John A. Thompson, MD

John A. Thompson, MD, is the Medical Director of the Phase 1 Clinical Trials Program and Co-Director of the Melanoma Clinic at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. He also serves as a professor in the Medical Oncology Division at the University of Washington School of Medicine and is a member of the Clinical Research Division at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Dr. Thompson’s clinical research focuses on the immunotherapy of cancer. Dr. Thompson is the Vice-Chair of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Melanoma Committee. He is the co-chair of the ASCO/NCCN committee that will publish guidelines on the diagnosis and management of toxicities related to immunotherapy. Dr. Thompson is a strong supporter of, and past President, of WSMOS.

His topic today is:

“Advances in the treatment of metastatic and high-risk melanoma”
Merkel cell carcinoma is a disease of increasing clinical impact (current incidence ~2500 cases/year in the United States) and with recent marked advances in our understanding of its pathogenesis (most cases caused by a virus, Merkel cell polyomavirus). Kelly Paulson is a 3rd year fellow in the hematology/oncology combined program at FHCRC/SCCA with a long-standing interest in Merkel cell carcinoma. She will review Merkel cell cancer pathogenesis, discuss the data leading to recent trials of immunotherapy in MCC, the results of these trials, and discuss in detail the newly released 2018 NCCN guidelines for MCC which now feature immunotherapy/checkpoint inhibitors in first line for metastatic/unresectable disease. She will then turn to discussion of next generation immunotherapies in MCC, particularly T cell therapies, and review her data presented at ASCO for which her travel was funded by WSMOS.
Cameron Turtle, M.D.

Dr. Turtle completed medical training in Australia, followed by dual Fellowships of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, and a PhD in Immunology. He is an Associate Member at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (FHCRC) and Associate Professor at the University of Washington (UW) in Seattle, WA. He serves as an attending physician on the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant (HCT) Service and the Immunotherapy Service at FHCRC, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance (SCCA) and the UW Medical Center, and has a research laboratory in the Clinical Research Division at FHCRC. His laboratory is focused on understanding the characteristics of distinct subsets of human CD8+ T cells, their potential utility for tumor immunotherapy, and their role in immune reconstitution after HCT. Dr. Turtle is Principal Investigator and IND sponsor of several investigator-initiated clinical trials of CD19-targeted chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-modified T cell therapy for patients with B cell malignancies.
Gena Cook, Co-Founder & CEO, Navigating Cancer

Gena Cook is the Co-Founder and CEO of Navigating Cancer, the leading patient relationship management platform for cancer care which she co-founded in 2008, out of a passion to leverage technology and involve patients in transforming the cancer care delivery model. Gena has over 20 years of healthcare experience directly in the cancer field. Prior to Navigating Cancer, she was VP of Sales and Marketing for McKesson Specialty Care Solutions and Oncology Therapeutics Network. She also held a variety of leadership and commercial roles during her 12-year tenure at Bristol-Myers Squibb. Gena received her B.A. in Business Administration from the University of Washington.

She currently serves as the chair of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Foundation board and a director for the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA) Benefit Trust.
Barry Russo
Chief Executive Officer, The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders

Barry Russo has been with The Center since 2002. Barry has over 25 years of healthcare experience – he has worked in academic and community practices as well as academic and community hospitals. The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders is a private community practice. The Center has 20 physicians, 8 Physician Extenders and 9 practice sites. The Center offers medical oncology, radiation oncology, hematology, gynecologic oncology, breast oncology surgery, stereotactic radiosurgery, integrative medicine, imaging, laboratory services and retail pharmacy.

Barry has an MBA from the University of Dallas and resides in Southlake, Texas.
Rena M. Conti, Ph.D

Rena M. Conti, Ph.D. is associate professor at the University of Chicago, departments of pediatrics and public health sciences. Her research applies economic methods to analyze the incentives driving prescription drug development, adoption and price. Her focus has been primarily on “specialty” drugs, particularly cancer, because this area is at the epicenter of the key policy conundrum: the tradeoff between providing incentives for innovative activity versus ensuring access and affordability. Dr. Conti is a 2007 graduate of Harvard University’s Interfaculty Initiative in Health Policy, concentration: economics.