



Australian Association for
Infant Mental Health

**AAIMHI WA BRANCH PRESIDENT'S REPORT
AGM
9th August 2018**

It is my pleasure to share with you the activities of AAIMHI WA Branch over the last 12 months during the 2017/18 financial year.

Membership

WA's membership continues to be strong, we had 195 members in the year 1st July 2017 – 30th June 2018.

The membership includes 130 members with known profession:

19% Registered nurse or midwife

17% "other"

16% psychologist

12% social worker

9% fulltime student

8% OT

5% early childhood educator

5% Physiotherapist

3% Psychiatrist

3% speech pathologist

<1% researcher

<1% psychotherapist

We do have 33% missing data on member profession, this data is really important to us, so if members could please log in to the website and check their profession and work place is entered and up to date it would be really helpful.

National AAIMHI

At the AAIMHI WA AGM on 7th September 2017 the membership passed a special resolution to wind up AAIMHI WA, it now operates as a branch under the national AAIMHI known as the West Australian branch of AAIMHI under the leadership of incoming National President Libby Morton. The Australian Association for Infant Mental Health – West Australian Branch Incorporated (AAIMHI WA) was formally cancelled on 28th December 2017.

In addition, at the 2017 National AGM, AAIMHI members voted for the Association to transfer to a Company Limited by Guarantee and was first registered with ASIC in April 2018.

Part of this transition to National AAIMHI means that the **AAIMHI WA Competency Guidelines for Culturally-Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health**® are now held by National AAIMHI. Connected to this, a National subcommittee Chaired by Beulah Warren has been established to answer the question:

‘Does adopting a competency framework assist in progressing or furthering the aims and objectives of the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health’

The subcommittee includes three representatives from WA and will feedback to National AAIMHI in November 2018.

Professional Development and Building Capacity for the WA Workforce in IMH

During the last financial year, we have offered 5 evening seminars. The seminar series has been aligned to core competencies for some time now and follows a progression of topics:

- IMH theory and practice,
- IMH in the pregnancy period,
- Assessment,
- Intervention,
- Reflective practice.

2017/18 seminar topics have included:

Topic	Competencies addressed	
Borderline Personality Disorder, Mentalizing, and mother-infant interaction Anthony Bateman July 2017	Theoretical Foundations: Mental and behavioural disorders in adults	Theoretical Foundations: Psychotherapeutic and behavioural theories of change
Engaging fathers on the importance of the early years. Keith Reid September 2017	Theoretical Foundations: Infant and young child family centred practice	
Infant Mental Health Clinical Case Work –Two Cases with Distressed Families, presented by C. Gally McKenzie & Olivia Marshall and facilitated by Associate Professor Lynn Priddis. November 2017	Direct Service Skills: Parent-infant/very young child relationship-based therapies and practices.	Theoretical Foundations: Attachment, separation, trauma, grief and loss.
Early Childhood Service Intensity Instrument (ECSII) Assessment Tool Videoconference from the USA Presented by Kate Wasserman April 2018	Direct service skills: Treatment planning	Systems expertise: Service delivery systems
Infant Mental Health (IMH) Awareness Week Keeping the Child in Mind If you could experience a city from 95cm – the height of a 3- year-old – what would you change? Multidisciplinary panel June 2018	Working with others: Collaborating	Systems expertise: Service delivery systems

Seminars are now averaging about 30-40 attendees (over the last 3-4 seminars). We are always keen to hear from our members if you would like specific presenters to be invited to present, so we ask that you please indicate any preferences on the feedback forms that we hand out at the end of the seminars or contact us at info-wa@aaimhi.org.

We are also looking for ways to ensure the training events we deliver are cost effective at the same time as delivering value for money to our members. As such we are currently exploring alternative venues for 2019 seminars. If you have any suggestions please let us know!

AAIMHI WA Competency Guidelines

The purpose of the interdisciplinary Competency Guidelines and Endorsement Working Group (which currently has 8 active members), is to support the implementation of the AAIMHI WA Competency Guidelines and Endorsement into the WA workforce across promotion, prevention, intervention and treatment levels of service.

This is a process that began in 2013 after The Building Mental Health of Infants and Young Children: Workforce and Competency Based Training project identified and recommended adopting the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health competency guidelines to build interdisciplinary workforce capacity across professions in the WA IMH sector.

