CONFERENCE REVIEW

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EMS Today: Conference & Expo

Baltimore, Maryland, US

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As a legacy of the late Dr. David Komesaroff, former Director of Medical Developments International (MDI) and respected Consultant Anaesthetist; the Australian Prehospital and Emergency Health Research Forum (APEHRF) Best Paper Prize was generously sponsored by MDI in 2007 following Dr. Komesaroff's death earlier that year.

The prize is intended to promote and encourage paramedic research among members of The Australian College of Ambulance Professionals (ACAP) and the paramedic profession Australia wide, which is achieved through peer review and adjudication of research papers submitted to the APEHRF for presentation at the annual ACAP conference.

As the 2007 APEHRF Best Paper Prize recipient, I am very grateful to MDI for funding the prize, which not only included travel and accommodation costs to attend the EMS Today Conference in Baltimore, but also provided me with the opportunity to present and further disseminate my research to an international audience.

Held on 25-29 March, more than 4,500 prehospital care providers gathered at Baltimore's large convention centre, at what was claimed to be the largest attendance in the conference's history. The 2008 event also marked a large increase in exhibitors, providing attendees with the opportunity to discover the latest prehospital products and technologies from over 300 of the industry's leading manufacturers.

Inner Harbor, Baltimore MD

The conference was filled with four intense days of clinically focused programs, ranging from ventilation and airway basics for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) to intense discussions on clinical hot topics such as rapid sequence intubation and induced hypothermia in post-cardiac arrest patients.

In addition, the conference provided the opportunity for prehospital care providers to become involved in pre-conference workshops which aimed to reinforce the clinical competencies and training requirements of each participant. Most states in America now require a national EMS standard or accreditation portfolio for each prehospital care provider and the conference is able to supplement this by providing learning programs in a vast number of clinical streams.

The exhibit hall delivered a spectacular arrangement of new products and devices, with over 300 manufactures presenting the latest and greatest in paramedic gadgets.

With the largest variety of ambulance vehicles in one place, any potential buyer would have been hard challenged to select from the very impressive variety of showroom quality vehicles that were on display.

EMS Vehicle

EMS Vehicle

If there's ever another way of securing that airway, you'll also find it here, with a vast range of endotracheal tubes, laryngeal mask airways, combitubes and the most amazing collection of laryngoscopes means that even the most difficult airways are made easy.

The conference also showcased the 2008 JEMS Games, using a building collapse with multiple trapped victims as the dramatic setting for the Games. Twenty-five teams from across America and Canada participated in the Games, with the

top five teams making it to the final. Congratulations to team, *Fire Department of New York (FDNY)* for an outstanding performance, and the winners of the 2008 JEMS Games.

The American Prehospital Care Research Forum at UCLA was delivered by Dr Baxter Larmon over a 'lunch and learn' session where attendees had the opportunity to listen to international and national oral presenters over lunch. Two presenters from America and Mexico were vying for the top research prize that would likely see them travel internationally to present their research.

In addition, it was the first time that the Research Forum had presenters from all three continents, with the 2007 UK and Australian research forum winners presenting to over 200 attendees.

Author presenting at the Research Forum

My paper "*So you think you can ventilate using a self inflating bag? Think again*" was warmly received with great feedback and commendations from those who attended, including Dr Baxter Larmon, whose dedication to prehospital research is evident in every speech he makes.

Baxter also announced that the 2007 winner of the UCLA Research Forum prize will travel to Melbourne for the 2008 ACAP Conference, held in September, to present his research. All abstracts from the UCLA Research Forum have been published in the March 2008 issue of JEMS Magazine.

For anyone who is considering a research project, I would recommend submitting your abstracts to the Australian Prehospital and Emergency Health Research Forum, for next year's ACAP Conference which will be held in Auckland, New Zealand. Further information will be available on the [ACAP website](#) in early 2009.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank ACAP for their encouragement and support of prehospital research among Australian paramedics.

I would also like to thank ACAP National Secretary, Les Hotchin, and ACAP President, Ian Patrick for facilitating an extraordinary experience for me at the 'EMS Today' Conference in Baltimore.

My sincere appreciation and thanks to MDI, ACAP and APEHRF for sponsoring the 2007 Australian Prehospital Emergency Health Research Forum prize and for so generously providing me with the opportunity and support to present my research internationally.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of staff at Monash University Department of Community Emergency Health and Paramedic Practice (DCEHPP), in particular, Bill Lord (for his enduring efforts to assist on my behalf with preparations to present in the US), and Malcolm Boyle (co-author of the winning paper), for his support and guidance with the research.

Last but not least, special thanks to Kate Cantwell (MICA Paramedic, Ambulance, Victoria) for her support at the conference and photo contributions in this conference review.

Links

- **Australian College of Ambulance Professionals (ACAP)**
<http://www.acap.org.au>
- **American Ambulance Technology:**
http://www.jems.com/Images/Amb%20Showcase%2008_tcm16-126576.pdf
- **EMS Today**
- <http://www.emstodayconference.com>,
http://www.jems.com/education_and_training/ems_today_live/EMS_Today_was_Huge_Success.html
- **Highly recommended videos (2007)**
http://www.jems.com/education_and_training/ems_today_live/index.html