Australian & New Zealand Society of Blood Transfusion Newsletter

March 2023

President's Report

Simon Benson, President of ANZSBT, provides an update on the Society's activities.

As I write we are well into the new year. I hope you had some time off over the holidays to recharge and to experience, as the Italians would say, *dolce far niente* or the sweet pleasure of doing nothing!

In March I look forward to catching up with Council for our first meeting of the year here in Sydney. This is a two-day meeting as we have a lot of business to cover, including some time to focus on strategic planning.

21 March 2023
BLOOD 2023 - Abstract Submission and

with the *Quality use of non-invasive prenatal RhD testing* project, and I am pleased to report Kristen Brown (who you might know from our Clinical Practice Improvement Committee) has joined us in the role of Project Officer. With the project team now complete, it is exciting to see the progress already being made by David Roxby and Kristen, supported by the fantastic project Steering Committee, which has proved a model of engagement and collaboration.

This Chinese New Year sees us entering the Year of the Rabbit. People born under this sign are said to be scholarly and suited to academia with good reasoning skills, attention to detail and a contemplative nature. Incidentally, Albert Einstein was born in a Year of the Rabbit (1879).

This leads me nicely into encouraging you to apply for funding from the Society's Research Grant, which is now open for applications. In addition to the $75,000 offered by the Society, we have been fortunate to receive additional support from Thermo Fisher Scientific, who are offering to provide their One Lambda™ testing kits for PhD project applications planning to utilise this technology in their research.

31 March 2023
ANZSBT Research Grant applications close

31 May 2023
BLOOD 2023 - Abstract Submission Closes

10 August 2023
BLOOD 2023 - Earlybird Registration Open Closes

4 November 2023
Transfusion Practitioner Study Day - Melbourne

5 - 8 November 2023
BLOOD 2023 - Melbourne

Before I go, I'll leave you with this quick trivia question: instead of the Rabbit, which animal is being celebrated by the Vietnamese this year?

Quality Use of Non-Invasive Prenatal *RHD* Testing - Project Update

Professor David Roxby, Project Manager of the Quality use of non-invasive prenatal RhD testing project provides an update on the project's progress.

In 2022 the Society successfully obtained a grant under the Quality Use of Pathology Program (QUPP) to assist with implementing RHD Non-Invasive Prenatal Testing (NIPT) in pregnant RhD negative women. This is an exciting development for the Society and an important project for Australia.

The project has several public health goals, including identifying all steps in the pathology testing pathway for the recently funded NIPT, devising standardised clinical testing and reporting pathways, integrating these into maternity care

A Steering Committee comprising clinicians and representatives from peak bodies has been established and has been meeting regularly since October 2022.

The Steering Committee has been in contact with various overseas services already providing RHD NIPT, reviewing their test characteristics and models, testing pathways and how these fit into clinical pathways, reporting processes and education material. Our research overseas has identified a variety of models for laboratory implementation, where RHD NIPT has been the standard of care in many comparator countries for over a decade.

Currently, the Steering Committee is reviewing various Antenatal Clinical Care Pathways covering metropolitan, regional and remote areas and Indigenous people to ensure the inclusion of RHD NIPT in these pathways and consideration of vulnerable communities.

At present, no Australian pathology laboratories are providing routine RHD NIPT for non-alloimmunised RhD negative women. However, the Steering Committee intends to work closely with any interested laboratory or organisation interested in establishing RHD NIPT to support the implementation of the test through education, interpretation, reporting, monitoring results and follow-up of mothers.

My Story: Dr Peter Flanagan

I retired in early February 2023 after 43 years practising medicine, of which 33 were in transfusion medicine. This is my story.

Born in Birmingham in the UK, I studied medicine in Nottingham and specialised in haematology after initial training in general medicine. I went on to undertake further training in transfusion medicine and was appointed as a consultant at the Yorkshire Regional Transfusion Service in 1989.

My appointment coincided with the discovery of hepatitis C (HCV) and the potential to test for the virus. This sparked my interest in transfusion-transmitted infection, which continued throughout my career. I joined and subsequently chaired the UKBTS Standing Committee on Transfusion Transmitted Infection (SACTTI) and played a key role in the UK HCV lookback programme, the UKBTS response to variant CJD and the development of systems to implement nucleic acid testing for HCV.

