

Welfare SIG Newsletter Edition 2 - January 2014

Welcome to the second Welfare of Anaesthetists Special Interest Group (SIG) newsletter. There have been many activities across New Zealand and Australia that our members have attended and organised. As welfare officers, clinical leaders, managers and individuals, please consider attending, organising or spreading the word about these activities and building a culture of welfare around you.

2013 education activities

Combined Education, Management and Welfare SIG Meeting

The 2013 Combined Education, Management and Welfare SIG Meeting was convened by the Welfare SIG in Noosa from September 20-22. The theme was "Mindfulness, performance and achievement" and the meeting was attended by 150 delegates.



As in previous years, the workshops proved very popular. In particular the pre-meeting workshop run by Spiritual Care Programme on the topic of "Mindfulness: Practising compassion for self and others" was heavily oversubscribed. It was new to most participants who found it challenging and very different from a typical anaesthesia workshop. Feedback from the workshop has been extremely positive and we are hoping to organise mindfulness practice sessions at future meetings. Please keep an eye out for sessions during the Singapore ANZCA Annual Scientific Meeting and at the next combined SIG meeting.

One of the books on the recommended reading list was Dr Robin Youngson's Time to Care. Dr Youngson is an anaesthetist based in New Zealand who has presented widely on mindfulness including at a past combined SIG meeting. He will be presenting a lecture on burnout at the upcoming combined SIG meeting.

Health Professionals' Health Conference, October 2013

Doctors' health conferences began in Australia in 1999 and have been held every two years since. In 2011, the conference in New Zealand was expanded to other health professionals.

The 2013 conference in Brisbane was organised by a committee led by Dr Margaret Kay who was aided by the Queensland Doctors' Health Advisory Service (DHAS). It was sponsored by Avant, beyondblue, the ADF, the AMA and Healthdirect. The conference was attended by 150 registrants from all healthcare professions who gained new insights and further skills in maintaining their own and others' mental and physical health.

There were several pre-conference workshops that were very well supported:

- Dr Chris Cresswell – burnout.
- Dr Margaret Kay and Dr Carolyn Russell - Treating doctors as patients.
- Sally Jones - Is a tidy desk the sign of a sick mind?
- Dr Sarah Winch - The Compassion Café.
- Dr Hilton Koppe - Creative writing.
- Dr Zoe Wainer and Sue Schoonbeck - Maintaining resilience at work – bullying.

- Jane Thompson and Fay White - Singing for health.

I did the Compassion Café and the Singing for health workshops and enjoyed both. The singing continued throughout the conference and we gave a couple of impromptu public concerts! Dr Chris Cresswell ran daily mindfulness workshops, and there were “Healing Health” walks every morning.

International keynote speakers who are leaders in doctors’ health in their home countries included Dr Andree Rochford, a general practitioner from Ireland, who has set up a telephone help line, education in doctors’ health and the Health in Practice program, and Dr Derek Puddester, from the Canadian Medical Association. Dr David Clarke presented a taste of the results of the beyondblue survey National Mental Health Survey of Doctors and Medical Students. Avant ran a plenary session on mandatory reporting and a concurrent session was organised by beyondblue. The latter was chaired by Dr Michael Baigent and involved Dr Di Khursandi and Professor Brett McDermott on “How to better support health professionals with a mental health condition”.

Dr Di Khursandi , executive member WOA SIG Executive Committee

ASA NSC, October 2013

Thanks also to Dr Greg Downey who organised the welfare session at the Canberra Australian Society of Anaesthetists’ National Scientific Congress. It was a well-attended session and the contrasting speakers kept the audience engaged. Professor Peter Klineberg spoke on errors in medical practice and professional performance and Dr Genevieve Yates spoke on the balanced doctor.

Mentor’s Toolbox Workshop, Auckland 2013

The term mentor originally comes from Homer’s Odyssey – where Odysseus trusted the upbringing of his son to a friend for 22 years while he was at the Trojan war. A mentor has come to describe a relationship where an older or more senior person acts in a role as an advisor, teacher, coach and supervisor. The role of mentor has become increasingly prominent in the medical literature and was eloquently described in ANZCA’s own “blue book” by Dr Peter Howe in 2007 as “that person who took you under their wing, provided you with timely advice and helped you address the complex choices that arise at the end of training and in the early years of consultant practice”.

