

Oesophagogastric Cancer Summit Newsletter



AUSTRALASIAN GASTRO-INTESTINAL TRIALS GROUP

The Oesophagogastric Cancer Summit, held in August 2016, raised questions regarding access to clinical trials for patients with oesophagogastric cancer, particularly patients living in regional Victoria. The summit highlighted an opportunity to use the Victorian Tumour Summits platform to promote the work of the Australasian Gastro-Intestinal Trials Group (AGITG). We spoke to Associate Professor Niall Tebbutt, Deputy Chair and Treasurer; and Associate Professor Trevor Leong, company secretary to find out more about the AGITG and the important work being done.

What is the AGITG?

The [AGITG](#) is a multi-disciplinary collaborative group of medical and research professionals who conduct clinical trials and related biological research to improve treatments for gastro-intestinal (GI) cancers: those of the oesophagus, stomach, liver, pancreas, gallbladder, colon, rectum and anus.

Who is involved in the group?

The AGITG currently has over 1,000 Australian and international members, specialising in a variety of disciplines including Medical and Radiation Oncologists, Surgeons, Nurses, Trial Co-ordinators, Data Managers, Scientists, Pathologists, Gastro-enterologists and Consumers.

What work do they do?

The 57 clinical trials conducted by the AGITG since the group was first formed as a network of investigators in 1991, have involved over 4,000 patients. AGITG clinical trials are taking place at 88 sites in Australia, 6 sites in New Zealand and 77 sites located across Asia, Europe, UK and North America. AGITG activities have enabled patients throughout Australia and New Zealand, in regional, rural and city based medical centres to access:

- Clinical trials
- New personalised treatment options
- Unfunded cancer treatments; and
- State of the art cancer treatments 3 – 5 years earlier than if the research were to be conducted overseas

The AGITG has played an important part in intergroup research which has changed international treatment practice for colorectal, GIST and oesophageal cancer patients.

See the **AGITG annual report** [here](#).

What are their major achievements?

AGITG research has improved the life expectancy, treatment and quality of life for patients with GI cancer. The AGITG has published 83 research articles in peer-reviewed journals as a result of AGITG trials and the group has made 180 presentations of study findings at national and international conferences.

The AGITG has improved cure rates by using:

- Oral chemotherapy as an alternative to intravenous therapies
- New drugs and targeted therapies
- Select chemotherapy drugs, pre and post operatively
- Preoperative chemo radiation
- Novel combinations of treatments

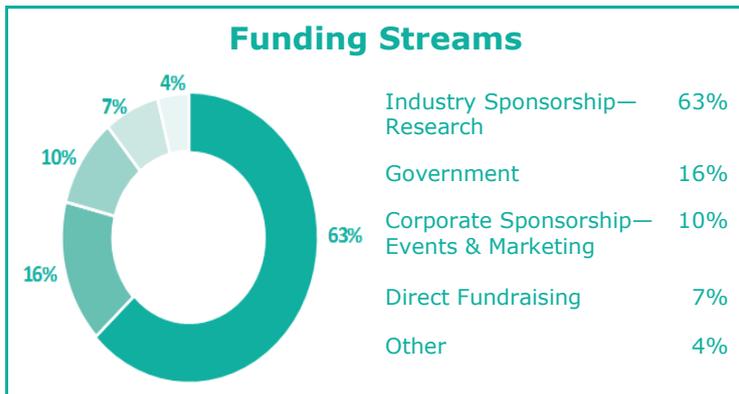
The AGITG has improved quality-of-life for patients by:

- Identifying when to introduce palliative chemotherapy
- Having fewer side effects when using a combination of chemotherapies

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How is the AGITG funded?

The AGITG is a not for profit organisation with multiple funding streams aimed to achieve a balance of funding that is sustainable, flexible and diversified to meet scientific opportunities. The continued development of the fund raising program through the GI Cancer Institute is one of several key strategies of the AGITG, and its continued success will provide greater flexibility and capacity within the AGITG in the future.



Can you tell us about any current clinical trials?

The AGITGs' clinical trials service patients in metropolitan and regional areas through hospitals and medical centres in Australia, New Zealand and across the globe. To find out which participating centres have trials open to recruitment [click here](#). There are a number of clinical trials open to recruitment currently:

Cancer type	Trial information
Colorectal Cancer	ASCOLT
Stomach Cancer	TOP GEAR
Gastro-Oesophageal Cancer	INTEGRATE II
Metastatic GI Stromal Tumour	ALT GIST
Anal Cancer	InterAACT
Neuroendocrine Tumours	NABNEC
Neuroendocrine Tumours	CONTROL NETs
Gallbladder Carcinoma	ACTICCA-1

What are the benefits of becoming a member?

The AGITG can provide structured processes and teams of experts to provide advice that can bring your research concept to life. Investigators are encouraged to bring research concepts forward through a number of opportunities offered by the AGITG. For more information about research development [click here](#).

Find out more about [AGITG membership](#)

FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW



Three Australians are diagnosed with GI cancer every hour of every day



24,600 people are affected by GI cancer each year



33 Australians die as a result of GI cancer every day of the year

Are there any key messages you would like to convey?

- It is important that patients are made aware of clinical trials and have access to them
- There is a need to increase clinician awareness of AGITG clinical trials outside of academic areas
- There are currently a number of national and international oesophagogastric cancer trials

Have a question about the Oesophagogastric Summit? Please contact [Amy Sutherland](#)