



High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia

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Dear Jon

Welcome to the second e news of 2016, hoping you all had a lovely Easter....

For those of you who have yet to renew our membership please do so as soon as possible. The official grace period has now expired (to March 31) and note that back fees are payable. Expect an e mail to follow up from our Secretariat if you have yet to renew.

Students are required to renew, despite no fee being payable and this is a good opportunity to update your details and status if you are no longer studying. As well as being kept up to date via this newsletter and the website, other advantages of membership include a hefty discount to the Annual Scientific Meeting, which as you know, is being held conjointly with the AAS and AVBS from December 7-10th 2016 in sunny Hobart.

We have a terrific line up of speakers, and it is still growing – see below for more details, and further details will follow as more come on board.

For the early career researchers (ECR), there is a great program being held on December 7th prior to the welcome reception and the team of ECR representatives across all three societies have been working hard on this program, again see below for more details. Read on for quite a bit of content and some good grant opportunities coming up.

All the best

Rob Widdop



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President's Message

2016 is proving to be a pivotal year for medical researchers and perhaps, cardiovascular researchers in particular. The members of the Australian Medical Research Board (who will guide the allocation of financial support and grants from the MRFF) were announced earlier this week:

Prof Ian Frazer AC (Chair)
 Prof Anne Kelso AC (NHMRC)
 Prof Doug Hilton (AAMRI)
 Prof Peter Hoj (UQ)
 Prof Karen Reynolds (Flinders)
 Dr Deborah Rajan (Bionomics)
 Yasser El-Ansary (Australian Private equity & Venture Capital Assoc)
 Jennifer Williams (Red Cross Blood Services).

As well, recognising the critical need for CVD research support, the National Heart Foundation announced an addition 9 million towards CVD research in 2016/2017 with a commitment to further increasing resources in this area in the forthcoming years.

This is superb news, but not enough.

CVD remains the leading cause of death worldwide, yet the resources dedicated towards CVD research remains disproportional to the disease and economic burden. HBPRCA has been in the forefront of advocating for greater attention in this space and members are urged to continue voicing their concerns to the decision makers, some of whom are listed above.

On other matters, we are delighted to announce a superb line up of speakers for our joint conference with AAS and AVBS to held in Dec this year in Hobart. RD Wright Lecturer Prof Nilesh Samani, has since been announced the new BHF medical director and we would do well to learn from their experience.

I look forward to active engagement from council this year,

All the best

Jaye Chin-Dusting
President



2016 Annual Scientific Meeting

The 2016 ASM will run from Dec 7 to 10 (yes Saturday 10th) at the Grand Chancellor Hotel in Hobart, Tasmania, and will be held conjointly with the Australian Atherosclerosis Society (AAS) and Australian Vascular Biology Society (AVBS).

Please mark your diaries and ensure you have renewed your membership to ensure you receive the member rate upon registering later in the year.

The society acknowledges that travelling to Hobart can add costs, and therefore are offering additional travel grants to attend the meeting for students.

Please note, students must be a member to apply (membership is free of charge, but ensure you have renewed), and you must have an abstract accepted at the meeting and not reside in Tasmania to be eligible. Please indicate your wish to apply for a travel grant upon registration in due course.

We are delighted to announce the confirmed Keynote Speakers so far, and I am sure you will agree that there is something for everyone in what promises to be an excellent program which is shaping up well.

As mentioned above the Young Investigator Symposium has been crafted by members of all three societies and will provide a great peer learning and ideas sharing experience.

In the true spirit of a joint meeting, the conference gala dinner will also be open to

MARK YOUR DIARY!

2016 Joint Annual Scientific Meeting of
The Australian Atherosclerosis Society, (AAS)
High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia, (HBPRCA)
and Australian Vascular Biology Society (AVBS)

2016 will bring a joining of forces with a combined meeting of 3 major scientific societies, in the wonderful city of Hobart, Tasmania.

December 7-10, 2016

Mark your diaries now, for a fantastic week of science and networking opportunities.

