

# Gold Coast 4th Annual Palliative Care Conference 2025

## Palliative Medicine Interventions and Updates

### Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June - Presenter Biographies



**Dr Alexander Soobratty, Staff Specialist Palliative Care, Gold Coast Health**

***Chair of Session 1 - Pharmacotherapy 1: Drugs once banned that are now being assessed / becoming available***

Alex Soobratty is a specialist palliative care physician who has a special interest in complex pain management, holistic care of patients and compassion.

His training has taken him across the country to explore work and health conditions in Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. This diverse experience has instilled an appreciation of the challenges of rural and regional communities.

Alex has the ambitious goal of transforming the way that analgesia is delivered in cancer-related pain, especially by learning from the examples of others.

Aside from his medical interests, he keeps himself grounded with his hobbies like cooking, rock climbing and a love of all things science fiction.



**Laura McCosker, Research Officer, Specialist Neurostimulation and Mood Disorder Service, Gold Coast Health**  
***Psilocybin***

Laura McCosker is an early career researcher in public and mental health. Her PhD involved two investigator-led, multi-site trials that identified strategies to improve COVID-19 vaccination uptake in people experiencing homelessness. Laura currently works as a research officer and clinical trials coordinator in the Specialist Neurostimulation and Mood Disorder Service at Gold Coast Health. She supports studies about novel treatments for difficult-to-treat mental illness including ECT, TMS, ketamine, and psilocybin.



**Dr Timothy Roberts, Staff Specialist Palliative Care, Gold Coast Health**  
***Clonidine***

Dr Tim Roberts is a Specialist Palliative Care Physician with a commitment to patient-centred care, communication, and medical education. He began his medical career in the UK with a focus on Respiratory Medicine, before moving to Australia, where he was drawn to the compassionate, holistic nature of palliative care.

Tim is particularly passionate about improving access to palliative care in community settings. He is driven by the goal of expanding services that support people to remain at home and avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, especially in the final stages of life.



**Dr Sigrun Gutjahr, Staff Specialist Psychiatrist, Gold Coast Health**  
***Ketamine***

Dr Sigrun Gutjahr, is an experienced consultant psychiatrist and psychotherapist who has practiced on the Gold Coast for over 20 years in both public and private settings.

Sigrun has worked for many years with patients struggling with self-harming behaviours and runs Project AIR, a personality disorder service at Gold Coast Health.

Over the past 5 years her interest in psychedelic assisted psychotherapy increased while searching for improved treatment response in the large patient group with anxiety and depression. She trained with trainers from the Monash trial on Psilocybin assisted psychotherapy for anxiety disorders and with the principal investigators for the St Vincent trial in Psilocybin assisted psychotherapy in terminally ill patients. This study looked at death anxiety, adjustment to end of life as well as mental health. She will shortly commence as a therapist in the 3PAP trial, a multicentre trial run by Swinburne University, examining psilocybin in treatment resistant depression.

Sigrun sees patients for dynamic psychotherapy. Sigrun's special interests are treatment of personality disorders, anxiety, depression, medically unexplained symptoms and complex trauma patients.

She holds a Masters in psychotherapy and is a member of the Faculty of Psychotherapy of RANZCP.



**Associate Professor Graham Grove, Staff Specialist Palliative Care, Gold Coast Health and Medical Director SPaRTa**  
***Chair of Session 2: Motor Neuron Disease***

Associate Professor Graham Grove is a consultant physician in palliative medicine and the medical director of QLD's regional and rural palliative care SPaRTa service. He is affiliated with Bond and Griffith Universities. He undertook medical school and physician's training in Adelaide. Following this he completed a theology bachelor and ministry accreditation whilst concurrently undertaking advanced training in palliative medicine, both part-time. He subsequently has worked as a consultant in Adelaide, the UK and Queensland. His interests include point-of-care ultrasound, radiology in palliative care, cancer pain interventions, prognostication and end-of-life and medical ethics.



**Dr Maneesha Bhullar, Staff Specialist, Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist, Gold Coast Health**  
***Nutrition and Feeding Gastronomies***

Dr Maneesha Bhullar is a consultant gastroenterologist and hepatologist who holds a staff specialist appointment at the Gold Coast University Hospital. She underwent her Gastroenterology training at the Royal Melbourne and Monash Hospital in Victoria before completing her fellowship in Inflammatory Bowel Disease and Nutritional Gastroenterology at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and now is part of the Inflammatory Bowel Disease service at the hospital.



**Dr Sushil Agwan, Senior Registrar Respiratory Medicine, Gold Coast Health**  
***Dyspnoea and NIV***

Sushil graduated from Bond University in 2017. Having undergone basic training at Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH) and respiratory training at The Prince Charles Hospital and Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Sushil is currently completing a year of Sleep Medicine training back at GCUH. His interests include Bronchiectasis, Respiratory infections, and Pleural pathologies.'





**Saul McWhae, Senior Sleep Scientist, Gold Coast Health  
*Dyspnoea and NIV***

Saul McWhae is a Senior Sleep Scientist with twenty years of experience starting at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane and transferred to Gold Coast University Hospital in 2016. Saul has Honours in a Bachelor of Biotechnology – Drug Design & Development at University of Queensland, St Lucia. Saul specialises in Invasive and Non-Invasive ventilation and all facets of sleep science. Saul has a special interest in neuromuscular diseases, in particular Motor Neurone Disease. Saul is the current facilitator of a Neuromuscular Multi-disciplinary Team Clinic at Gold Coast University Hospital involving specialities in Neurology, Sleep, Physiotherapy, Palliative Care and Gastrostomy. In his free time, Saul likes to work on his cars, watch AFL and play video games.



