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Conference/Meeting Name: Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) and International Psycho-Oncology Society (IPOS) joint Congress
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Presentation Type: Invited Symposium Speaker





Conference Report – COSA/IPOS Joint Congress 2025

Last week I attended the COSA/IPOS Joint Congress, a meeting bringing together over 1200 clinicians, researchers, allied health professionals, and consumer representatives across the cancer care and psycho-oncology sectors. This was the first time since 2012 that COSA and IPOS have held a joint meeting, and the combined program truly reflected the strength and breadth of both communities. The 2025 theme "Optimising care, optimising outcomes: Partnering to improve outcomes for all, was evident throughout, with a rich mix of scientific, clinical, and multidisciplinary sessions. The congress attracted a large and diverse delegation from Australia and internationally. Key invited speakers included Professor Dorothy Keefe (Australia), Professor Wendy Lam (Hong Kong), Dr Surendran Veeraiah (India), Christian Nelson (USA), and Dr Pernille Bidstrup (Denmark), each bringing valuable global insights into cancer care and psychosocial oncology. I was invited to present in a symposium focused on ageing and cancer.

There was a noticeable "buzz" around ageing and cancer, survivorship pathways, and the changing needs of older adults; perfectly aligned with the conference theme. This made my own presentation

in this area particularly timely. A standout session for me was Myths and Misconceptions, where Dr Ben Bravery delivered a powerful and deeply moving talk grounded in lived experience. Another highly impactful session focused on cancer care for people with severe mental illness, highlighting major gaps in equity and access, and prompting rich discussion among attendees.

The scientific program was exceptionally strong, with insights into emerging models of care for older adults, innovations in psychosocial trial methodology, and the expanding use of digital tools in supportive care. The multidisciplinary nature of the sessions offered practical and translatable ideas that will inform and strengthen our ongoing work.

The congress also enabled invaluable networking. I finally met several colleagues I had only communicated with via email, and I was able to connect with international collaborators to discuss next steps in our shared projects. These discussions have already sparked ideas for future work that will directly enhance my current research program.

The knowledge and connections gained will greatly benefit my ongoing research in psycho-oncology, particularly as we continue developing age-focused interventions and refining trial approaches. These insights are highly relevant to the Sydney Cancer Partners membership, highlighting key priorities in equitable, patient-centred care and demonstrating the value of partnership, a central theme of this year's meeting - in improving outcomes for diverse populations.

The social events, in my opinion, were relaxed, inclusive, and a wonderful showcase of Australian culture. Delegates had the chance to see quokkas, snakes, and geckos, and enjoyed offerings from local producers. It created a memorable atmosphere and a great space for informal discussions.