From the Director

The excellent effort of AIRmed staff in preparing for the successful accreditation visit assessing our compliance with the National Safety and Quality Healthcare Standards was recognised and much appreciated. Although a massive logistic exercise, the accreditation process has helped us to identify a number of significant improvements in order to further optimise the quality of care we deliver for our patients. This Newsletter also emphasises our contributions to clinical governance and evidence based medicine by the large number of peer-reviewed publications across AIRmed. A number of our colleagues have been recognised with particular honours and awards and also with success in the recent Monash University academic promotions round. It is noteworthy that the three prize winners in the recent Monash Alfred campus 3 Minute Thesis competition heats were all affiliated with AIRmed, perhaps reflecting the high interest in translational research which is a strength of this campus and also the impressive calibre of our PhD students. I hope you enjoy the current Newsletter.

Regards, Robyn

Prizes & Awards

Dr Kirk Kee has received an Abstract Scholarship for this year 2013 American Thoracic Society International Conference in Philadelphia.

Kerry Parker and colleagues working on the ACT3 study, won the COPD SIG best poster finalist at Thoracic Society of Australia & New Zealand in Darwin in March this year.

Three AIRmed PhD students were highly successful in the Monash CCS 3 Minute Thesis Competition heat. Dr Kathryn Hackman was ranked first with Ms Jodie Abramovitch and Dr Kirk Kee both tying for second place.

Professor Michael Abramson was recognised with a Community Service Award from the Asthma Foundation Victoria, in recognition of his significant contribution to the understanding of asthma through research and support. The award was presented to Michael by Lady Anna Cowen, wife of the late Rt. Hon. Sir Zelman Cowen, at the Asthma Foundation Victoria’s 50th Anniversary Reception on 9th May, 2013.

Michael was also presented with a National award and a plaque in recognition of his inspirational national leadership in developing and implementing the Asthma Australia National Research Program. This award was presented to Michael by The Hon. David Davis, MP, Victorian Minister for Health and Ageing. It was a fitting acknowledgement of Michael’s commitment to asthma research, which has made a real difference to the lives of people with this condition.

Congratulations

Adjunct Appointments Monash University: Congratulations to Robert Stirling who has been appointed Adjunct Clinical Associate Professor. Rob leads our clinical programme for patients with primary immunodeficiencies. He has shown vision by including with this group the overlapping clinical patients with non-cystic fibrosis bronchiectasis. Rob also plays a very pivotal role in the multidisciplinary care of Alfred patients with lung cancer.

Brenda Button has been reappointed as Adjunct Clinical Associate Professor, in recognition of her significant academic contributions to physiotherapy, particularly in cystic fibrosis patients.

Assoc Prof Bruce Thompson, Head Physiology Service, has been appointed Adjunct Professor of Medicine in recognition of his high level of achievement in respiratory physiology and contribution to Monash University.

Congratulations to Dr Shueh-Wei Lim who has been appointed as Clinical Professor of Dermatology with Alliance University College, affiliated with the medical programmes of the National University of Ireland, Galway and University College Cork, Ireland as well as University Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Ben Tarrant - Senior physiotherapist was successful in a small projects grant ($9,993) for his Masters Project titled 'Investigating the role of nebulised mucolytic therapy during lower respiratory tract infections post lung transplantation'. Co-investigators are Greg Snell, Bruce Thompson, Steve Ivulich, Lou Fuller, Brenda Button and Anne Holland.
**World Day of Immunology**
World Day of Immunology was celebrated in Melbourne with a public lecture on 29 April. Among the presenters were Professor Robyn O’Hehir, “Allergy: from clinic to lab to community” along with some of Melbourne’s top scientists covering immunological advances in coeliac disease, multiple sclerosis and cancer therapies.

**AIRmed be prepared**
A recent AIRmed grand round was well attended with all staff completing the Basic Life Skills training. Thanks to Matt Naughton, Kerry Parker, Emily Beattie and Paul Ross for their time and knowledge with the training.

