

ASPERT

Bulletin | July 2023



AOTEAROA AUSTRALIA PANCREATIC ENZYME REPLACEMENT THERAPY RESEARCH GROUP

FROM THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

AMANDA LANDERS



Tēnā koutou katoa,

We are already in the middle of 2023! In Aotearoa New Zealand we have just celebrated Matariki, the Māori New Year. Matariki is a group of stars that appears at dawn in Aotearoa during the winter months. In Māori culture, festivals at this time of the year celebrated bountiful crops, acknowledged the dead, released their wairua (spirit), and celebrated life. This new public holiday is a great time for those of us who work in palliative care to reflect on our work, how we can deliver better services, and what is needed to improve quality of life. ASPERT plays its part by remembering people with pancreatic cancer. We hope to partner with them in their challenges with symptoms and support them in accessing appropriate treatments. We strive to produce high-quality research that improves their lives.

Please read the updates in the bulletin as there are several projects in the pipeline, ways we are getting the PERT message out, and opportunities for involvement.

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WORLD PANCREATIC CANCER COALITION

LOUISE DALY

ASPERT continues to make waves and new connections globally, as we spread more awareness and education of pancreatic cancer and PERT. One of these new connections is with the World Pancreatic Cancer Coalition (WPCC), a global coalition of 100+ worldwide patient advocacy groups focused on pancreatic cancer. The WPCC recently invited Amanda Landers to participate in a 'The Power of PERT' Webinar about PEI and PERT.

One of the exciting things raised in this webinar was the development of a PERT calculator called 'DigestThis!', that allows patients to estimate the appropriate dosage of PERT for each meal. This initiative from *Craig's Cause* and the *Canadian Digestive Health Foundation* is an exciting step forward for PERT and ensuring appropriate treatment for patients with pancreatic cancer.



Pancreatic Cancer
Aotearoa New Zealand



Caring for people since 1896

NATALIE TAYLOR

LOUISE DALY

It is with great delight that we welcome Associate Professor Natalie Taylor (UNSW) to the ASPERT team.

Natalie Taylor is an implementation scientist. She works in an ever-growing and important field of studying methods and strategies that help to facilitate the uptake and translation of evidence based practice into healthcare settings. As ASPERT grows and implementation of our research becomes a reality, having Natalie within our team will provide an important perspective and evidence-based approach of how best to improve care and outcomes for people with pancreatic cancer.

Natalie completed her PhD in Health Psychology in 2011 from the University of Leeds. She is the Director of Research in the School of Population Health at UNSW, has had extensive involvement in a variety of research, grants and healthcare interventions, and has been recipient of many awards, including the Australian Institute of Health Innovation Researcher of the Year Award in 2015 and 2016.

Welcome to ASPERT, Natalie!



PERT RESEARCH DAY

LOUISE DALY

With significant anticipation and planning, our PERT research day turned out to be a fantastic, productive day. The day involved 11 attendees, each bringing a wide range of experience and global perspectives. Our main goal was to make sense of what we've currently achieved with PERT, in regards to research and current global perspectives, and to channel these ideas into new questions, goals and plans.

The research day was opened by Prof Keith Roberts, a hepatobiliary surgeon from Birmingham University, via Zoom. His compelling presentation of data showing equivalent efficacy of PERT, surgery and chemotherapy set the scene for the potential trajectory and use of PERT in patients with pancreatic cancer.

One of our key successes was the breadth and depth of experience we had in the room. These backgrounds helped to lay the foundation for discussion about the direction and future focuses of ASPERT. A number of projects were proposed, based upon research from two national surveys conducted last year. These include a live tracker, RAPID reviews, algorithm development, formation of an international position statement and an implementation RCT based on the above items. Funding applications and further connection with other groups will help these projects to get off the ground. This is an exciting stage, with momentum behind us and a vision of where to from here.

Thank you for all those that were able to attend the day- some two years in the making! Keep looking out for updates on these projects and opportunities to get involved.

See image on left of the attendees.



PCANZ AND ASPERT



LOUISE DALY

ASPERT is pleased to announce a new partnership with Pancreatic Cancer Aotearoa/ New Zealand (PCANZ). As mentioned in the April Aspert Bulletin, PCANZ was started, and is led by Briony O'Farrell. It has grown from its original facebook support group into providing support, education, awareness and fundraising towards eradicating pancreatic cancer. This partnership further strengthens our ties to those affected by pancreatic cancer

METHODOLOGY PAPER

LOUISE DALY

ASPERT's methodology paper on using a mixed-media approach for our PERT patient survey is now a pre-print, with almost 100 views! Read it here: <https://tinyurl.com/3859nm6y>

COMING SOON: RAPID PROGRAM

LOUISE DALY

The Rapid Program is a collaborative, international, quality improvement program that studies the prospective use of medications commonly used in palliative care and cancer symptom management. It engages clinicians and provides an avenue for them to become involved in research. ASPERT will be partnering with the UTS Rapid program to study PERT prescribing.

MANAWATIA A MATARIKI

HAPPY MATARIKI!



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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