



Australian Association for
Infant Mental Health

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health

AAIMH National Chairperson's Report: Nicole Milburn

Nov 20th, 2023 AAIMH Annual General Meeting:

Vision

The needs of every infant and young child from before birth to age three are prioritised and addressed in a timely and responsive way to enhance their relationships and their mental health and wellbeing.

Mission

Our Mission is to work for all infants and young children from pre birth to age three to ensure their social, emotional and developmental needs are met through stable and nurturing relationships within their family, culture and communities.

The 2022/23 Board:

Chairperson: Nicole Milburn (Vic).

Secretary: Michelle Fryer (Qld).

Treasurer: Mary Hood (SA).

Branch Reps/ Board Directors: Sally Watson (SA), Joe Coyne (Qld), Cath McPhee (Vic), Sara Browne (WA), Jane Kohlhoff (NSW), Danielle Kurr (ACT), Caroline Diamond (Tas), Karen Hazell Raine (NT).

Membership Secretary Heather Warne (SA)

Website Coordinator: Abby Chee (WA)

Competency Guidelines National Project Leader: Gally McKenzie (WA)

Project Officer: Brendan Cook (NSW), position funded, 4 hours per week.

Executive Support: Margaret Turner, funded 4 hours per week

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

126A Payneham Road Stepney SA 5069 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522
info@aaimhi.org | www.aaimhi.org

Affiliated with the



WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

Subcommittees:

IMHAW: Caroline Diamond (Chair)

Governance: Joe Coyne (Qld) Nicole Milburn (Vic) & Gally McKenzie (WA)

Education: Joe Coyne (Qld) and Sally Watson (SA)

Research and Advocacy: Cath McPhee (Vic)

Finance: National and Branch Treasurers

It feels like this year has flown by. AAIMH has been very active again, and we have much to report.

Highlights have been welcoming our Northern Territory branch, which is well and truly up and running. We can all be very proud that we now have branches in every state and territory!

We welcomed Karen Hazell Raine, NT President, and new Board members Jane Kohlhoff (NSW) and Sara Browne (WA) to our planning day in February with all national colleagues and had a very productive day. This is the only time the Board come together in person and is vital for the group.

February also saw the National Early Years Summit, run by Ministers Rishworth and Ali, as a key part of developing the new National Early Years Strategy. AAIMH was invited to the day at Parliament House along with approximately 100 people from different organizations and interest groups to contribute. It was great to see AAIMH on the invitation list and there was much said about mental health. AAIMH followed up with a submission, and thanks go to AAIMH members Richard Fletcher and Rebecca Thatcher for their work with the subcommittee. The submission is available on the website.

June saw the marking of Infant Mental Health Awareness week with branch events and very beautiful posters developed by the subcommittee. The posters and the recording of the SA event are still available on the website.

July saw a great contingent of AAIMH members participate in and present at the WAIMH Congress in Dublin. AAIMH congratulates Assoc Prof Campbell Paul on his Presidency of WAIMH and a rich and successful congress. Australian infant mental health professionals are always well represented at the WAIMH Congresses, and this one was no exception. The body of work of Australians in this context is known and respected elsewhere.

Members of the Board and colleagues from WA met with the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health in Dublin to progress the implementation of the competency framework. More about this below, but it was terrific to have the opportunity to meet in person to build the alliance with the Alliance. It was also very helpful to see

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org |
www.aaimhi.org



how Ireland, as the only other non-US AIMH, has been grappling with implementing the framework.

In September AAIMH presented a plenary at the Marce Conference in Adelaide in what we hope will be reciprocal joint ventures in the future.

AAIMH decided to publish a statement in support of the Yes campaign for the recent referendum on the Voice to Parliament. This was viewed as an important step to promote reconciliation and to support our First Nations colleagues, and the work we do with families.

AAIMH has done a major back of house piece of work this year in transitioning to the Microsoft universe, which is streamlining many of our processes and saving some money on storage and Zoom. We appreciate member's patience while we progress this work.

Our flagship event, the Claudia Gold national tour, unfortunately was cancelled in the days and week prior, due to Dr Gold's personal circumstances. Dr. Gold was very disappointed to be unable to come and is keen to come at some stage in the future when family issues allow. AAIMH appreciated member's and registrant's understanding. This has resulted in a financial loss to AAIMH that is being calculated at the time of writing and will be reported in the 2023-2024 accounts.