While there are numerous conferences discussing the educational and technical skills of anaesthesia there is less awareness of courses and resources available for us to learn the skills of mentoring.

Auckland’s Middlemore Hospital provided an opportunity for interested consultants to attend a department-based training day run by the New Zealand Coaching and Mentoring Centre. A half-day version of their “The Mentors Toolbox” workshop was run at Middlemore. It covered what mentoring is, tools for effective mentoring and role playing to practice tools useful in mentoring conversations. Courses are run across the major centers for people from all fields, both medical and non-medical. With the private workshop the focus was able on our training system and the barriers pertaining to medical mentoring.

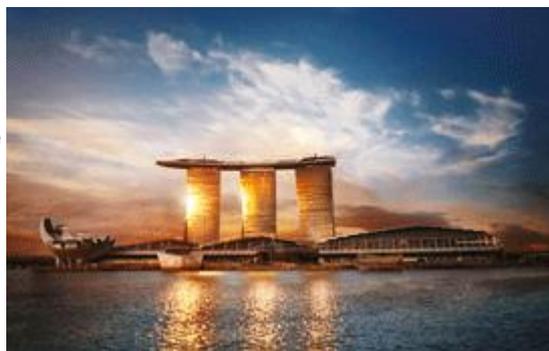
Feedback from the day was overwhelmingly positive and included the comments “all clinical teachers should do this” and “should be mandatory for the whole department”. The skills associated with being a mentor differ from being a mentee and with this in mind work is being done to run a workshop for trainees in the coming year.

Dr Cath Purdy, NZ trainee representative, WOA SIG Executive Committee

2014 education activities

ANZCA ASM and RACS ASM, May 5-9

Upcoming session at meetings include the Singapore ANZCA ASM and RACS ASC. The welfare session will take place on Friday May 9 at 1.30pm. Please note this is the last session of the conference. The speakers are Dr Christopher Young (surgeon) speaking about trainees on and off the tracks, Dr Richard Walsh on regulatory bodies and our performance, health and conduct and Dr Marion Andrew on trainee support programs. Thanks to Dr Tim Porter and Dr Di Khursandi for organising this. Dr Khursandi is also running a small group discussion on Monday afternoon called "Having that difficult conversation" and Dr Porter will be conducting a similar session on the challenges of teaching professionalism to our registrars and junior colleagues.



Combined Education, Communications, Management and Welfare SIG Meeting, September 19-21 The 2014 Combined Education, Management and Welfare SIG meeting will take place in Kingscliffe, NSW. For the first time it will include the the Communication in Anaesthesia SIG. Registrations will open around mid-year. The welfare session will be themed "Derailment in mid-career" and canvas topics such as burnout.

Further information for the meeting will be available

shortly.

ASA National Scientific Congress, October 4-7

Dr Jeneen Thatcher and Dr Di Khursandi are organising the welfare session at the national scientific congress.

The Gold Coast weather, entertainment and recreational activities are sure to make this a very popular and family-friendly meeting. The welfare session is scheduled for Sunday October 5 at 3.30pm and partners will be welcome. If you are registering, please bring your partners to this session.



Publications

Thanks to Dr Martin Heck and Dr Di Khursandi who contributed to the Australian Society of Anaesthetists magazine Australian Anaesthetist on the welfare of the international medical graduate and the isolated anaesthetist.

Anaesthesia and Intensive Care published an article called "Mental health and welfare in Australian anaesthetists" in Volume 41, Issue 5. The authors, Dr Nolan McDonnell, Dr David Kaye, Dr Sean Hood, Dr Prani Shrivastava and Dr Diana Khursandi, surveyed 191 Fellows. Among the findings 26 per cent had attended their general practitioner for mental health issues. It marks the first recent

Australian and New Zealand survey of Fellows' mental health. Journal clubs or peer review groups may find it an interesting discussion point.

