



# ascia

australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy



# Annual Report 2014

ASCIA is the peak professional body of clinical immunology and allergy specialists in Australia and New Zealand and is a member society of the World Allergy Organisation (WAO).

The mission of ASCIA is to promote the highest standard of medical practice, training, education and research, to prevent and control allergic diseases, immunodeficiencies and other immune diseases, and therefore improve the health and quality of life of people with these conditions.

[www.allergy.org.au](http://www.allergy.org.au)

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# ASCIA Annual Report 2014

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## ASCIA President's Report - Clinical A/Professor Richard Loh

Thank you for attending the ASCIA Annual General Meeting (AGM) and ASCIA 2014 Conference. I appreciate that so many of you have given up your time to attend these meetings. My report will reflect back on the last 12 months which have been busy but rewarding.

Two years ago ASCIA considered developing a model of care for allergy and other immune diseases. This has resulted in the development of several reports and meetings. More recently it has progressed to the development of the first National Allergy Strategy for Australia, which we aim to complete by August 2015.

Our efforts in advocating for allergic diseases to be listed as a National Health Priority Area (NPHA) in Australia has helped to raise awareness and build relationships. However, we have been advised by senior health administrators that even if allergic diseases become a NPHA it is unlikely that additional resources will be provided. Based on this advice we have embarked on developing a National Allergy Strategy. In August 2014 we held the world's first Allergy Summit in partnership with the patient organisation Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia (A&AA). The aim of the Allergy Summit was to engage key external stakeholders and to raise awareness of allergic diseases. I believe the Summit was successful in achieving this and there has been strong support from state and federal politicians for the approach ASCIA has taken, which has been remarked upon as being well planned and more evolved than that of other similar organisations. ASCIA and A&AA have continued to advocate for allergic diseases being a NPHA and have received strong support from politicians from States, Territories and Federal. In May 2014 the Hon Anna Burke MP tabled in Federal Parliament a private member's motion to make allergic diseases a NPHA.

At the ASCIA 2013 AGM I raised the possibility of asthma being added to ASCIA's name. We have stepped back from this, mainly because asthma is already a NPHA and there is also a National Asthma Strategy, so we do not want to confuse stakeholders. I still believe that we have an important role in the management of patients with asthma, and this is reflected in additional resources being developed by ASCIA committees and working parties.

ASCIA now has an established office in Brookvale. The move to the office in October 2013 was problem free thanks to Jill Smith's exceptional planning. The office is being well utilised for many meetings with other organisations, including sponsors.

The past year has also seen many of our practices and procedures now clearly documented with at least two ASCIA staff members familiar with the day-to-day functions of ASCIA. The transition to cloud based XERO based accounting software has also made managing our finances more automated, streamlined and sustainable.

ASCIA committees and working parties continue to be productive and most have developed plans for the next three years. Deputy chairs have been appointed to most committees and I hope in the next 12 months all committees will have deputy chairs. This allows for the sharing of workload and succession planning. Some of the key resource achievements undertaken by these committees in the past 12 months include:

- ASCIA SCIg Position Statement
- Transitioning from paediatric to adult care information
- Anaphylaxis checklists for health professionals
- RACGP accreditation of the ASCIA Active Learning Module for allergy and anaphylaxis.
- ASCIA Food Allergy e-training for Pharmacists

Many other projects have commenced including the development of new ASCIA Food Challenge and ASCIA Immunodeficiency Registers.

The ASCIA Drug Allergy Working Party will hold its first meeting during the ASCIA 2015 Conference. This is an important ASCIA Working Party and this is reflected in the membership which contains two past ASCIA Presidents and our incoming ASCIA President. I would like to thank Michaela Lucas for initiating this ASCIA Working Party. The ASCIA Chronic Urticaria Working Party will also be established in the next few months and I would like to acknowledge Connie Katelaris for facilitating the development of this important ASCIA Working Party. An ASCIA Autoantibody Standardisation Working Party will also be established under the leadership of Daman Langguth and thank you Daman for this initiative.

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The Allergy and Immunology Foundation of Australasia (AIFA) was launched in September 2013. It has taken some time to finalise and submit all the paperwork required and I wish to acknowledge all the hard work of Michelle Haskard, Ray Mullins, Jill Smith and other members of the AIFA Board. AIFA will be awarding its first grants in late 2014. Many ASCIA members have donated to AIFA and I wish to thank them for this. I hope that ASCIA members will think about AIFA in their interactions with patients and their families, friends, colleagues and organisations. The main aim of AIFA is to increase the capacity to raise funds for research for allergy and other immune diseases.

