

Division:	Fellowship Engagement	Ref. No.	POL-3131
Department:	Fellowship Services		
Title:	Upper GI, HPB and Obesity Surgery Section Awards		

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy details the awarding of the:

- a. **Mark Smithers Award for Clinical Research**, and the
- b. **Leslie Nathanson Award for Translational Research and Innovation**

by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), and the Upper GI, HPB and Obesity Surgery Section (the Section).

The Awards were established by the Section in 2020 for the best free papers at the Annual Scientific Congress (ASC).

The Awards are named in honour of:

a. Professor Mark Smithers

The Professor Mark Smithers Award for clinical research is awarded to the best oral presentation for clinical research in the field of Oesophagogastric or bariatric surgery. The Professor Mark Smithers Award for clinical research acknowledges the outstanding contribution which Professor Smithers has made to clinical research and leadership within the field of Oesophagogastric Surgery in Australasia.

Professor Mark Smithers is:

- Mayne Professor and Head of the Discipline of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, University of Queensland
- Director of the Upper GI and Soft Tissue Surgical unit, Princess Alexandra Hospital
- Past President, Australia and New Zealand Gastric and Oesophageal Surgeons Association (ANZGOSA)
- Chair, Section of Academic Surgery, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
- Member of the Queensland Cancer Control Safety and Quality Partnership, chairing the Oesophago-gastric Cancer Collaborative
- Executive member of the International Gastric Cancer Association; and
- Co-chair, Publication & Audit Subcommittee of the Research & Database Committee, International Society for Diseases of the Esophagus (ISDE).

Professor Smithers is involved with the early development and progression of minimally invasive surgery for upper gastro-intestinal tract pathology, including benign hiatal surgery and esophageal resection. His clinical and research work focuses on the multidisciplinary evidence-based management of cancer of the oesophagus and stomach with an emphasis on improving patient outcomes including quality of life. He is chief investigator on a number of grants assessing the epidemiology and management of oesophageal and gastric cancer (NIH, USA and NH&MRC, Australia) and is lead surgical investigator in a number of Phase II and III trials relating to the role of neoadjuvant therapy for Oesophagogastric cancer. Most recently he is the surgical principal investigator of an international a multi-centre randomised trial assessing the role of preoperative chemo-radiation for locally advanced gastric cancer.

In 2018, became a Member of the Order of Australia for service to medicine in the fields of gastro-intestinal and melanoma surgery, to medical education and to professional organisations.

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b. Mr Leslie Nathanson

The Leslie Nathanson Award for translational research and innovation is awarded to the best oral presentation for translational research and/ or innovation in the field of oesophago gastric or hepato-pancreato-biliary surgery. The Leslie Nathanson Award for translational research and innovation acknowledges the outstanding contribution which Dr Nathanson has made to innovation in the field of Upper GI Surgery in Australasia.

Leslie Nathanson graduated from University of Cape Town Medical School in 1978, migrated to Australia in 1983, passing Australian Medical Exam Council registration exams 2 months later and completed general surgical training in Brisbane, FRACS in 1988.

His experience was further broadened by working in Europe with Professor Sir Alfred Cuschieri in Ninewells Hospital, Dundee as an Honorary Senior Registrar concentrating on developing Laparoscopic Surgery, from 1989 - 1991. He returned to Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in August 1991 as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland, Royal Brisbane Hospital, progressing to Associate Professor in September 1994. Although he resigned from the University in 2001, he continued as a Visiting Medical Officer and head of the Hepatobiliary Unit at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital until 2018.

He was awarded an honorary fellowship from the Edinburgh College of Surgeons in 2012.

Mr Nathanson is well known for the Nathanson laparoscopic liver retractor and the development of the common bile duct basket used for extracting common bile duct stones. His randomised trial of ERCP vs Laparoscopic treatment of CBD stones was published in 2005 and was a personal landmark trial in the treatment of common bile duct stones.

His interests concentrated on hepatobiliary, upper GI and laparoscopic surgery, especially the evolution of laparoscopic fundoplication surgery for reflux. This culminated in publication of baseline data of adult oesophageal junction distensibility during general anaesthetic and laparoscopy and its application in 841 Funduplications.

2. KEYWORDS

Mark Smithers, Leslie Nathanson, award, Upper GI, HPB and Obesity Surgery, Research, Annual Scientific Congress, ASC.

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Criteria for eligibility

The Awards are open to all applicants for research conducted in Australia and New Zealand and accepted for podium presentations in the free paper session of the Upper GI, and Obesity Surgery program at the Annual Scientific Congress (ASC). This may include pre-vocational doctors.

3.2. Award Criteria

The Awards are presented for the best paper presented by those eligible at the ASC as judged by at least two members of the Section using an objective structured scoring system.

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3.3. Value of the Award

The Awards provide a stipend cash amount of \$1000 (AUD) each, plus complimentary registration at the relevant national conference (ANZGOSA, ANZHPBA or ANZMOSS).

3.4. Frequency of the Award

The Awards are presented annually if papers of sufficient merit are presented in either or both categories .

3.5. Funding

Funding for the Awards is from sponsorship. If no sponsorship is available then funding comes from the Upper GI, HPB and Obesity Surgical Fund.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Travel and Accommodation Policy

Approver Professional Standards and Advocacy Committee

Authoriser Council