Further information available from Conference Organisers

YOUR SECRETARIAT

3/10 Pioneer Avenue
Tuggerah Business Park
Tuggerah, NSW 2259

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E: admin@yoursecretariat.com.au
www.yoursecretariat.com.au

all delegates and the costs of the dinner included in your registration this year. It will be a very collegiate evening, with the awards winners across all the societies being presented with their awards over dinner, and a great networking night.

Keynote speakers to date:

RD Wright invited Lecturer: Prof. Sir Nilesh J Samani, UK

Nilesh Samani is British Heart Foundation Professor of Cardiology and Head of the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences at the University of Leicester. He is also Director of the Leicester National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Biomedical Research Unit in Cardiovascular Disease and Consultant Cardiologist at the Cardiac Centre, Glenfield Hospital, Leicester.

Colin I Johnston invited Lecturer: Prof. Chris Semsarian

Chris Semsarian is a cardiologist with a specific research focus in the genetic basis of cardiovascular disease. Prof. Semsarian trained at the University of Sydney, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, and Harvard Medical School. A focus area of his research is in the investigation and prevention of sudden cardiac death in the young, particularly amongst children and young adults. Prof. Semsarian has an established research program that is at the interface of basic science and clinical research, with the ultimate goal to prevent the complications of genetic heart diseases in our community. Prof. Semsarian is the director of two speciality clinics at RPAH: The Genetic Heart Disease and Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Clinics.

Austin Doyle invited Lecturer: Prof. Alan Cooper, SA

Alan Cooper has been an Australian Research Council Federation and Future Fellow (2005-2010, 2011-2014), during which time he has specialized in the genetic analysis of evolution, biodiversity, climate change, paleoecology and microbiomes.

Prof. Jean Pierre Despres, Canada

Jean Pierre Despres is a professor at the department of sciences of food and nutrition at the Laval University in Montreal, Canada. He is also director of research at the Institute of Cardiology at Laval Hospital, and director of the research center on lipidic diseases.

A/Prof. Jonathan Shaw, UK

Jonathan Shaw is Associate Director of Baker IDI and has been practising at the Clinic for the past 10 years. A/Prof. Shaw is Co-Chief Investigator of the AusDiab Study, the largest population-based study in Australia examining the natural history of diabetes, pre-diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease.

Prof. Craig Anderson

Craig Anderson is Director of the Neurological and Mental Health Division at The George Institute for International Health, and Professor of Stroke Medicine and Clinical Neuroscience in the College of Health Sciences at the University of Sydney and Neurologist (Director of Stroke Services) at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

Further details on the program will follow in the coming months, and we will be sure to let you know of any updates, the call for abstracts date and when registration opens.

We look forward to seeing you all in Tasmania



Anne Barden
Program Director



Feature article – SPRINT trial

Late last year the SPRINT trial results were announced, a summary of which is captured below. This trial will be discussed in greater depth at the upcoming American Society of Hypertension meeting in May – see the end of this e news for more details.

Intensive lowering of systolic blood pressure in high-risk individuals without diabetes reduces the risk of cardiovascular events

Lowering systolic blood pressure (SBP) levels below 120 mm Hg reduces the risk of cardiovascular events and death in high-risk individuals with hypertension but without diabetes (The SPRINT Research Group. *New Engl J Med* 2015; 373:2103-16). A randomised clinical trial – the SPRINT study – investigated the effect on cardiovascular outcomes of intensive SBP lowering (defined as SBP <120 mm Hg) compared with a standard SBP target (defined as SBP <140 mm Hg) in 9361 people at increased risk of cardiovascular events. The study subjects had a baseline SBP of 130 mm Hg or higher, but no diabetes. They were considered to be at increased cardiovascular risk due to the presence of one or more risk factors including history of cardiovascular disease (but no history of stroke), chronic kidney disease, age 75 years or older, or other cardiovascular risk factors. The main composite outcome included events such as myocardial infarction or other acute coronary syndromes, stroke, heart failure or death from cardiovascular causes. The patients were followed up for a median of 3.26 years.