The Competency Guidelines and Endorsement Working Group was formed in October 2014, and has met at least monthly since then. The main work of CGEWG over the last financial year has been focussed on preparation to roll out the AAIMHI WA Branch Based Endorsement procedures over the next 12 months. This has involved:

- Continuing the workload of the 5 Sub Committees, i.e. Reflective Supervision, Training, Fiscal, Communications, Cultural Contextualisation of Competency Guidelines for Aboriginal & Torres Straits Island Communities. From March 2018 these sub committees have been suspended due to the extent of the CGEWG workload related to the roll out of the AAIMHI WA Branch Endorsement Process. The Training Sub Committee will reconvene in September.
- Seeking consultation from and meeting with a number of counterparts in a number of States in the USA who have implemented the endorsement process.
- Editing and adapting Michigan Association IMH Endorsement documents and processes for the WA context.
- Supporting the alignment of IMH competencies for seminars, training, and educational institutions, both from Government & Non-Government Associations & Bodies, including a number of Post Graduate Programs.
- Responding to requests for training and the development of protocols associated with this.
- Conference presentations relating to competency guidelines and endorsement in infant mental health practice at professional meetings, e.g., the 2017 Rural & Remote Area Mental Health Conference, Broome, October 2017.
- Attendance and liaison meetings at AAIMHI national Conference November 2017, Melbourne.
- Attendance and liaison at WAIMH Congress, June, Rome.
- Development and publication of an AAIMHI WA CGEWG article to the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health.

Successful Grant from the Government of Western Australia Mental Health Commission

In order to achieve the commencement of the AAIMHI WA Competency Guidelines® Endorsement process implementation in 2018, several organisations were approached in order to explore the possibility of a grant being made available to fund a project officer working 0.2FTE equivalent. In March 2018 discussion was had with the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) and in April 2018 we were in communication with the WA Mental Health Commission (MHC). On June 9th 2018, the MHC confirmed that AAIMHI WA Branch would be in receipt of \$19,800.00 (including GST) to fund the project officer position. The funds have since been received. As a result, an expression of interest for the project officer role will be sent out to the membership within the week. All are welcome to apply and a formal recruitment process will take place soon. We are delighted to be working alongside the MHC again in order to progress the next stage of Endorsement process implementation!

Training Provider List

Over the past year, we have also been collating a list of external training providers in response to the branch receiving a number of requests for training from external bodies. A number of applications were received for the training provider list and all applicants have since been contacted by the branch. The training provider list will now be made available to external bodies upon their request to AAIMHI WA Branch for this information. The list will not be made available to the public.

Update regarding the AAIMHI WA Branch Management Committee

The Management Committee has undergone several changes over the course of the year. In particular, we have had three people step down from the Management Committee during the course of the year and five people step down at the 2018 AGM. Thus, our current Management Committee stands at seven members (the maximum number allowed is 14). For family and personal reasons, I will be stepping down from my roles as President and Treasurer in December 2018 which will leave six remaining Management Committee members and the following office bearing roles vacant:

- President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Membership Secretary

After much reflection at a branch level and some consultation with National, we acknowledge that we are now in a position where we will need to focus our efforts and energies on core functions only for the next few months. Without the addition of new members to the Management Committee, we plan to use the next few months to allow ourselves time and space to take stock, think and reflect about how best the Management Committee can move forward into 2019 and beyond, considering how we can fill the above leadership roles in order to continue to support our membership and the Western Australian community.

The Management Committee is dedicated to diversity and inclusion for all professionals working with infants, young children and families across the Continuum of Care. We welcome the involvement of all people working in the early childhood space, irrespective of where they sit on the Continuum of Care. If you would like to join the committee and contribute to the voice of Infant Mental Health in Western Australia, we ask members to send through a nomination to info-wa@aaimhi.org by 5pm on the 30th September 2018.

If you do not feel able to embrace a leadership role at present, I ask you to source a nomination from within your professional networks, someone who you consider demonstrates key leadership qualities in order to take AAIMHI WA Branch forward collectively.

Leadership is not and should never be the responsibility of one person or one group of people. We all have capacity to be leaders; this is never truer than in our field, which is founded on the cornerstones of relationships and advocacy. Whether we have 30 years' experience in the field or are just starting out; whether we are a community officer working in a universal service or a clinical psychologist; whether we have a postgraduate qualification or a TAFE qualification, we all have so much to contribute to shape the future of Infant Mental Health in Western Australia.

I would like to finish by reflecting on a quote by Barack Obama:

**Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time.
We are the ones we've been waiting for.
We are the change that we seek.**

Thank you everyone for your time and support.

Jenna Thornton
President AAIMHI WA Branch
On Behalf of the AAIMHI WA Management Committee