Shortly after the publication of the above survey, beyondblue released the National Mental Health Survey of Doctors and Medical Students report. It can be found on their website or by following [this link](#)

Subgroup analyses according to specialty were published as well as recommendations for the mental health of doctors and medical students. They advise the adoption of positive coping strategies. A further summary will be published in the upcoming ANZCA Bulletin.

Other activities

In 1993, Dr Anthony Weeks, Dr Mark Buckland, Dr Evan Morgan and Professor Paul Myles published a paper in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care titled "Chemical dependence in anaesthetic registrars in Australia and New Zealand". In 2005, Dr Rob Fry conducted a follow-up survey, also published in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care. He surveyed every anaesthetic department in Australia and New Zealand and obtained an impressive 78 per cent response rate.

As data on substance abuse among anaesthetists in our region is extremely difficult to obtain, this information has value to individuals and departments. If you work as head of department in a public hospital in Australia or New Zealand, you will shortly receive his survey via ANZCA. Your response will count so please reply.

The Welfare of Anaesthetists founders and executive have been working to obtain a clearer picture of substance abuse and the treatment of anaesthetists across Australia and New Zealand. These have included meeting with medical board officials, searching the national database for deaths amongst anaesthesia personnel and working with psychiatry colleagues. Further updates will appear in future newsletters. Thanks to our parent bodies the ASA, ANZCA and NZSA for their support in these efforts.

Upcoming website additions

A new link on "How to request a resource document" will shortly appear on the WOA SIG website. If you would like to suggest a topic for a future resource document, please contact [Kirsty O'Connor](#). Also appearing will be guidelines on how to draft a resource document. This will explain how the SIG drafts its resource documents.

Dr Suzi Nou and Dr Cath Purdy will be posting a resource and reading list on the website shortly. This should prove useful to welfare officers, supervisors of training and anaesthesia trainees and Fellows. Thanks Suzi and Cath.

A new section on how to run a peer review group will shortly be appearing. Dr Shirley Prager led an interesting masterclass on this topic in Noosa at the combined SIG meeting. Groups are springing up already, however more information and suggestions on the creation and ground rules for such groups will be coming shortly. Our thanks to Dr Antionette Brennan, Dr Kushlani Stevenson and Dr Shirley Prager for their work.

A quick reminder that the ANZCA special interest group site is accessible to the public and doesn't require ANZCA registration.

Other news

The ANZCA Library can set up auto-alerts for individuals to keep them up to date with the most recent literature on specific topics such as substance abuse or impaired physicians.

As my time as chair is drawing to a close I would like to remind interested people that the WOA SIG is

seeking a new chair. If you would like to nominate for the position or would like further information please contact either [Kirsty](#) or myself. In order to assist the incoming chair, the SIG executive recently voted to create an informal deputy role. Nominations are not required but the first deputy will be drawn from the existing executive.

Finally, many thanks to all those who have contributed to welfare-related events since the last newsletter. Our particular thanks to Ms Hannah Burnell who has stepped down from SIG co-ordinator role. Hannah's patience and enthusiasm will be missed. We would also like to welcome Ms Kirsty O'Connor who has replaced Hannah. Kirsty is working part-time and is available on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Next newsletter

For submissions or ideas for the next newsletter, please contact [Kirsty O'Connor](#)

ANZCA House
630 St Kilda Road
Melbourne VIC 3004
Australia
T: +61 3 9093 4998

Welfare of Anaesthetist Special Interest Group Executive Committee

Dr Prani Shrivastava (WA) - Chair
Dr Di Khursandi(Qld)
Dr Tracey Tay (NSW)
Dr Greg Downey (NSW)
Dr Robert Fry (NZ)
Dr Kushlani Stevenson (Vic)
Dr Jenny Plummer (Tas)
Dr Tim Porter (SA)
Dr Suzi Nou (NT)
Dr Cath Purdy (NZ trainee representative)
Dr Vicki Pentelow (Australian trainee representative)