The creation of the National Blood Authority in 1993 led to considerable change for the blood service in England. Regional centres were disestablished, and a national structure progressively implemented. I was appointed as the Clinical Director of the northern zone. The management responsibilities of this role, in conjunction with the professional role in blood safety, were particularly onerous

newly established NZBS.

I arrived in Auckland in November 1998 and played a leading role in the establishment of the new service, helping to create a world-class blood service. We were the second country in the world to implement the UK blood donor exclusion and were an early adopter of universal pre-storage leucodepletion. My role in medical student teaching led me to an appointment as an honorary clinical associate professor in the Department of Molecular Medicine and Pathology at the University of Auckland.

My international roles progressively grew. I served as ANZSBT President from 2007-09, ISBT Board member from 2006, becoming President in 2012-14 and Chair of the Standing Committee on Ethics from 2015 -2022, and Vice-President Asia for the International Plasma Fractionation Association (IPFA) from 2016-20. I have been a member of the WHO Expert Committee on Blood Transfusion since 2008, and an Expert with the Council of Europe and European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines (EDQM) from 1999 until 2021.

I am particularly proud of two initiatives. Firstly, my role as Chair of the EDQM/European Commission Working Group responsible for developing the Good Practice Guidelines, which were subsequently adopted as EU standards following publication of Commission Directive (EU) 2106/1214. Secondly, the redrafting of the ISBT Code of Ethics that was endorsed by the ISBT General Assembly in 2017; this was the first major rewrite of the Code since it was first published in 1980.

I was awarded the Ruth Sanger Oration in 2017 and a Life member of the

In 2019, as part of a planned retirement path, I moved to a Transfusion Medicine specialist in Wellington. I am privileged to have worked with so many people who share my commitment to transfusion, and I am grateful for the support and encouragement they have given me. I am now ready to embark on the next stage of my journey with plans to travel, improve my bridge, stay fit as a tramper and hot yoga enthusiast, and spend more time with my long-suffering and supportive wife, Pat.

National Transfusion Dataset: A First Step in National Streamlined Blood Use

Initially funded by the Australian Research Data Commons, the National Transfusion Dataset (NTD) was established by the Transfusion Research Unit (TRU) at Monash University to capture data on all transfusion episodes occurring at participating hospital and pre-hospital services. The NTD leverages the existing structure of the Australian and New Zealand Massive Transfusion Registry (ANZMTR), established in 2011, which captured data on more than 10,000 cases of critical bleeding. By collating data on all transfusion episodes, the NTD will provide vital information on blood use, that will help support evidence-based policy decisions, leading to better blood utilisation and improved clinical outcomes for Australian patients.

In 2022 the TRU received a $2.9 million MRFF grant which will further expand the project, enabling the addition of more structured data from national hospital services, pre-hospital services and registries, including de-identified donation

used to broaden the NTD data.

The expansion will facilitate research into national priority areas in transfusion, including:

- areas of high use of blood products, such as to support critically ill patients and those with major haemorrhage or bone marrow failure;
- development of a suite of surveillance systems to monitor blood product safety across the entire blood transfusion chain, from donation to transfusion;
- health economic analyses of blood product usage; and
- Australia's first registry-based transfusion clinical trial: a trial of haemoglobin triggers for red cell transfusions in patients supported by extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO), in partnership with the EXCEL Registry

More information is available at: https://bloodsynergy.org/ntd

National Transfusion Dataset

BLOOD 2022 Award Winners

Best Poster or Oral Presentation on Haemovigilance

Dolly Matthew is a Clinical Nurse Consultant PBM/Transfusion at Joondalup Health Campus (Ramsay Health Care) Western Australia. We caught up with Dolly after BLOOD 2022 to discuss her presentation "A comprehensive neonatal-paediatric intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) treatment plan developed to improve health care outcomes for children requiring IVIG infusions in Australia"

This study aimed to achieve safer IVIg administration for neonatal and paediatric patients. Paediatric IVIg therapy is not common and can cause confusion among medical and nursing staff with prescription and administration.