The study was stopped early because of a significant reduction in events in the intensive treatment arm. Those with the more intensive SBP lowering target had a 25% relative risk reduction for cardiovascular events (primary composite outcome) compared with the standard SBP target group ($P < 0.001$). People in the intensive treatment group also had a significantly lower risk of death from any cause compared with those treated to a less intensive SBP target (27% lower relative risk; $P = 0.003$). The overall rate of serious adverse events was not significantly different between groups, although intensive SBP lowering was associated with a higher rate of hypotension, syncope, kidney damage and electrolyte disturbances compared with the standard SBP target group ($P < 0.001$).

An important notation with respect to study design and the achievement of such low SBP targets with intervention was that BP was measured using an automated, unobserved technique. This approach has been shown to reduce the white coat effect and results in BP values that are lower than clinic measured BP but are similar to out of clinic BP such as 24 hour ambulatory BP.

Overall the findings demonstrate that more intensive SBP lowering in high-risk individuals with hypertension, but without diabetes, can significantly lower the rates of fatal and non-fatal cardiovascular events.

More commentary on the SPRINT trial can be found at the following link:

http://hyper.ahajournals.org/site/misc/SPRINT_Trial.xhtml

Young Investigator Corner

Science meets Parliament

Early in March, Chris Chan (Monash University), Dean Picone (University of Tasmania) and I attended 'Science meets Parliament' in Canberra, organised by Science and Technology Australia. It is a fantastic experience for young researchers, and we are very lucky the HBPRCA supports new investigators to attend it! Read on to hear about their experience below.

Early Career Researcher (ECR) Symposium

In collaboration with new investigators from the Australian Atherosclerosis Society (AAS) and the Australian Vascular Biology Society (AVBS), we have started to put together a very exciting program for our annual Young Investigator Symposium. While some details are yet to be confirmed, I can disclose we will have workshops on very hot topics. This includes how to write an eye catching scientific resume. In line with the government agenda on innovation, we will have a workshop on research translation. We will also hold a workshop on science communication and how to get your message across the media and the public. This is in line with the "What is the fuss about" campaign in support of medical research and the Medical Research

Future Fund, which will hopefully support many of our young scientists to keep a job in medical research. We will end the symposium with a career panel, to discuss job opportunities after a PhD.

We hope to see all HBPRCA early career researchers there!

Francine Marques
YI Representative



Science Meets Parliament Update – Chris Chan and Dean Picone

Chris Chan and I were given the fantastic opportunity to attend SmP 2016. We spent the first day of the meeting learning about policy, the media and how to convey your key scientific message in 60 seconds (judged by our peers!).



Chris Chan and Dean Picone, along with Francine Marques at Science Meets Parliament 2016

The second day was spent at Parliament. I met with Jill Hall, the Labor member for Shortland. She is a co-convenor of the Parliamentary friends of the Heart and Stroke Foundations and was very interested to hear about the challenge of improving cardiovascular disease outcomes in Australia. SmP was an invaluable experience, many thanks to the HBPRCA for providing us the opportunity to attend.

Dean Picone

I received the amazing opportunity to represent the HBPRCA Science Meets Parliament (SmP) 2016 in Canberra, where 200 selected scientists around Australia. On the first day of SmP 2016, we engaged in a whole-day workshop aimed and were exposed to some fantastic insight from the Novel Laureate Prof. Brian Schmidt, journalists Paul Bongiorno and Alison Carabine, and policy makers Prof Emily Banks and Dr Subho Banerjee to name a few - who all emphasised the importance of being able to communicate Science and influence the wider community that we may previously not paid much attention to. The Gala dinner, held at Parliament house, was fantastic and we heard from Bill Shorten and Christopher Pyne, who both spoke extensively about the importance of science innovation and very importantly, fostering gender equity in STEM fields. The next day I and three other scientists met Sharon Claydon, the MP for Newcastle, where we got to discuss the importance of our research. Of course, the tour was not complete without attending the National Press Club (and hearing from Dr Alan Finkel) and hearing the politicians duke it out during Question Time. Thank you to the HBPRCA for allowing us to attend SmP 2016 - it is a fantastic experience for any scientist to attend, I enjoyed it immensely and learnt a lot!

