

PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2014

It seems like only yesterday that I was frantically attempting to construct an acting president's report prior to the Hamilton conference, and here I am frantically writing another report. With the changes to the conference dates, which have moved it forward in the year to September, report writing time has come around very quickly.

At the end of the last conference Martin Bird (secretary) and I were in discussion with the PSA, to explore how the professional and industrial representatives for the membership could better work alongside each other promote the profession and the interests of the members. From a professional standpoint the association is looking for acknowledgement of the member's growth and development over the past few years. Members have shown their dedication to professional development with majority having achieved the level 3 Certificate in Sterilising Technology and many now achieving the level 5 Certificate. The NZSSA will be striving for the introduction of a financially based career pathway for Sterile Technicians and have the support of industrial organisations to further investigate and promote this. I will keep you informed by way of Supplyline and the website of any progress on this.

Last year Martin and I attended a meeting with the professional body Allied Health Association of New Zealand. This body professionally represents many allied health groups including anaesthetic technicians and dieticians. At that time we were there to state our case for membership of this group. We were unsuccessful in our attempt as we were not offering a Diploma level course, nor did we have a code of ethics. Following this disappointment the executive set about to rectify this situation. A code of conduct has been drafted and will issue to members for comment. If adopted, it will sit in with the constitution and rules. As for the Diploma level course, Alison and the Open polytechnic have been given the mandate to proceed with developing the transition of the level 5 course to a Diploma and the level 3 course to level 4.

Two months ago the AHA NZ contacted me again and stated that they would be willing to potentially offer us associate membership of the AHA NZ if we wished to reapply. The executive discussed this at their last meeting and agreed we should reapply.

I am happy to announce to you all that the AHA NZ unanimously agreed to our application and we are now officially associate members of the allied health professional group AHA NZ. This unites our association with approximately 20000 allied health professionals and gives us greater access to the ministry of health, through the Ministry of Health representative on that association.

In March Alison and I attended the leader's forum in Christchurch. We had a fantastic turnout and I am personally pleased to say we had no shakes. Attendees came from all over the South Island and I was particularly impressed by the way everyone got involved and joined in the discussion. Sadly it was decided there was a need to cancel the meeting at the end of July in Wellington. When all was weighed up it appeared to be too close to conference. For the coming year we will ensure we do not repeat such clashes of dates. I will be looking for members of our executive to take the lead in running the north and south island meetings.

In the June/July edition of Supplyline, I highlighted two Sterile Technicians from Hutt Valley DHB who had gone on to complete the GENCA course for endoscopy processing. At HVDHB sterile technicians

work within the endoscopy unit on a rostered and rotating basis and are responsible for all scope reprocessing. Little did I know that this article would open up the flood gates with requests from numerous sterile technicians to complete the course and be assessed by GENCA. GENCA will be providing further courses this year in the South Island. Dates and details are up on the website. It also proves our members want to continue to up skill themselves.

The executive have also this year been assisting another group the Dental Association with their policy and procedural guidelines, and I met with the MP for Nelson Dr Nick Smith to discuss the courses available through the Association and the Open Polytechnic for tattoo artists.

The NZSSA were one of the sponsors for TC198 which held their forum in Sydney. I had the pleasure of being able to attend the forums as an official observer. While I appreciate the work these people from around the world undertake in addition to their regular jobs, it is time consuming and the end never appears to be in sight.

I would like to thank the executive team for all their hard work and dedication. I would particularly like to thank the two Sue's, Sue Woods and Sue Evans who have spent the past ten months organising the venue and social calendar for this year's conference in Christchurch. Thanks go to Theresa Luke for tending the Facebook site in its infancy. Theresa has now handed this role over to Martin Bird to continue on with. Thanks also go to Theresa who puts together the "Supplyline" journal. It is a huge task and she does a fantastic job. Thanks go to Jenny Carstens for doing a wonderful job with getting events and issues up onto the website and to Nicki Quested for agreeing to be on the working group for the Open Polytechnic for the review of the qualifications.

So where to for 2014/15. The team will continue to work with the Open Polytechnic on the progression and changes to the courses offered. There will also likely be a review of the requirements for registration.

I look forward to working with you all and appreciate your on-going support of the association. Remember the NZSSA is here for you. I can always be contacted by phone or email.

Thank you

Shelagh Thomas

President

New Zealand Sterile Services Association.