ASCIA is not just about allergy. Over the past 12 months ASCIA has devoted considerable resources towards primary immunodeficiency diseases. This includes:

- The TAPID Project which commenced with a face to face meeting with our stem cell transplant colleagues and continues with monthly teleconferences. I would like to acknowledge Jo Smart for her driving this initiative.
- The SCIg Project which commenced with a face to face meeting and has resulted in the development of an ASCIA SCIg Position Statement and continues to develop resources to support SCIg Programs.
- Interactions with the National Blood Authority (NBA) including invitations to ASCIA representatives onto NBA committees.
- Work continues on the new ASCIA Immunodeficiency Register and I would like to thank Melanie Wong and Jane Peake and who have given their time and expertise to this initiative.
- Funding to develop PID education resources for patients and health professionals including e training.

The next year will bring some challenges. Development of second tier of the scope of practice has not progressed as it has been difficult to obtain consensus. We have not yet progressed in our attempts to achieve Medicare funding for key procedures, such as food challenges, and new laboratory investigations as we have received advice that the likelihood of success is very low with current fiscal tightening.

With all the work that we hope to achieve, I am mindful that many members contribute significantly to ASCIA projects and I would like to acknowledge the many ASCIA members who give so much to ASCIA in time and expertise. We need to ensure that we maintain a balance between productivity and achievement whilst not overburdening the membership and staff. It is also important during rapid growth, that ASCIA does not lose focus of our mission.

Finally, I would like to particularly thank a few specific people:

- Jo Douglass and the organising committee for organising this wonderful conference.
- ASCIA Executive and Council for their support and guidance over the past two years. I have enjoyed working with my colleagues and I believe our Council meetings have been very productive.
- Melanie Wong who always provides excellent guidance and I wish her all the best as she steps forward as the new ASCIA President.
- William Smith for continuing to drive the ASCIA Immunotherapy Working Party and also for putting his hand up to be President-Elect.
- Sam Mehr who has worked tirelessly as ASCIA Treasurer over the past two years. Sam has assisted ASCIA to implement new systems, to maintain a strong financial status through strategic changes which have made the accounting processes more streamlined, transparent and sustainable.
- I also wish to acknowledge the chairs of the ASCIA Committees and Working Parties – a lot of the ASCIA's work simply could not be done without the leadership and contribution you provide.
- I would like to acknowledge the ASCIA members who are leaving Council this year.
- Special thanks to ASCIA Past Presidents, in particular Jo Douglass and Ray Mullins.
- Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge ASCIA staff:
  - Education Project Officer, Sandra Vale.
  - Administrative Officer - Rikki Dunstall who has rapidly become one of the ASCIA family.
  - AIFA Project Officer, Michelle Haskard who also provides administration support and has done a tremendous job in the development of AIFA.
  - Executive Officer, Jill Smith, who ensures that ASCIA continues to function and provides tremendous support to ASCIA Executive, Council, committees, working parties, members and staff.

In closing, thank you for the support you have afforded me during my two years as ASCIA President. It has been an honour to represent the Society and I wish Melanie Wong all the best as she takes on the leadership role. ASCIA is in safe hand with Melanie and a wonderful Executive, Council and staff.

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## ASCIA FINANCIAL REPORT 2013-2014 – Dr Sam Mehr

This report is based on the audited ASCIA financial statements for 2013-2014. In summary:

- ASCIA has maintained approximately 3 years of annual expenditure in reserve (~\$1,500,000) for the past 3 years (table 1), which ensures stability of finances and buffers ASCIA in light of possible further volatility in the financial sector and sponsorship.
- Equity (current and retained earnings) has increased by 7% to a total of \$1,642,748 (table 2).
- This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year that ASCIA has made a surplus/profit (table 3), and this is despite additional costs of office rent, infrastructure and staff incurred in 2013-2014. However it is important to note that this surplus includes AIFA funds, even though they are held in separate bank accounts to ASCIA funds.
- Income has increased by 44.8%, despite relatively low interest rates and therefore less return from the 2 term deposits of \$500,000. In 2014-2015 these will be combined into 1 term deposit of \$1,000,000 to assist in obtaining the highest possible interest rates.

