularly attractive to me, as it stands as a one-of-its-kind in offering pharmacist-specific sessions parallel to the clinicians’ meetings. It was an invaluable opportunity to network with over 200 pharmacists practicing in the highly-specialized field of bone marrow transplantation, thus creating a forum where clinical experiences and expertise could be shared. The provision of the PowerPoint slides of all the presentations on a USB and folder was a valuable take-home resource.

The packed program began each day with a breakfast symposium and on most days, concluded with a dinner symposium. The five-days of plenary sessions, concurrent scientific sessions, workshops and symposia presented by internationally renowned speakers covered recent progress in basic science, translational research and clinical studies in all areas of BMT, with updates on treatment of hematological malignancies to current strategies in infectious complication management.

There was an overwhelming amount of information presented, but the following were particular highlights for me:

Helen Leather of Health Interactions, Princeton presented a review of ASH 2008. In it, she spoke of the VOSIFI Study which utilizes voriconazole for secondary prophylaxis of invasive fungal infections (IFI) in allogeneic SCT (stem cell transplantation). This study started patients with proven or probable IFI in the previous 12 months who were undergoing SCT on prophylactic voriconazole (oral or IV) within 48 hours of SCT for at least 100 days. The results were that of the 42 patients, only 3 (7% incidence, 10% in the complete case analysis) developed a probable/proven IFI during the study. This is a favorable result compared to the expected rate of 30% and implies that the utilization of prophylactic voriconazole can take patients with a past history of IFI to subsequent HCT effectively.\(^1\) Cordonnier C. et al, Blood ’08:112 Ab1159

Michael D. Westmoreland of MD Anderson Cancer Center gave a comprehensive update on Acute Graft versus Host Disease (GVHD). During this session, he presented the results from a recent Phase II randomized trial evaluating Etanercept, Mycophenolate, Denileukin Diftitox and Pentostatin in Combination with Steroids in 180 patients with Newly Diagnosed Acute GVHD\(^2\) Alousi A et al. Blood 112; ASH abstract 55, 2008

In this study, mycophenolate clearly won the war with 27 of 45 (60%) patients achieving complete response (CR) at Day 28, compared to the other agents [Etanercept 9/46 (28%); Denileukin 15/47 (48%); Pentostatin 11/42 (39%)]. This is also a promising result in view of the historical CR rate of 35% with steroids alone. However, it was raised that more information on the trial was needed ie. Differences in use of in vivo T cell depletion, benefit of having a steroid-only arm. These issues will hopefully be addressed in the Phase III trial of mycophenolate against steroids alone which will open to enrollment in mid 2009.

In the afternoons, there was an opportunity to view 470 posters submitted by authors based in 29 countries.

For complete abstracts, see Biology of Blood and Marrow Transplantation Vol 15 No 2 Supplement 2 February 2009

There were many fantastic poster abstracts, but one of particular interest to me was one put together by Julianna Burzynski at Mayo Clinic, Rochester. The details are as follows.

Impact of a Pharmacist in the Outpatient Allogeneic Stem Cell Transplant Clinic\(^3\)

Burzynski, J.A., Craver, L.F. et al Mayo Clinic Des Moines, IA Abstract 83

Background

• Pharmacist involvement in direct patient care of allogeneic stem cell (SCT) transplant patients has not been described.

• 2009 National Patient Safety Goals from the Joint Commission emphasize the importance of accurate and
complete medication lists across the continuum of care to reduce adverse drug reactions
- Hypothesis is that including a pharmacist in the care of patients undergoing allogeneic transplant will improve medication list accuracy and improve pharmaceutical care

Methods
- SCT patients were commenced on scheduled pharmacist appointments at the clinic prior to their physician visit to complete medication reconciliation and pharmaceutical care was provided.

Results
- The pharmacist met with 90 patients between 5/5/08 and 1/10/08 (total 410 patient visits during 105 clinic days)
- 72% of patients had at least 1 medication omitted from their list at their first pharmacist visit
- 367 pharmaceutical care recommendations were made on 76 patients, with 72% of recommendations accepted

Conclusion
- Pharmacist involvement in the allogeneic stem cell transplant clinic has improved medication list and pharmaceutical care of patients

It is well-acknowledged that SCT patients are a complex-care population and provision of pharmaceutical care by an inpatient clinical pharmacist is crucial in reducing the incidence of adverse drug events and optimizing medical therapy. However, there has been limited research looking at bridging the gap to extend a continuum of pharmaceutical care to the outpatient setting. This poster highlights the positive impact of an outpatient SCT pharmacist and it is a service which those involved in transplanting would do well to consider.

Finally, as a well-known saying goes, “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” which implies that without time off from work, a person becomes bored and boring. The organisers of the BMT tandem meeting avoided that pitfall by inclusion of a meet-and-greet dinner on the first night, which was held at a nearby Channelside plaza and allowed the attendees to socialise and mingle.

The 2010 BMT Tandem meetings will be held in Orlando, Florida on Feb 24-28. I would not hesitate to recommend attendance at these meetings to BMT pharmacy practitioners as they will undoubtedly find that the knowledge gained will greatly enhance their practice of SCT patient care.

Features of the new-look ISOPP website

- Home
- Contact us
- Members Chat
- Chat with ISOPP Members on-line
- See pictures of ISOPP meetings
- Send messages to ISOPP members
- Create your blog
- Everybody can participate in surveys and polls. Moreover, if you are a Member of the ISOPP Committee, you can join a specific discussion forum
ISOPP welcomes all its new members

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The Taiwan Society of Health-System Pharmacists are currently working on the second edition of their guidelines for the Safe Handling of Cytotoxic Drugs.

A multidisciplinary meeting of experts was held in June 2009 in Taipei and one of the agenda items was the ISOPP Standard of Practice for the Safe Handling of Cytotoxic Drugs. Taiwanese pharmacists are very aware of the ISOPP Standard and had a number of questions about the writing of this document. Robbie McLauchlan from Melbourne, Australia (former Standards Committee co-chair) was invited to the meeting to answer specific questions about the content of the Standard, and to explain the logistics behind writing such a detailed document. The meeting was very successful, and our Taiwanese colleagues are likely to try some of the strategies used by the Standards Committee, such as an on-line chat forum.

Following this meeting, there was an interesting afternoon symposium including presentations on extravasation management, cleanroom facilities, and, of course, the ISOPP Standard!

Chiang Kai Shek memorial hall in Taipei

Robbie McLauchlan
ISOPP Standards Committee
[Robbie’s attendance at this meeting was made possible by Pfizer Taiwan Pty Ltd.]