**Dr Matthew Neve, Radiation Oncologist, Gold Coast Health  
*Sialorrhea and Radiotherapy***

Dr Matthew Neve is an experienced Radiation Oncologist at Icon Cancer Centre Gold Coast University Hospital and Icon Cancer Centre Gold Coast Private. In 2008, he completed his Bachelor of Human Biology (BHB) and Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) at the University of Auckland and became a fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists in 2016. Dr Neve completed his medical training at North Shore Hospital and Auckland City Hospital prior to commencing specialist oncology training at Waikato Hospital.

Dr Neve gained extensive radiation oncology experience in New Zealand and Canada prior to commencing private practice in Australia. He undertook five years of speciality training as a radiation oncology registrar at Waikato Hospital before completing a radiation oncology fellowship at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto, Canada. He is actively involved in education, research and clinical trials, regularly presenting at national and international oncology conferences. Dr Neve has co-authored articles in leading publications including the Journal of Clinical Oncology and Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences, investigating radiation therapy treatments for head and neck and breast cancers.

Dr Neve's clinical experience covers a broad range of solid tumour malignancies, with special clinical interest in breast, head and neck, genitourinary, gastrointestinal and lung cancers.



**Dr Arman Sabet, Staff Specialist Neurologist, Gold Coast Health**  
***Functional Loss – Neuralink / Synchron***

After obtaining Bachelor of Science (in Physics) and Doctor of Medicine degrees, Associate Professor Sabet pursued his Neurology training followed by Clinical Neurophysiology fellowship at Duke University Medical Center in USA. He then joined the Department of Neurology at the University of Kentucky as Staff Specialist and Training Program Director. In 2006, Dr Sabet accepted a position at the Gold Coast Hospital as Neurology Consultant and later as the Director of Neurology until 2021. He also has a private practice in Southport with special interest in neuromuscular disorders, in particular motor neuron disease, and he runs the MND clinic at Gold Coast University Hospital.

A/Prof Sabet is a fellow of Royal Australasian College of Physicians and American Academy of Neurology and is involved in medical education and clinical research with Griffith University.



**Dr Nicola Morgan, Staff Specialist Palliative Care, Gold Coast Health**  
***Chair of Session 3 – Cancer Focus: Changing Paradigms***

Dr Morgan works on the Gold Coast as a Specialist Palliative Care consultant physician, researcher and educator with Honorary Adjunct Assistant Professor status through Bond University. She is a passionate advocate for holistic care, advanced communication skills and the quality use of medicines at end-of-life. Prior to retraining in palliative care, she spent 15 years in both rural and urban general practice, equipping her with a broad skill base to care for patients in a range of healthcare settings.



**Dr Sean Hill, Medical Oncologist, Gold Coast Health**  
***Updates in Gynaecological and Gastrointestinal Cancers***

Dr Sean Hill is a Medical Oncologist working at the Gold Coast University Hospital with special interests in the fields of breast cancer, tumours of the central nervous system and gynaecological cancers.

Sean completed his advanced training in medical oncology in multiple hospitals in Southeast Queensland before relocating to the Gold Coast to complete a joint medical oncology/palliative care fellowship and was awarded a consultant position in 2022. He enjoys weaving in his skills learnt in palliative care into the everyday management of patient's cancer and treatment-related symptoms.



**Dr Eunji Hwang, Radiation Oncologist, Western Sydney Local Health District**  
***Emerging Radiotherapy Treatments – Carbon Ion and Proton Therapy***

Dr Eunji Hwang is a consultant Radiation Oncologist at Westmead Hospital, with specialist expertise in head and neck, skin, and paediatric/ AYA cancers. She obtained her FRANZCR fellowship in 2019 and was awarded the Thomas Baker Fellowship Grant to undertake a Proton Beam Therapy fellowship at The Christie Hospital in Manchester, UK (2019–2020). Dr Hwang is currently completing a PhD through the University of Sydney, focusing on the implementation of particle therapy in Australia. She is actively involved in multiple RANZCR working groups and special interest groups, particularly in paediatric and particle therapy.



**Dr John Grieve, Interventional Radiologist, Gold Coast Health**  
***Interventional Radiology - Improving Quality of Life (Pain Procedures)***  
***and Prolonging Life (Drain Insertions and Clot Retrievals)***

Dr John Grieve is a dual trained diagnostic and interventional radiologist at Qscan Radiology Clinics. He graduated from the University of Queensland in 2007 before undertaking his internship and residency at the Gold Coast Hospital.

He completed his radiology training in Sydney in 2016 before undertaking a year-long fellowship at Liverpool Hospital in interventional radiology. In 2017 he successfully obtained his European Board of Interventional Radiology (EBIR) qualification and since 2018 he has held a position as a senior staff specialist at the Gold Coast University Hospital where he works as an interventional radiologist. John is the director of training at GCUH and is committed to teaching Queensland's next generation of radiologists. He is also committed to medical services in the bush and provides a monthly interventional radiology service to Roma, Warwick and Dalby.

He lives at the northern end of the Gold Coast with his wife and three children, and outside of work enjoys boating, inventing and camping.

*In partnership with:*

