
MEETING REPORT

The 25th IACR Meeting - "Cancer Registration and Surveillance, Around the World"

Marc T Goodman

The 25th International Association of Cancer Registries meeting, hosted by the Hawaii Tumor Registry of the University of Hawaii Cancer Research Center, was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, June 16th-18th. This silver anniversary conference brought together more than 200 participants from more than 40 countries. This was the first year in which the IACR meeting was held in conjunction with the North American Association of Cancer Registries meeting which convened on June 10th-13th, and attracted more than 250 registrants and speakers from the United States and Canada. The conjunction of these two meetings provided a unique forum for cancer registrars, scientists, and administrators to exchange ideas and research findings with their colleagues from throughout the world.

The IACR conference theme, "Cancer Registration and Surveillance, Around the World," was fitting for this truly international meeting. The conference program featured nearly 40 speakers and was organized around nine plenary sessions. Following an executive meeting, registration, and a reception on June 15th, the scientific session officially opened on June 16th with remarks by Dr. Marc Goodman, the conference convener, Dr. Hans Storm, the IACR president, Dr. Carl Vogel, the Director of the Cancer Research Center of Hawaii, and the Honorable Jeremy Harris, the Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu.

The first plenary session, "Cancer in Pacific Islanders and Indigenous Populations," was led by Dr. Neal Palafox of the University of Hawaii, John Burns School of Medicine. Dr. Palafox discussed cancer incidence and survival among Micronesians associated with exposure to radioactive fallout from atom bomb testing by the United States. Disease surveillance and exposure assessment issues were discussed. Additional speakers focused on ethnic disparities in cancer incidence and mortality in Hawaii, especially among Native Hawaiians.

The second session concerned "Cancer Registry Operations" and was chaired by Drs. Marc Goodman of the United States and Divina Esteban of the Philippines. This session featured speakers from the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Brazil, India, and the United States who discussed the utility of the cancer registry in the evaluation of cancer screening programs, the use of the cancer registry in examining regional differences in the quality of cancer survival, variability among central cancer registries in consolidating multiple reports from the same individual, and the use of hospital discharge data to augment cancer registry information.

The third plenary session focused on "Physical Activity and Cancer" and was led by Dr. Leslie Bernstein of the



The Assembled Company at the Meeting

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Marc Goodman - Conference Convener

Department of Preventive Medicine, University of Southern California. Dr. Bernstein provided an overview of the association of physical activity with cancer risk, and featured her own seminal work on physical activity in the etiology of breast cancer.

The fourth session on "Survival Analysis" was chaired by Drs. Henry Wabinga of Uganda and Vivien Chen of the United States, and included speakers from Germany, India, Italy, and the United Kingdom. The association of diagnostic delay with survival from breast cancer, application of period analysis to trends in long-term cancer survival and cure, social inequalities in cancer survival, and survival from oral cavity cancer were among the topics of the oral presentations.

The first day ended with a discussion of "Diet and Cancer", led by Dr. Arthur Schatzkin of the Nutritional Epidemiology Branch, United States* National Cancer Institute. Dr. Schatzkin provided an overview of studies of diet and cancer, highlighting inconsistencies in recent findings that may be attributable to measurement error. Although he voiced skepticism and confusion over the state of diet and cancer research, Dr. Schatzkin noted that the field continues to offer great promise for preventing morbidity and mortality from malignant disease. Other speakers from Korea, Australia, and the United States reviewed the association of ginseng with cancer incidence, results from the Melbourne Collaborative Cohort Study, and the use of pyramid servings in the analysis of dietary data from the Multiethnic Cohort Study.

The second day opened with a plenary session on "Human Papillomaviruses, Cervical Cancer and Vaccines" led by Dr. Eduardo Franco of McGill University. Dr. Franco provided a summary of the epidemiology of human papillomavirus and the risk of cervical cancer, with details of a cohort study of co-factors of human papillomavirus persistence he is conducting with collaborators in Brazil. Recent progress in the development of a human

papillomavirus vaccine promises the near eradication of cervical cancer and other human papillomavirus-associated malignancies in the coming years. Dr. Schatzkin was followed by speakers from Uganda and the United Kingdom who discussed the influence of cervical cancer management on survival from this malignancy.

The seventh plenary session on "Rare Cancers" was led by Dr. Jorn Olsen of the University of Aarhus, Denmark. Dr. Olsen discussed design issues and results from seven multi-center case-control studies of rare cancers conducted through the European Union Biomed Program. Other speakers from the Netherlands, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, and Singapore focused on a range of topics from childhood cancers and extra-Paget*s mammary disease to methodological problems in the identification of second primary malignancies.†

The eighth plenary session on "Migrants and Cancers" featured Dr. Laurence Kolonel of the University of Hawaii. Dr. Kolonel discussed clues regarding cancer etiology resulting from studies of cancer incidence among successive generations of migrants to Hawaii. Patterns of cancer incidence and mortality among Japanese and Filipino migrants suggest a strong environmental foundation for this disease and formed the basis for studies of diet and cancer in Hawaii. In addition to the epidemiology of cancer among migrants to Hawaii from Asia, studies of migrants to Australia, Canada, and the Netherlands were discussed.

The third day closed with the theme "Issues of Data Harmonization, Especially Concerning Multiple Primaries and Comparative Data Analysis" led by Drs. John Young of Emory University and Lynn Ries of the United States National Cancer Institute. Drs. Young and Ries have had a long-standing interest in the study of multiple primary cancers and shared results of both analytic and methodological research in this area. They cautioned that before data are compared internationally, care must be taken to ensure that cancer rate differences between countries are not a function of differences in counting multiple primaries. Other speakers discussed the impact of classification issues on the study of multiple primaries, such as ICD-O-3.

ALOHA!