

REPORT ON 3RD ANNUAL WACC 2009

VENUE: Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre Durban South Africa

DATES: 1 and 2 October 2009

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

370 people attended, as delegates or speakers, over the two days. Another 30 attended as visitors. Approximately 64% of attendees were from KZN and 36% were from various Provinces in South Africa. 20 delegates have come from other Southern African countries. Of the 64% from KZN, half of them were from Durban.

A: FEEDBACK FROM SPONSORS

1. Dept of Health KZN - the Department of Health in KZN was a major sponsor of the conference. At the opening ceremony Dr Buthelezi spoke on behalf of the MEC for Health in KZN, Dr Dlomo. He encouraged the workshop to discuss ways in which clinical care could be streamlined to do things in ways that are relevant to the challenges of cost effective patient care. He was very supportive of the effort that AWACC is making to help translate the latest scientific research from evidence based medicine into best clinical practice for resource limited settings. He hoped that KZN would lead the way forward to improve things and set an example for South Africa and Africa as a whole.
The DoH in KZN runs the largest ARV programme in South Africa.
2. Mr Roger Phili, who runs the HIV/AIDS, Sexually transmitted diseases and TB unit (HAST Unit), closed the session on 2 October. He congratulated the organizers and delegates on a successful conference. He has also undertaken to take forward many of the positive recommendations from the scientific sessions. These relate to:
 - a. Hepatitis B co-infection,
 - b. Guidelines for switching therapy and treatment failure,
 - c. Availability of drugs to limit toxicity of ARVs,
 - d. Changes in keeping with new National Guidelines for commencing ART and PMTCT,The DoH has indicated their willingness to consider sponsorship of ongoing workshops for clinicians

B. CENTRE FOR AIDS RESEARCH (CFAR) AND THE HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

Professor Bruce Walker and Dr Raj Gandhi made a meaningful contribution again this year. They have been responsible for supporting this conference significantly since 2007. This year they provided funds in support of the conference logistics, travel and participation of speakers from Harvard Medical School (HMS). All the speakers were experts in their field and made a very important contribution to the sessions. We are grateful for their commitment for continued participation next year under the leadership of Dr Gandhi. He will remain a scientific director and co-chair of the conference.

C. THE S A HIV CLINICIANS SOCIETY

Dr François Venter, President of the society, gave the opening plenary talk. He set the tone for the entire two day discussion and discussed the challenges of making best use of what we have available in S A for the greatest number of people. Towards this end there needs to be some changes in ARV guidelines but more work must be done on systems and problematic issues in the delivery of health care to our citizens. The society also provided speakers from outside KZN and funds for them to participate in the conference as experts.

D. INFECTIOUS DISEASE UNIT, NELSON R MANDELA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, UKZN

Professor Moosa co-ordinated the case conferences, and chaired many of the meetings. He was able to conduct a very successful case conference, which elicited a very enthusiast response from the participants.

He is very committed to using the forum to empower clinicians all over KZN. He will continue as one of the co-chairs and scientific directors of the conference.

E. McCORD HOSPITAL

McCord Hospital celebrates its centenary in 2009. The hospital was established in 1909 by an American Christian Missionary doctor, Dr James McCord. Prof P Zulu, Chairman of the McCord Hospital Board, participated in the opening ceremony. He underscored the vital role that McCord has played because of its unique position as an autonomous, private/State-subsidised institution. McCord played a key co-ordinating role for the conference under the leadership of Dr H Sunpath, head of Internal Medicine/HIV medicine at McCord. He was the scientific director and one of the co- chairs of the programme. Dr Sunpath provided leadership for the administration of AWACC based at McCord Hospital. McCord Hospital has graciously made available its facilities for co-ordination of AWACC in its Centenary year.

F. THE PALLIATIVE CARE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dr Sarah Fakroodeen, chairperson of the society, co-ordinated the first session at AWACC in HIV/AIDS palliative care. The challenge remains to educate health care workers on the principles of Palliative care in HIV/AIDS.

The education of clinicians needs to improve for pain and symptom control throughout the course of the illness and especially the terminal care of some patients. The discussion, around the use of sub-acute care facilities/step down care units for inpatient care of very sick patients who are not yet ready to be discharged, must be addressed. This was reiterated by Dr Sunpath and Dr C Edwin.

Dr M Meiring emphasized the need to implement protocols for effective pain management among children and requested that palliative medicine should be given greater exposure in future workshops.

G. PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

The following companies were grateful to be involved in sponsoring the workshop. Most of the delegates from these companies enjoyed the clinical teaching and interaction with other delegates. They have indicated willingness to be involved in future workshops.

These companies are; Pfizer, BMS, Abbott, MSD, GS , Cipla and Aspen.

H. FEEDBACK FROM DELEGATES

A summary of the analysis of the Course Survey that was undertaken, please see attached questionnaire.

Day 1. All eight (8) sessions received an assessment of over 90% indicating very good and excellent. The Case Conference, in the evening, received more than 80% of Good, Very Good and Excellent assessments.

Day 2. The breakout sessions, eight (8) in all, were equally well attended. The session on Traditional Healers/HIV, generated a lot of discussion and recommendations that the workshop should allocate more time, next year, in the form of a symposium on the subject.

The other plenary sessions of the day on Maternal Health, ARV resistance and HIV and the Lung, received over 90% of Very Good and Excellent responses.

Dr François Venter's talk on 'Caring for the Carer' was excellent and inspired a lot of the delegates.

SOME GENERAL COMMENTS GLEANED FROM THE DELEGATES

Regarding the Conference venue, very appropriate and convenient. Service was excellent. More than 80% of the delegates found the choice of course topics very relevant to their work. There was a more than 80% response as Excellent for the level of participation by the delegates. The length of the course was just right for 95% of the delegates and was not considered too big.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE COMMENTS IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY

All topics relevant and well covered with good participation.

More time needed for Maternal and Child Health Care issues.

More time for issues related to improving systems and programmes of care.

Case Conference to discuss problems around HIV and the Kidney, HIV and HAART and Metabolic complications.

Discussion on mental health, psychosocial issues and cultural aspects of HIV care.

More input required from KZN pharmaceutical committee.

Timekeeping for sessions to be improved, especially in the morning.

Focus on salvage regimens to be used in the public sector.

To involve the National Department of Health.

More collaboration between the DoH and S A Clinicians Society on guidelines.

A session on HIV and skin disorders.

Durban is a preferred venue, closer to home with good facilities.

Care of surgical patients with AIDS

PERSONAL COMMENTS BY ORGANISERS

We are inspired by all the responses to continue organizing this workshop.

Dr Raj Gandhi considers that this workshop has the potential to become the premier AIDS Clinical conference in Africa.

Professor Y Moosa is very encouraged by the support from the Department of Health, in KZN, and would like them to play a key role in taking the recommendations of this workshop to policy makers. He would also like to invite case presentations, for future conferences, from sites all over South Africa.

Dr H Sunpath would like to invite anyone who wishes to join the panel of advisors for this workshop with whom he could network in drawing up the agenda for the fourth Annual workshop.

It is proposed to be held again in 2010 on the following days: 23 and 24 September, or 30 September and 1 October, depending on the availability of conferencing venues and dates of the school holidays. The dates will be announced in January 2010.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sunpath', with a horizontal line underneath it.

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Report compiled by Dr H Sunpath,
Scientific Director and co-chair AWACC

Attachments to this report available on McCord Website – AWACC LINK

1. Conference programme
2. Biodata of speakers
3. Course evaluation questionnaire