



# THE MEETING PLANNERS

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## Press Release – For Immediate Release

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**Subject** Ozzawa Conference Features Educating for Understanding Patient Needs and Hits Record Attendance

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The 13<sup>th</sup> Ottawa International Conference on Clinical Competence, known as “OZZAWA” when it ran 5-8 March 2008 in Melbourne, had as a focus assessment of the clinician and patient information exchange. With themes on “**The Life of the Patient**”, “**The Life of the Professional**” and “**The Life of the Programme**” there were Keynote presentations on bringing about positive changes for indigenous communities, communication used by healthcare teams in clinical settings, assessment of professionalism in medical students, training clinicians in patient self-care skills, work-based learning and assessment as well as patient and colleague feedback to clinicians.

The conference is attended by those involved in medical education and in the assessment of clinical competence and runs biennially rotating around the world. Jointly hosted by Monash University, The University of Melbourne and Deakin University this was the first time the conference had been held in Australia. Conference Chairs Professor Brian Jolly of Monash University, Agnes Dodds of The University of Melbourne and Professor David Prideaux were delighted that so many of their colleagues had chosen to join them.

Recalling his experience bringing a world conference to his home town Professor Brian Jolly stated *“The MCVB helped us prepare and win the bid for Melbourne in 2003 – they were fantastic- they have access to so much planning information and background statistics. Then TMP won the PCO tender against two other groups, and just impressed us ever since with their dedicated professionalism”*.

Confidently expecting between 750 and 800 delegates the Organising Committee began working on the conference in 2003 when they were successful in their bid to bring the conference to Australia. The Meeting Planners were appointed as the Professional Conference Organiser (PCO) in August 2004 and the Melbourne Convention Centre selected as the venue. Under the supervision of Conference Manager Nicole Bakes the enthusiastic committee so successfully promoted the conference, its themes and six main keynote speakers that actual attendance rose to an all time record of 1,150 for a conference run in the Southern Hemisphere. *“It was a great feeling to know that we had brought so many colleagues from around the world to present their latest research and to meet their Australian peers. It was a bonus to be able to give them a really well-organized program, great venue and world-class entertainment, thanks to TMP and the staff of the MCEC”* remarked Agnes Dodds on this tremendous increase in numbers.

There were very healthy online abstract submissions received through the TMP ‘WAVE’ system and reviewed online by the committee resulting in 17 pre-conference workshops, over 450 oral presentations, 26 symposia, 29 workshops and 300 posters. A feature of the conference was

the introduction of a new category of presentation – Long Paper Presentations – allowing for more in-depth review of research; the life of these presentations was extended through publication on the website [www.ozzawa13.com](http://www.ozzawa13.com) where delegates could find all Abstracts and download the ones that interested them thus saving hard copy print of over a million pages.

Commenting after chairing one of the keynote sessions Professor David Prideaux said *“We really pushed the Patient/Clinician interaction in a new direction today. Putting the patient in the picture, assessing the way people interact and how they receive information is an extremely multi-layered process. Patients today are much more knowledgeable and prepared to speak up – we need to be training the medical educators and teaching professionals how to deal with this new approach and demand for information”*

The Meeting Planners (TMP) began over 20 years ago and has grown to become one of Australia’s largest and most respected conference management companies or PCOs. This has been due primarily to successful partnerships with great clients and service suppliers plus basic sheer hard work and dedication with staff that will go the extra mile for clients and who truly dedicate themselves to the job at hand. Praising the management team of Nicole Bakes, Bree Richardson and Leigh Clarke the conference committee thanked the team for their *“patience, unflinching cheerfulness and expert guidance”*

Endorsing this sentiment TMP’s Karine Bulger states *“We firmly believe that the key element to a successful Conference is the strength of the partnership between the PCO and the Organising Committee”*.

TMP provides the complete solution for conference management advising, directing operations, consulting with clients and committees, planning strategies, managing finances, organising functions, coordinating logistics and creating themes through which they inspire success and exceed expectations.

**For Further Information please contact:**

Karine Bulger, Chief Executive Officer

**Email:** [kbulger@meetingplanners.com.au](mailto:kbulger@meetingplanners.com.au)

**Tel:** 03 9417 0888

Jenny Salsbury, Executive Manager

**Email:** [jsalsbury@meetingplanners.com.au](mailto:jsalsbury@meetingplanners.com.au)

**Tel:** 03 9417 0888

**Note to Editors**

The biennial Ottawa conferences are now the largest regular meetings on clinical competence. In 1985, this series of international conferences was started by Ian Hart, M.D. of Ottawa, Canada and Ronald Harden, M.D. of Dundee, Scotland. Now known as the "Ottawa Conference," the aim of these meetings has been to assemble health care educators from around the world. Important goals of this forum are to share educational experiences and to improve evaluation instruments used to assess health care professionals. The 12th conference was held in New York City on 20-24 May 2006 and the next in the series, the 14<sup>th</sup>, will be held in Miami, Florida on 16-20 May 2010.