**Cabrini Food Allergy Symposium**
Professor Robyn O’Hehir gave a keynote address on “Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis: Diagnosis, Management and Future Prospects” at the Cabrini Malvern Update on Food Allergy and Intolerance and Implications for Hospital Food Service Systems. The day long symposium was held on Friday May 17th 2013.

**NHMRC/RG Menzies Fellowship**
Dr Scott Sands BEng PhD has started officially with AIRmed. Previously collaborating with Matt Naughton, Kirk Kee and Teanau Roebuck, Scott developed a way to quantitate the severity of central sleep apnea, an affliction that is highly prevalent in heart failure. Scott is currently at Harvard Medical School for two years investigating whether obstructive sleep apnea – also common in heart failure – is primarily a disorder of breathing control rather than anatomy. Ultimately the goal is to provide new insights into the mechanisms and treatment of apnea in heart failure.

**Visiting Professor**
A/Prof Danny Eckert, Senior Research Fellow at Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA), Sydney, NHMRC R.D. Wright Fellow and leader of the sleep physiology research program at NeuRA presented recently at the AIRmed Grandround on “Defining the Pathophysiological Causes of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea: Identification of Novel Therapeutic Targets”.

**Money raised for CF**
Last May two energetic and inspiring young men completed a monumental run in an effort to raise money and awareness for CF. John Davis and Matthew Haines ran 65km a day for 5 days from Melbourne to Albury. This was an amazing achievement that took hundreds of hours of planning and obviously training.

The young achievers were able to raise over $47,000 dollars, in which a large amount was donated to the Alfred. The money will be utilised in future research projects in the CF department.

**Opening of new general practice**
Dr Larry Light had his new dedicated 5 consulting room general practice officially opened by The Member for Gellibrand, The Hon Nicola Roxon MP, on 29th July. Notably he received a DoHA Primary Care Infrastructure Grant to help with the redevelopment.

**Asian Pacific Society of Respirology**
Professor Michael Abramson was an invited speaker at the recent research protocol development workshop held by the Asian Pacific Society of Respirology and Ho Chi Minh City Respirology Society in Vietnam.

**AIRmed Equipment Acquisitions**
AIRmed has recently been successful in the acquisition of equipment through The Alfred Foundation (TAF). Recent purchases include transcutaneous monitors and NIV pumps for General Respiratory and Sleep Medicine; a state-of-the-art Body Composition Analyser which was applied for by the CF team to benefit the CF Service and the wider department; oximeters; dosimeters; a blood-taking chair and mobile clinic trolleys. We were also successful with the acquisition of one patient monitor in the Bronchoscopy Suite and will endeavour to complement this unit with another two units.

Special thanks to the staff who worked hard on providing the information in a timely manner to TAF, and of course our TAF colleagues who work tirelessly. The equipment was attained through donors, foundations and general funding.

A reminder that if you have any equipment needs, please work through your Service Head to lodge your request with Liz Malinowski, Business Manager.
Welcome & Farewell ...

Dina Pitsas is currently on maternity leave for 12 months. Priscilla Woodward is backfilling Dina’s role while she is on leave.

Congratulations to allergy lab scientists: Sara (and Victor) Prickett on the birth of their daughter Freya and Astrid Voskamp (and Stefan) on the birth of their daughter Mila.

Congratulations to 2012 registrar Anna Freeman (and Chris) on the arrival of Madeleine.

Edwina McCarthy leaves AIRmed after 10 years service. She has taken a position as a Research Assistant at the Royal Melbourne Hospital/University of Melbourne.

Welcome back Kirsten Deckert (AIR4 research nurse) from maternity leave.

Dr Julian Bosco who is a Clinical and Laboratory Immunologist, has joined the AIR4 Clinic service.

Recent Publications


Recent Publications


