

# ASPERT

Bulletin | September 2022



AOTEAROA AUSTRALIA PANCREATIC ENZYME REPLACEMENT THERAPY RESEARCH GROUP

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

AMANDA LANDERS



So much is happening for the ASPERT team as the 2022 year draws closer to Christmas! The patient survey study has finally closed. We finished with 199 engagements in Australia and 136 for Aotearoa New Zealand. What a massive effort and thanks so much to everyone who put the message out to networks. We are in the middle of analysing the data and will be releasing some preliminary numbers to you all soon. The clinician survey study is still open until the end of September. We may extend this study depending on the numbers. We have almost 90% of the target for New Zealand, but have a way to go in Australia. We still have some advertisements to go out so hopefully we will see a rise in numbers across the Tasman. If you know anyone in Australia who prescribes PERT, please pass the link on to them.

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## SYSTEMATIC REVIEW PUBLICATION

ASPERT has recently published a systematic review titled "The Impact of Pancreatic Enzyme Replacement Therapy on Patients with Advanced Pancreatic Adenocarcinoma". The purpose of the review was to explore the impact that PERT has on people with advanced pancreatic cancer.

This study laid the foundation for the two population surveys the team has developed and released.

The link to the abstract is below

[https://journals.lww.com/pancreasjournal/Abstract/2022/05000/The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Pancreatic\\_Enzyme\\_Replacement.1.aspx#](https://journals.lww.com/pancreasjournal/Abstract/2022/05000/The_Impact_of_Pancreatic_Enzyme_Replacement.1.aspx#)



## TEAM NEWS

CHRIS BAGGOLEY



Chris Baggoley was Chief Medical Officer of Australia between 2011 and 2016 and contributed to the international response to several global epidemics through his work on the World Health Organisation's International Health Regulations Emergency Committee. Prior to this, he held positions as Director of Emergency Medicine at both the Flinders Medical Centre and Royal Adelaide Hospital, Chief Medical Officer of South Australia and Chief Executive of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

He received an Order of Australia in the 2013 Queen's Birthday Honours List for distinguished service to medicine, medical administration and public health care, and to education. He currently sits on 3 boards including Australian Red Cross Lifeblood. He is a member of the WHO Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee for the WHO Emergency Programme.

Chris was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in January 2019, fortunately early enough for him to undergo a Whipple's procedure, followed by 6 months of chemotherapy. He is now the Deputy Chair of the Australian Pancreatic Cancer Foundation (PanKind) and a valued consumer representative for the ASPERT group. He was prescribed PERT while in hospital and has been taking it before every meal since!

## DIETITIANS NZ CONFERENCE

This year the Dietitians NZ conference was hosted in Ōtautahi (Christchurch). The theme was "Te Kākano – The Seed" which focused on the generation of new ideas and innovation in the new health care system.

Some members of the ASPERT team (Amanda and Helen) were asked to help present a case study on PERT and pancreatic cancer at the recent NZ Dietitian's conference. (pic). They had a lovely time with several dietitians who were keen to hear more about our work.

Prior to the conference two members of the ASPERT team (Advanced Clinical Dietitian Kylie Russell and Pancreatic Surgeon Professor John Windsor) held a workshop on PEI and PERT covering a range of topics including the following...

- How to identify and diagnose patients at risk of PEI.
- Practical teaching on how to commence, monitor and evaluate PERT dosing
- New evidence on PEI & PERT in a range of clinical settings including pancreatic cancer, surgery, pancreatitis and the elderly.

This was a great opportunity to spread awareness and educate more of Aotearoa's health care professionals about PEI, PERT and pancreatic cancer.



## PRELIMINARY RESULTS POPULATION SURVEY

The population survey has closed and the team is currently working through the results. Some preliminary results are as follows.

1. Some patients with advanced pancreatic cancer have not heard of PERT.
2. Of those who had heard of PERT many have not been prescribed it.
3. Patients with PEI suffer from symptoms of malabsorption, some of which appear to be reduced by PERT.
4. PERT appears to be well tolerated with minimal side effects.

## CLINICIANS SURVEY

SOPHIE HOOKE

**We are just days away from the closing of the survey.** Thank you for anyone who has responded so far. We greatly appreciate your continued support.

The New Zealand arm of the survey has reached 85% of the goal response rate but will still need 15 more responses. On the contrary, **the Australian arm of the survey has only reached 30% of the goal response rate** so we would greatly appreciate your support sharing the survey around any networks and channels you have available!

So far, preliminary results show that majority of clinicians are routinely prescribing PERT post-pancreaticoduodenectomy (PD). However, PERT is most commonly only commenced if the pancreatic cancer patient becomes symptomatic of PEI (e.g. steatorrhea, abdominal pain, bloating, flatulence).

## WATCH THIS SPACE

A group of mostly Australian (and one Kiwi) researchers including members of ASPERT have applied for a MRFF grant specifically targeting nutrition, pain and pancreatic cancer. We will wait to hear if we have been successful and keep you all posted. If anyone reading this bulletin is keen to be supported to do some research in this area, or to be on the ASPERT research team as a consumer please let me know. We would love to hear from you!

## WE'RE ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

ASPERT has Twitter, Facebook and Instagram profiles! Follow us to keep up to date with all things.

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