

A news service for the Australian brain tumour patient and caregiver community

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BRAIN TUMOUR

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ALLIANCE AUSTRALIA Inc.

BTAA eNews May 2015

Dear friend of the brain tumour patient and caregiver support community

The previous BTAA eNews from April is available at:

The focus of this month's eNews is this week's ASCO Scientific Meeting.

In my role as Chair, I will be attending the American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting that starts tomorrow and ends on Tuesday (Wednesday in

Australia).

It is the world's largest annual oncology (cancer) meeting, and is expected to attract more than 25000 attendees this year.

The programme for ASCO is available at:

<https://iplanner.asco.org/am2015/SessionSearch.aspx/SessionAtGlance>, and can be searched at: <https://iplanner.asco.org/am2015/AM2015.aspx>

Abstracts can be searched at: http://abstracts.asco.org/156/IndexView_156.html

You can search by a particular brain tumour/cancer type, symptom, author, or therapy of interest. For example, searching 'glioblastoma' retrieves 173 results.

Posters specific to neuro-oncology can be viewed at:

<https://iplanner.asco.org/am2015/AM2015.aspx/SessionDetail/9318>

Topics of particular interest to me are:

- Views on the merits of Optune therapy for glioblastoma (e.g., http://abstracts.asco.org/156/AbstView_156_151667.html)
- Updates on immunotherapy trials for glioblastoma (e.g., <https://iplanner.asco.org/am2015/AM2015.aspx/SessionDetail/9424>)
- Patient outcome data on the use of 5-Ala and 'tumour paint' in neurosurgery
- Updates on brain tumour/cancer awareness strategies, and collaboration.

Session of particular interest are:

- 'Controversies in Management of High-Grade Glioma', (<https://iplanner.asco.org/am2015/AM2015.aspx/SessionDetail/9304>);
- 'Multidisciplinary Approach to Low-Grade Glioma' (<https://iplanner.asco.org/am2015/AM2015.aspx/SessionDetail/9293>);
- 'Improving Quality of Life for Patients with Central Nervous System Tumors' (<http://meetinglibrary.asco.org/content/115552?media=vm>); And:
- 'Rare Tumors of the Central Nervous System: More Similar than Different', (<https://iplanner.asco.org/am2015/AM2015.aspx/SessionDetail/9423>);

If you would like further information on a topic at ASCO, please email questions to chair@btaa.org.au, or post questions on the BTAA Facebook page 'Brain Tumour Alliance Australia', or tweet @BrainTumourAA. I will be tweeting from ASCO using @BrainTumourAA. Please note that it is hard to provide information to specific questions on e.g., treatment options after recurrence, and these are best addressed to clinicians in Australia.

A full and summarised conference BTAA report will be sent within a fortnight of the meeting's end. IBTA and other patient advocacy groups will also be issuing conference reports, and these will be linked to in next month's BTAA eNews.

As an objective of BTAA is to foster collaboration and help attract, develop, and retain health professionals to the disciplines of neuro-oncology, BTAA also offers travel scholarships to health professionals to attend ASCO and other relevant conferences.

Please advise your health professionals of the availability of domestic and international travel scholarships, and that they can contact secretary@btaa.org.au for more information on these opportunities.

It is also very cost effective to bring the world's neuro-oncology specialists to Australia to share expertise with their colleagues. With this objective, over the next week I will approach neuro-oncology specialists and offer funding for them to visit Australia within the next few years, preferably in conjunction with the COGNO Annual Scientific Meeting each October.

ASCO media release highlights Australian clinical research

Incidentally, [ASCO issued a media release prior to the meeting that includes news that](#): 'A large Australian trial showing that daily use of nicotinamide, a form of vitamin B3, for 12 months reduced the incidence of new non-melanoma skin cancers by 23% in patients at high risk for skin cancer' (See: www.asco.org/press-center/2015-asco-annual-meeting-press-program-highlight-advances-cancer-treatment-prevention).

IBTA e-News

The IBTA e-News for this month has been released (see <http://theibta.org/news>), and includes this item:

'Gamma Knife radiosurgery to begin in Australian public hospital

The Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane, Queensland is to receive Australia's first government-funded Gamma Knife equipment in July. Until now, Gamma Knife surgery for brain tumours has only been performed at Sydney's private Macquarie University Hospital'. Follow the link above to read more on this and other items from around the world.

The IBTA also note [Carrie Bickmore's Gold Logie award acceptance speech](#) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6D7NyJMN5w), the extraordinary response in the traditional and new media to Carrie, and her continued advocacy.

Support is available

For those facing a brain tumour diagnosis or its aftermath, practical support is

available from your peers in local support groups, cancer control Government agencies, Cancer Councils and other NGOs, and teams of clinicians and allied health care specialists. Many skilled professionals working on future treatments, from person-centered quality of life researchers to scientists studying why tumours develop and how we can best remove them. **To talk with experienced caregivers, call BTAA on the Freecall number: 1800 857 221, and see [support groups available in your local area](#) at: www.btaa.org.au/page/26/support-organisations**

BTAA thanks its donors. We are a volunteer-only organisation that receives no funding or concessions from any governments, asides from indirectly as donations to us are tax deductible. Your funds continue to help grow the organisation and each day it is more capable, committed and able to assist to patients and caregivers.

Thank you for reading.

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BTAA on social media

Facebook: [Brain Tumour Alliance Australia](#)

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Youtube: Search 'BTAA' for various videos

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Note: After a three year hiatus from its monthly eNews service, it was resumed based on feedback from convenors' of Australian support groups that such information assists their work. The eNews is normally sent on the morning of the first Friday every month, with exceptions such as this month's edition. BTAA welcomes feedback on the content and format of these eNews services. **Please contact secretary@btaa.org.au. In the near future, there will be an option to notify us of your preferences and only receive select topics of interest to you.**

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