Paediatric IVIg therapy is challenging due to the variable doses among patients (weight-related) and the incremental rate rises are also weight-related, coupled

during infusion, the standard forms some areas use do not offer clear recording of all aspects of prescription and administration.
A form was developed to provide better guidance to reduce confusion and errors. The form allows for the correct dose for prescriptions to be clearly documented, and the correct rate with incremental increases explicitly governed. This allows ease of IVIg administration and patient monitoring across the whole infusion period.

This form reduces prescription dosage errors and reduces rate-related adverse events, especially for patients with Kawasaki disease who require infusions over 10-12 hours. The form also avoids confusion regarding administration for staff across shift change-overs during the long infusion period.

ANZSBT News

Blood 2023

On behalf of the Organising Committee, we look forward to welcoming you to Melbourne for Blood 2023 on 5th - 8th November.

We encourage you to put the dates in your diary now and start planning your participation and attendance. We are very much looking forward to gathering together in person again, and planning is already underway for an excellent educational program including leading international experts joining us in Melbourne.

21 https://www.blood2023.com/

ANZSBT Research Fund

We are very pleased to advise that applications are now open for the ANZSBT Research Grant 2023.

The purpose of the grant is to contribute towards basic science, clinical and translational research in transfusion or related fields in Australia and New Zealand.

In 2023, the Society will award a total sum of $75,000 comprising either a single grant of $75,000 or smaller grants totalling $75,000.

2023 Thermo Fisher Support

Projects submitted by PhD students that will require use of One Lambda branded HLA/HNA/HPA/KIR genotyping kits and/or HLA antibody/AT1R antibody or non-HLA antibody kits, supplied by Thermo Fisher Scientific ANZ, may be eligible for additional support. The upper limit of support will be reviewed and agreed dependent upon the range and volume of tests to be performed, with potential for up to 75 test subjects. Applicants should itemise this in the Budget Justification in their Research Grant application. ANZSBT is grateful to Thermo Fisher for this support.

transfusion or related fields.

The Society recognises the importance of supporting career development of the next generation of transfusion researchers. The Society therefore encourages applications from early career researchers (less than 5 years since PhD, FRCPA, FAIMS or equivalent qualification) and post-graduate students are encouraged. The Society encourages applications from nurses or medical laboratory scientists for funding of suitable projects.

An applicant needs to be an ANZSBT member.
You can find more information about membership and how to join on our website. Application for membership alongside the grant application will be accepted.

For more information, please click on the link below and select the “ANZSBT Research Fund” tab.
https://anzsbt.org.au/awards-grants/awards-grants-general-information/

The closing date for applications is on Friday 31st March 2023

donation to promote best practice in clinical and laboratory medicine through life-changing research, education and independent expertise.
Donate today!

Other News

Transfusion Evidence Round-Up

The latest quarterly Transfusion Evidence Round-Up newsletter is now available. The March Round-Up topic is "World Haemophilia Day 2023" and the articles focus on acquired and inherited bleeding disorders.

These quarterly newsletters are emailed to all ISBT members and TEL subscribers. To learn more or subscribe, visit the ISBT website or TEL website.

Transfusion Evidence Library

National Pathology Accreditation Scheme (NPAAC) - new edition release notification

consultation with the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC), has released the following updates:

Requirements for transfusion laboratory practice (5th edition)

The transfusion standard outlines practice standards that assure the safety, quality and efficacy of transfusion testing, associated transfusion laboratory practice, and non-transfusion related blood group immunohaematology testing.

If your laboratory provides pretransfusion and antenatal and post-natal immunohaematology testing and issuing of blood and blood products, then you will be required to comply with the fifth edition of the transfusion standard.

The following standards have also been updated:

- Requirements for information communication and reporting (5th edition)
- Requirements for the packaging and transport of pathology specimens and associated materials (5th edition)
- Requirements for medical testing for human genetic variation (3rd edition)

If you have any questions Contact the Safety and Quality Advice Centre: AdviceCentre@safetyandquality.gov.au

Answer: Year of the Cat..