CASH FLOW	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Cash (start of year)	\$1,539,879	\$1,551,384	\$919,232
Cash (end of year)	\$1,469,988	\$1,539,879	\$1,551,384

FINANCIAL POSITION	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Total Assets	\$1,842,392	\$1,751,391	\$1,598,048
Total Liabilities	\$255,451	\$221,339	\$156,540
<b>Equity (retained surplus)</b>	<b>\$1,586,941</b>	<b>\$1,530,052</b>	<b>\$1,441,508</b>

OPERATING STATEMENT	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Total Income	\$1,061,782	\$776,380	\$947,545
Total Expenses	\$1,004,893	\$687,135	\$727,728
<b>Net Surplus/Loss *</b>	<b>\$56,889</b>	<b>\$88,324</b>	<b>\$219,817</b>

Income	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Sponsorship	\$314,085	NA	NA
Membership Fees	\$112,384	\$106,352	\$101,665
Donations	\$129,609	\$100,000	NA
Conference Income	\$458,251	NA	NA
Interest	\$47,421	\$54,089	\$46,373
Other Income	\$32	\$6,910	NA
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,061,782</b>	<b>\$776,380</b>	<b>\$947,545</b>

In 2013-2014 a sustainability plan for ASCIA was developed and implemented, which has improved efficiency and ensures sustainability of ASCIA for the future. The main changes are as follows:

- ASCIA now leases Suite 238, 117 Old Pittwater Rd Brookvale NSW 2100, in the Lifestyle Working Brookvale complex [www.lifestyleworking.com.au](http://www.lifestyleworking.com.au) since October 2013. This office is ideally set up and located for meetings, particularly with sponsors.
- ASCIA revised its financial management systems by reviewing investments, changing to onsite accountants and auditors, employing an Administration Officer and implementing XERO accounting software.
- ASCIA revised its information technology systems, including new hardware, backup, central data storage and onsite IT support.



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## ASCIA Executive Officer's Report - Jill Smith

In 2014 ASCIA accomplished significant projects, collaborations and achievements which are outlined below and on the ASCIA website: [www.allergy.org.au/about-ascia/2014-highlights](http://www.allergy.org.au/about-ascia/2014-highlights)

As well as the National Allergy Strategy, participation in the NPS MedicineWise Choosing Wisely Australia program and the ASCIA Annual Conference, there are multiple ASCIA projects planned for 2015 as listed on the ASCIA website: [www.allergy.org.au/about-ascia/2015-highlights](http://www.allergy.org.au/about-ascia/2015-highlights)

Thank you to:

- ASCIA staff (Rikki Dunstall, Michelle Haskard and Sandra Vale) for their tremendous commitment and enthusiasm for their work;
- ASCIA members, particularly the Executive, Council, committee and working party members who generously donate their time and expertise to ASCIA issues and projects;
- Impagination, who develop and support the ASCIA website and e-training courses;
- ICMSA, who have provided logistics support for ASCIA conferences since 2006;
- Patient support organisations for collaborations that focus on patient health outcomes;
- Sponsors for their continued support (via unrestricted educational grants) of ASCIA educational initiatives.



## ASCIA 2014 Conference Report - Jill Smith

Congratulations and thank you to the **ASCIA 2014 Conference Chair, Professor Jo Douglass** and the committee on a highly successful 25th Annual Conference of ASCIA, held from 10th to 13th September 2014 at the Melbourne Convention Centre.

We have received excellent feedback about the program and venue. It was a bonus that we had fine spring weather most of the time, so delegates were able to enjoy the vibrant riverfront location, although there was not much spare time, with a full, interactive and appealing program.

In her welcome message Professor Douglass stated:

*This is the 25th ASCIA annual conference and we celebrate today those people who considered, 25 years ago, that the synergies from joining the Clinical Immunology Group of the Australasian Society for Immunology with the Australian College of Allergy, were worth more than our differences. With more than 400 delegates at this conference this shows that this is the case.*

*In welcoming you to this conference I suggest we are here to achieve the following 3 things:*

- 1. Update on the clinical and scientific basis of our practice.** Thank you in advance to our 4 international speakers, to CFAR for jointly sponsoring 2 of these speakers, and to local speakers who bring their work and passion to our conference.
- 2. Update on our local research.** This is the largest number of posters ever displayed and presented and I thank all of the authors for their efforts.
- 3. Celebrate our collegiality.** Our annual conference is an opportunity to renew and refresh our relationships with our professional colleagues and industry partners in this dynamic environment.

