

Nicola Smith



Welcome to the July ASCEPT newsletter and what a bumper edition we have. However, we're in July, it's World Congress of Pharmacology Month and so we need to focus on that. And I'm delighted to be joined today by Professor Carl Kirkpatrick, our Chair of WCP 2026. Welcome, Carl.



Carl Kirkpatrick

Thanks, Nicola. Thanks for the welcome. Yes, absolutely. We are in July and the World Congress of Pharmacology is about to commence very soon. It's a large global pharmacology congress, bringing together experimental clinical and educational pharmacologists from across the globe, all in Melbourne, all across six days. What more could you want?



Nicola Smith

I'm so excited. Now, is it true that we've actually got a really large number of international visitors?



Carl Kirkpatrick

Yeah, we have. We've got 70% of our registrants are international attendees and that's absolutely fantastic. So if you want to find someone that works in your area overseas, the World Congress is going to be the place to be.



Nicola Smith

And there's lots of fantastic networking opportunities as well.



Carl Kirkpatrick

Absolutely. There's social things to do. There's workshops, there's symposia. There'll be lots of times for the posters. The posters are going to stay up across the whole Congress. So it's not just that they go up for one day or half a day and they come down again. They'll go up on Monday and they'll be available right through the end of Thursday.



Nicola Smith

Brilliant.

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

But judging and poster sessions will happen as planned across those days.

 **Nicola Smith**

I've got to say, having read a number of the poster abstracts for judging, I was so impressed by the quality just of the posters, so I can't wait to see what the oral presentations look like.

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

Absolutely. Sorry, keep going.

 **Nicola Smith**

Oh no, I was going to say, what about ASCEPT specific opportunities at the meeting?

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

So ASCEPT, as you know, this aligns with our ASCEPT Congress, and we're not having an ASCEPT ASM this year in our normal November-December window, but the programme holds all the key prestigious events that ASCEPT would normally hold in that November-December meeting. So we've got the ASCEPT Bellberry New Investigator session, which will be, you know, that prestigious EMCRs presenting with obviously their amazing award that they get to go to the BPS conference, the winner of that session. We have the Garth McQueen Oral Communication Prize. Again, high quality researchers presenting early, early career research opportunities.

You know, this session is going to be held, all those sessions are going to be held in the plenary session. You know, it's 2000 seats that people, ASCEPT members can come and listen to those two prestigious sessions. And then of course, we've also got the ASCEPT Fellowship and Awards Ceremony, which again allows us to recognise some key ASCEPT members and their contributions.

But also not forgetting, and we've got Rob Widdop, who is the ASCEPT Lecturer, who is actually one of the key keynote plenary speakers within the Congress.

 **Nicola Smith**

That's wonderful, and it sounds like a challenge for ASCEPT members to get into that big plenary session to fill those seats.

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

I don't think it's a challenge, Nicola. There is no shortage of seats. It's in the main auditorium, the main plenary auditorium. So if you haven't been able to or haven't signed up through the portal or it seemed full when you were trying to register for it, don't worry. There's a seat for you there. All you got to do is turn up and engage and listen to some amazing research from our ASCEPT researchers.

 **Nicola Smith**

I can't wait. Now I have to ask you one more question because I know that you know the programme inside-out. So what are you most excited about for the meeting?

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

There's so many things, Nicola. The keynotes, there's some amazing keynotes. I think it's really important that, you know, we've got an opening presenter, an opening plenary by Sharon Lewin, and then a closing plenary by Glenn King, two amazing Australian researchers, not our normal speakers that we would have in ASCEPT ASM, but I'm sure they're going to impart some really important things. There's other plenaries on neuroinflammation, cardiology, even toxicology of mRNA. So it is amazing the breadth and width of the topics being covered in those plenary lectures. The symposia, so beautifully curated by the people that have put those forward.

 **Nicola Smith**

Amazing.

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

They've got two or three longer sessions with people speaking for 25, 30 minutes. And then often we've got some really nice, short, punchy oral presentations at the end of those, which allow to see some new innovative science in those areas. So they are amazing.

 **Nicola Smith**

Fantastic, and I'm also excited about the satellite meetings as well. So there's still time to sign up for some of those, I think.

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

I believe there's still room for some to fill up. Obviously, we've opened up a couple that are now at the end of the conference. So go back and cheque the website. There's a couple more open. They may be relevant to you. But, you know, it's amazing what a World Congress is bringing and the satellite meetings that are being built.

 **Nicola Smith**

Oh, brilliant.

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

The Education satellite is being held here at MIPS. I'm aware there's spaces for people there. So if you're into pharmacology, education or toxicology education, I'm sure they can find more room for you there. Obviously, if you come to those satellites, you know, we really want to see you at the Congress as well.

 **Nicola Smith**

That sounds brilliant. Look, on behalf of ASCEPT, Carl, I have to thank you and your amazing team for putting ASCEPT and pharmacology on the world stage. And I'm so proud as an Australian for this event to be held here. So thank you to your team and we'll see you in Melbourne.

 **Carl Kirkpatrick**

Thanks very much, Nicola. Look forward to seeing you all in Melbourne very soon.