

CASE STUDY

5th World Congress on Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery	
TYPE OF EVENT: International Association Conference	DATE OF EVENT: 20 th – 26 th June 2009
EVENT DESTINATION: Cairns, Australia	EVENT VENUE: Cairns Convention Centre
ORGANISER/HOST: PCCS2009 Australian & New Zealand Organising Committee and health professionals committed to research and care of children with heart disease	CONFERENCE ORGANISER: ICMS Pty Ltd
ACTUAL ATTENDANCE: 2,290 registrants from 81 countries	

PROFILE/OBJECTIVE OF CONFERENCE:

The World Congress is held every four years and consists of seven sub-speciality meeting partners including Paediatric Interventional Cardiac Symposium, World Society for Paediatric and Congenital heart Surgery, The Paediatric & Congenital Electrophysiology Society, Congenital Cardiac Anaesthesia Society, and International Society for Adult Congenital Heart Disease, The Paediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Society and Pedirhythm.

It is the major international scientific and academic event for heart disease in children and aims to improve quality of care for children with congenital and acquired heart disease through the sharing of research, education and training.

REASONS FOR DESTINATION/VENUE SELECTION:

Australia is a world leader in the field of Paediatric Cardiology with many of our hospitals receiving patients from Hong Kong, SE Asia, Mauritius, the Pacific Islands, Africa and elsewhere.

It would give delegates the opportunity to focus on particular issues significant to the Asia Pacific

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such as Rheumatic heart disease. It is extremely rare in Europe or North America, but common in this region and these issues would not have been tabled if the meeting was not held here.

The Committee chose Cairns based on its world class convention facilities and convenient business events infrastructure. They believed the location, situated on the shores of the Great Barrier Reef, would be an attractive incentive for international delegates and ensure good attendance.

LOCATION/VENUE/ACCOMMODATION INFRASTRUCTURE:

The Cairns Convention Centre was the host venue for PCCS2009, comfortably accommodating the 2,290 registrants, exhibitors and the specialised audio visual requirements.

More than 4,400 room nights were sourced by ICMS using 12 properties and another 4,000 rooms were booked direct. Delegates enjoyed the many and varied leisure options, restaurants and shopping in the tropical paradise of Cairns.

EVENT TRIUMPHS:

Conference Co-Chair Professor Jim Wilkinson said the results confirmed the events triumph with 2,290 registrants from 81 countries, 1,432 abstract submissions, 37 exhibitors, 412 invited oral presentations, 160 oral abstracts and 1,140 posters.

“Live-case” broadcast feeds to Saudi Arabia, Kuala Lumpur, Japan, Berlin and Melbourne, coordinated by the Cairns Convention Centre Production Team, gave access to professionals unable to attend the meeting in Cairns which broadened the opportunities for shared education.

Co-Chair Professor Dan Penny said risk management is such an important issue in today’s society and to hear speakers outside our realm of expertise was inspiring, educational and a topic that every delegate from every nation could learn from.

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SPECIAL TOUCHES:

Entertainment for the Opening Ceremony was locally sourced with a 'Welcome to Country' performance from the Djajengi Buai Aboriginal Troupe a traditional haka from the NZ Te Tiairaka Performance Troupe and music by the Cairns Children's Choir.

The conference dinner was an unstructured evening of Australian experiences complete with koalas, kangaroos, crocodiles, the chance to throw a boomerang or play a didgeridoo and tours through the rainforest viewing nocturnal animals in WW11 Army Ducks.

Following client approval and as part of the Cairns Convention Centre's CSR policy, left over delegate satchels were sent to children in the "child soldier" rehab centres in Ghana and the MAF Kids Programme in Papua Guinea and Arnhem Land.

CHALLENGES:

Uniting seven sub-specialties together as one entity. It took years of discussions to bring all sections under the one banner at the World Congress.

The Global Financial Crisis (GFC). Professor Jim Wilkinson said that it was difficult to plan for the GFC, but ultimately it did not greatly affect attendance.

H1N1 worldwide flu pandemic was an added challenge. Professor Dan Penny said, "Several universities insisted that participants take an additional week leave, in forced isolation, on their return. As this world congress is only held every four years, the majority of our delegates continued with their travel plans."

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