*So thank you all for coming, welcome, and enjoy!*

Congratulations to the poster and clinical grand round (CGR) award winners, who are listed on the ASCIA website: [www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/awards-grants/ascia-award-grant-scholarship-recipients](http://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/awards-grants/ascia-award-grant-scholarship-recipients)

All 111 abstracts that were submitted for posters and CGR cases are also published online, in the Internal Medicine Journal (IMJ): [www.allergy.org.au/conferences/ascia-annual-conference/published-abstracts-ascia](http://www.allergy.org.au/conferences/ascia-annual-conference/published-abstracts-ascia)

I would also take this opportunity to thank all of the following:

- **International speakers:** Professor Bobby Gaspar (UK), Professor Robert Lemanske (USA), A/Professor Kari Nadeau (USA) and A/Professor Wayne Shreffler (USA)
- **Basten Orator:** Professor James McCluskey  
[www.allergy.org.au/conferences/ascia-annual-conference/annual-ascia-basten-oration](http://www.allergy.org.au/conferences/ascia-annual-conference/annual-ascia-basten-oration)
- **Organising committee:** Professor Jo Douglass, Professor Katie Allen, Dr Sara Barnes, Dr Jeremy McComish, Vicki McWilliam, Dr Kate Nicholls, Professor Robyn O'Hehir, Dr Joanne Smart, Professor Mimi Tang, Dr Dean Tey, Leone Thiele.
- **Other speakers and chairs:** 40 speakers and 44 chairs in total.
- **Delegates:** 650 registrations in total, from 420 delegates, in addition to more than 100 exhibitor delegates.
- **Sponsors and exhibitors:** for their continued support of ASCIA annual conferences and other ASCIA educational initiatives.
- **ASCIA and ICMSA staff:** a big thank you to Rikki Dunstall, Michelle Haskard, Sandra Vale, Rebecca Hardman and Helane Doyle.

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## Incoming ASCIA President's Message - Dr Melanie Wong

It is a great honour to be the ASCIA President for 2014-2016 and I thank all the ASCIA Presidents who have served before me. Together with ASCIA staff and members they have helped to develop ASCIA over the past 25 years into the extremely well organised, active, respected and well established organisation that it is today. Thank you to Richard Loh, who has driven many of the most recent ASCIA projects with great enthusiasm and commitment. Thank you also to Jo Douglass and her committee for organising the excellent ASCIA 2014 Annual Conference.

In September 2015 I look forward to welcoming you to the ASCIA 2015 Annual Conference in Adelaide which is being organised by William Smith, Anthony Smith and their committee. ASCIA Annual Conferences continue to provide an international standard of continuing professional development for ASCIA members and other health professionals on a wide range of topics relating to allergy, immunodeficiency and autoimmunity.

In 2015 I also look forward to many innovative initiatives for ASCIA, including:

- Development of the first National Allergy Strategy for Australia, an extremely important collaboration between ASCIA, Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia and many other stakeholders.
- Development of several educational resources in the area of primary immunodeficiency diseases.
- Hosting of the ASCIA 2015 Autoimmunity Update in conjunction with the ASCIA 2015 Conference.

I would like to take this opportunity to:

- **Thank outgoing ASCIA Council members** for their greatly appreciated contributions to ASCIA: Alison Cunningham, Jo Douglass, Lara Ford, David Gillis, Merryn Netting and Jane Peake.
- **Welcome new ASCIA Council members**, who I look forward to working with over the next two years: Andrew Baker, Annaliese Blincoe, Rachael Dunn, Diamond Hira, Michael O'Sullivan, Susan Perel, Ingrid Roche and Tiffany Hughes.

## ASCIA Council 2014-2015

### EXECUTIVE

President	Dr Melanie Wong
President Elect	Dr William Smith
Secretary (Hon)	Dr Jan Sinclair
Treasurer (Hon)	Dr Sam Mehr

### AREA REPRESENTATIVES

NSW	Dr Alisa Kane
NZ	Dr Andrew Baker
QLD	Dr Susan Perel
SA	Dr Anthony Smith
VIC	Dr Jeremy McComish
WA	Dr Michael O'Sullivan

### OTHER REPRESENTATIVES

- Anaphylaxis Committee Chair: **Dr Ray Mullins**
- Education Committee Chair: **Dr Sara Barnes**
- Immunodeficiency Committee Chair: **Dr Andrew McLean-Tooke**
- Laboratory Practice Committee Chair: **Louise Wienholt**
- Paediatric Committee Chair: **Prof Dianne Campbell**
- Joint Specialist Advisory Committee (JSAC) for Immunology and Allergy: **Dr Tiffany Hughes**
- Immediate Past President: **A/Prof Richard Loh**
- Advanced Trainee Representative: **Dr Annaliese Blincoe**
- Associate (GP) Representative: **Dr Diamond Hira**
- Associate (Nurse) Representative: **Rachael Dunn**
- Associate (Dietitian) Representative: **Ingrid Roche**