

RCOG World Congress 2015, Joint RCOG / RANZCOG event

Organised by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG)

2,138 delegates (35% international). 12-15th April 2015

The Organising Committee consisted of 16 members and was supported by a Scientific Committee involving an additional 11 members; these members represented both Australia and the United Kingdom

Details of the program

Some of the world's leading obstetricians and gynaecologists were among more than 2,000 delegates from 45 countries who converged on the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre earlier this year to attend a joint world congress dedicated to improving women's health around the world.

The RCOG World Congress 2015, Joint RCOG / RANZCOG Event was structured to showcase scientific advances in the field of obstetrics and gynaecology that could impact millions of women and girls right around the globe. A wide range of topics including stillbirth, preterm birth, helping vulnerable women and managing complex pregnancies were on the agenda of a very diverse scientific program.

Five key note speakers, all international leaders in their field, three days of scientific and educational sessions as well as an additional two day pre-congress workshop program with 14 interactive workshops, comprised a very comprehensive scientific conference program.

The Congress attracted specialist obstetricians and gynaecologists, general practitioners, midwives, medical students, researchers and other professional health providers. The program consisted of plenary sessions and six concurrent streams, featuring a total of 102 invited speakers, 77 additional oral presentations, 728 electronic posters as well as breakfast sessions and industry supported breakfast and lunch symposiums.

There was an accompanying industry exhibition, with 50 exhibitors from Australia and overseas.

A number of social functions were held off-site, which provided delegates with the opportunity to fully experience Brisbane's appeal as a conference destination. Events were held at Brisbane's celebrated Gallery of Modern Art, located in the convention and cultural precinct of South Bank, Brisbane City Hall and in the city's Fortitude Valley entertainment hub.

Difficulties/Challenges

Associate Professor Ted Weaver, Chair of the Organising Committee and RANZCOG Past President, said reaching the target for delegate numbers of 1,500 was initially considered a challenge by the committee, but was addressed by a strong scientific program and comprehensive marketing strategy with final numbers reaching in excess of 2,100.

The influx of registrations was a major re-organisational challenge and necessitated a review of venue space and room allocations. "While receiving greater registration numbers is a fantastic challenge to encounter, it can be a logistical dilemma," he said.

“The support of the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, who worked closely with Waldron Smith Management during this time to ensure room allocations would meet our needs, was greatly appreciated. The importance of having close working relationships between all parties to ensure the Congress meets the expectations of delegates, exhibitors, sponsors and the organisers is integral to making the event a success.”

With delegates from 45 different countries attending, the ability to communicate in today's technological age was a priority for organisers. Local Brisbane-based technology company, Entegy, who are also technology partners with BCEC, came on board with a Congress App, which was downloaded by more than 80% of delegates. The App was utilised in scientific sessions with delegates able to pose questions to speakers as well as take part in voting in interactive case-based sessions. Throughout the event, over 660 questions were posted through the App and approximately 24,000 votes were submitted cumulatively in the interactive sessions.

Special touches/highlight

One of the Congress highlights was the hosting of a Q&A panel by award-winning TV journalist Tony Jones. The well attended session covered a range of global issues relevant to the speciality. These sessions engaged delegates and generated a great deal of debate.

Media Relations

The organisers were successfully proactive and reactive in liaising with a variety of media outlets (print, TV, radio and online). All media releases and alerts were circulated via email to approximately 1,100 local, national and international (New Zealand and United Kingdom) media outlets. The media were attracted to a range of women's health issues showcased in the scientific program, such as cervical and HPV screening in Australia, prospects for antenatal treatment of fetuses with Down Syndrome and the management of female genital cosmetic surgery. Significant media interest from a range of media outlets was received, including from the Brisbane Times, 612 ABC Brisbane, the Australian Newspaper, the Sydney Morning Herald and The Dominion Post in New Zealand.

Social Media

Social media platforms such as the Congress Facebook event page, the RANZCOG Facebook Page, Twitter, Vimeo, Flickr and Storify, provided live updates of the event. The content was aimed at delegates, stakeholders, Fellows and Members, women and the media.

Clients Comments

Chair of the Organising Committee, Associate Professor Weaver said that feedback from delegates was very positive with 94% reporting that the scientific program was interesting and relevant to their professional needs.

Additionally, 96% of delegates rated the BCEC as a good venue with one delegate commenting that 'BCEC was a terrific venue, spacious, easy to navigate and good AV and Wi-Fi'.

Associate Professor Weaver echoed the thoughts of delegates: "BCEC is a fantastic venue. The main auditorium was suitably theatrical, the exhibition space was well set out, spacious and invited you in and it was well connected to the lecture venues."

Brisbane rated well as a destination with 94% of delegates giving Brisbane the thumbs up.

CASE STUDY



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Date published: October 2015