Chris Chan



Membership

As you are well aware, membership runs to December 31st, however the society offers a grace period until March 31st to allow you to renew your membership for the following calendar year.

Many of you (**156** in fact as at March 30th) have already renewed your membership and updated your details via the secretariat, thank you, but there are still a good number to do so.

At this stage there are:

- **72** students still to renew / update their details (even though it is free, please action!)
- **123** Ordinary members to renew (noting that of these 64 did not pay their 2015 dues last year, and whose membership will be lapsed if not renewed this year).

We are very keen to accelerate membership renewals in the future, so if you are one of those due to renew PLEASE do so as soon as possible, so we can have an accurate database of active members, and don't just wait and see if you are going to the ASM in December before actioning!

The Secretariat will be in touch with you to follow up, and the Executive have agreed the following procedure:

- Renewals reminders have been sent to current database
- Those who have yet to respond are being followed up individually
- Back payments for 2015 (63 of 123 yet to renew) are payable or membership will be lapsed.
- An **additional extension** to end of financial year has been agreed...meaning that members can renew but they still need to pay outstanding dues for 2015 as well as 2016 by June 30 or membership will lapse.
- If such members choose to rejoin after June 30, they must pay their debt (back fees) plus 2016 membership to be able to re-join

If you no longer wish to be a member, or if your contact details (especially e mail) have changed please let the Secretariat know by e mailing admin@yoursecretariat.com.au or calling 02 4356 0007.



Janna Morrison
Membership Secretary



Meetings and other items of interest

Hypertension Seoul 2016

Register now for this exciting meeting! **Travel grants** are available through **ISH** and additional grants are also available through the **High Blood Pressure Foundation** – see the HBPRCA website for further details [CLICK HERE](#)



[CLICK HERE](#) to see details of ISH travel grants available.

American Society of Hypertension (ASH)

Please read on for a Special Message from Suzanne Oparil, MD

Dear Colleague –

*As a past president of the American Society of Hypertension, I am writing today to give you and your fellow clinicians an exceptionally good reason to attend the **ASH Annual Scientific Meeting – May 13-17, 2016 in New York City: at this year's meeting, we will be highlighting the landmark SPRINT Trial--including featuring some new SPRINT data being released for the first time.***

*I was a principal investigator of one of the five clinical networks involved in SPRINT, and I'm very excited to share the results of this study and its **implications for patient care.** In fact, because the results have been so outstandingly positive with respect to preventing cardiovascular disease outcomes and death in the study population, healthcare providers need to know how to treat and manage blood pressure more effectively ... and the **ASH Annual Scientific Meeting provides the perfect hypertension learning experience.***

*From the SPRINT Trial session, to sessions focused on how to use diuretics alone and in combination, to sessions on utilizing mobile health technology in blood pressure control, the ASH Annual Meeting will provide attendees with both the latest **evidence in clinical hypertension research** and the tools and skills for **point of care application.***

I would like to give you the opportunity both to hear from the experts, and

to discuss with them, the implications of SPRINT – at our Annual Meeting in May. In fact I would say that if there ever was a BEST TIME to attend the ASH Annual Meeting – 2016 would be the year!

*Please click on the following links (below) for more information about the **ASH Annual Scientific Meeting and Exposition – May 13-17, 2016 – in New York City.***

*Sincerely,
Suzanne Oparil, MD
Distinguished Professor of Medicine
Professor of Cell, Developmental and Integrative Biology
Director, Vascular Biology and Hypertension Program
Of the Division of Cardiovascular Disease
Department of Medicine
University of Alabama at Birmingham*

Click [HERE](#) to Sign up as an ATTENDEE for ASH 2016.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the SPRINT STUDY and the results released so far.

World Hypertension League

The WHL has just released their newsletter, [click here](#) to read it via the HBPRCA website

Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR)

The ASMR have released their newsletter [click here](#) to read it via the latest news page of the HBPRCA website

CPPEI 2016

CPPEI 2016 will be taking place in Bratislava, Slovakia on June 30-July 2, 2016.
Congress website is: <http://cardioelderly.org/>

CPPEI are happy to offer to all collaborating associations and partners a special discounted registration rate for all members.

