

Centre of Research Excellence for the Study of Naevi



Naevus CRE Update – 19 December 2016

Upcoming CRE Events

- **2017 CRE Researcher in Residence, Professor Allan Halpern**, will visit Brisbane in October 2017 in conjunction with the 9th World Congress of Melanoma. Prof Halpern, Chief of the Dermatology Service and co-Leader of the Melanoma Disease Management Team at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, USA, is an internationally recognised expert in melanoma and pigmented lesions. He has a special interest in the roles of naevi as precursors and risk factors for melanoma.

CRE News and Progress

- **2016 CRE Researcher in Residence was Associate Professor Lois Loescher**, in Brisbane from 8th – 16th September. Lois, a CRE Associate Investigator, is a behavioural scientist working at the Skin Cancer Institute at the Arizona Cancer Center, The University of Arizona, Tucson, USA. She has a distinguished career focusing on the development of skin cancer prevention and early detection programs and intervention materials. During her visit Lois spent time at QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, Queensland University of Technology and the Translational Research Institute (TRI), interacting with researchers and conducting mentoring sessions with students and early career researchers. Her visit to Brisbane, including her seminar presentation at the TRI on 15th September: “Does your Research Make a Difference? Translation of Sun Protection and UVR Risk Reduction Behaviour into Community Settings”, was well received and highly productive for the CRE. Lois’s presentation can be found on the CRE website <https://naevi.centre.uq.edu.au/presentations>
- **2nd CRE Consumer Forum** was held at the TRI on 15th September. A/Prof Lois Loescher led the consumer discussion focussing on partner-assisted skin examination and how technology can help. Consumer Reflections, providing a brief overview of the Consumer Forums held to date, can be found on the CRE website <https://naevi.centre.uq.edu.au/consumer-forums>
- The **Core Study** (also called the **Mind your Moles Study**) has received approval from the Australian Electoral Commission, and in early November we received the extract of a randomised sample of electorates from the greater Brisbane area for recruitment of potential participants. Recruitment brochures have been sent to 500 potential participants, and to date 37 have responded with 27 participants scheduled for baseline

imaging appointments before Christmas. We are certain this positive response is in part due to Emma Betts (<http://www.dearmelanoma.com/>), who kindly supports our recruitment campaign (<https://naevi.centre.uq.edu.au/mind-your-moles-study>).

Recently, 10 participants were involved in a pilot validation study to allow evaluation of our Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in preparation for the Mind your Moles Study. This has been a very valuable process, resulting in updates to the SOPs to achieve greater efficiency and accuracy in processes and data collection.

Many Mind your Moles volunteers have also participated in Focus Group sessions, assisting us with the development of an app to send photos of moles to a doctor (linking with Program II).

- **Program I: Genetics and Epidemiology of Naevi** aimed to reach its recruitment goal of 1200 participants, which first started in 2011. After a monumental 5 year effort, recruitment for this study has now been finalised with a total of 1261 participants enrolled, and we currently have completed phenotypic/imaging data for 1239 participants (589 cases, 650 controls) and genotypic data for 898 participants. This program will now continue with analysis and evaluation of the large data set acquired since 2011, with numerous research outputs anticipated in 2017.
- **Program II: Consumer Facilitated Naevi Monitoring** will utilise participants recruited as part of the CRE Core Study, with this Program originally planned to commence at their 6 month follow up appointment. Initiation of this Program will now be postponed until the 18 month follow up appointment, allowing for optimal alignment with work being conducted within the complementary NHMRC Partnership Project APP1113962 'Redesigning skin cancer early detection and care' 2015-2018.
- **Program III: Molecular and Genetic Properties of Changing Naevi** recruitment is continuing. Currently 16 advanced melanoma patients and 43 control participants have undergone their baseline imaging and data collection appointment.
- **Melanoma/Skin Cancer MOOC (Massive Open Online Course)** development has made some encouraging progress recently. The UQ Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) is supporting UQx in progressing our MOOC proposal, with it now being considered for development in 2017 as soon as the required resources can be obtained.
- **16th World Congress on Cancers of the Skin (WCCS) in Vienna (31st August – 3rd Sept 2016)**. Presentations were given by Prof H. Peter Soyer (Apps and Telemedicine), Prof Monika Janda (Skin Cancer Prevention in Australia) and Dr Mitchell Stark (Melanoma Treatment and Micro-RNA Biomarkers). The presentations can be found on the CRE website <https://naevi.centre.uq.edu.au/presentations>
- **Society for Melanoma Research Congress (SMR) in Boston (6th – 9th Nov 2016)**. A/Prof Rick Sturm (Germline variants in individuals of low and high nevus count) and A/Prof Helmut Schaidler (The AMPK-OGT axis prevents acquired drug resistance through inhibition of drug induced epigenetic remodelling in melanoma) gave presentations at the SMR. Their presentation abstracts can be found on the CRE website <https://naevi.centre.uq.edu.au/presentations>