Finally, AAIMH is farewelling Mary Hood who has been our erstwhile and dedicated Treasurer for 5 years. Mary has embedded the financial practices required for the not for profit status and helped the Board understand and comply with the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not for profit Commission (ACNC). She has also been very hands on and active in managing the bank accounts and helping the branches with financial issues. AAIMH is very grateful to Mary for her years of service.

With the understanding that AAIMH is now a medium sized charity according to the ACNC, the Board have decided to appoint a financial professional in the role of Treasurer. This is a first for AAIMH, being the first person who is not an infant mental health professional to join the Board and the organization. We welcome Kate Griffin to the role this AGM. Kate is an Accountant and brings many years of experience in working with not for profit, member based, superannuation firms. She has years of experience working with Boards who have comprised professional as well as member-directors, and the Board is very pleased to welcome her to the organization.

As you are all aware, AAIMH relies mostly upon volunteers. The Board, branch committees and members all make up the wonderful organization that is AAIMH, and continue the culture of support, generosity and steadfast advocacy in the service of babies and toddlers and their families. This year we farewell Caroline Diamond from the Board. Caroline was the inaugural president of the Tasmania Branch and has overseen the establishment of the branch, as well as providing leadership to the Infant Mental Health Awareness subcommittee. We are very grateful to Caroline for her contribution to AAIMH, and look forward to welcoming Dr. Victoria Carter to the role and to the Board.

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org |
www.aaimhi.org

Page 3 of 9

Affiliated with the



WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

AAIMH is supported by the Membership Secretary, Heather Warne, and our website coordinator, Abby Chee. Abby and Heather do enormous amounts of work to ensure the smooth running of things, and both have stepped in to do urgent work at times. AAIMH could not run without these very important people!

We also have 2 paid contractors who help AAIMH with the work. Brendan Cook is an AAIMH member and has been working on projects. His expertise is seen most in the development of the position statements, a key part of AAIMH's communication to the members and the sector. Margaret Turner provides executive administration services and keeps everything organized and on track and somehow manages to bring order to what sometimes appears as chaos. We are very grateful to Brendan and Margaret for their work.

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org |
www.aaimhi.org

Page 4 of 9

Affiliated with the



WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

Report on the strategic priorities:

The Vision and Mission of AAIMH are:

Vision

The needs of every infant and young child from before birth to age three are prioritised and addressed in a timely and responsive way to enhance their relationships and their mental health and wellbeing.

Mission

Our Mission is to work for all infants and young children from pre birth to age three to ensure their social, emotional and developmental needs are met through stable and nurturing relationships within their family, culture and communities.

In 2021 we adopted a new 3 year strategic plan to progress our mission. At the end of the third year of the strategic plan, we have achieved the following:

1. **Advocate and collaborate for infants and young children through improving professional and public recognition within relevant networks.**

Activities

- Perform activities to celebrate International Infant Mental Health Awareness Week
- Join with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and professionals to advocate for the needs of First Nations infants and their families.
- Provide resources for caregivers and families
- Identify and link to relevant networks, including liaising with affiliated international colleagues
- Develop a National Advocacy Agenda that includes state as well as national priorities
- Provide information to members

Progress in 2023:

1.1 The Theme for International Infant Mental Health Awareness Week (IMHAW) in 2023 was 'bonding before birth', and events were held in a number of branches to celebrate. In addition, the subcommittee developed some beautiful posters that are still available on the website

1.2 We have established a strong connection with the NZ Infant Mental Health Association (IMHAANZ) through reciprocal free membership of the Chairs. This will

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org |
www.aaimhi.org



increase communication across the ditch in the first instance and generate opportunities to collaborate further in PD events.

1.3 AAIMH made a submission to the National Early Years strategy.

1.4 Examples of some of the activities taken place at branch level include:

- SA branch have continued to develop links with Group “Deadly Nannas” a group of Aboriginal women based in Murray Bridge who are supporting families
- SA branch made a second submission for Early Childhood Education and care First Call focusing on First Thousand Days
- Ongoing involvement Thrive to Five SA Chapter
- Both the WA and SA branches made strategic use of Chandra Ghosh Ippen’s visit to Australia to meet with key stakeholders in government and the sector to promote the needs of infants who have suffered trauma
- The Circle of Security training was extensively advertised and supported throughout AAIMH branches.

2. Increase the capacity of those directly involved in developing or advocating for policy or services that provide support to infants and young children through provision of education, professional development, and the dissemination of scientific knowledge.

Activities:

- Generate and update position statements
- Deliver a biannual National Conference
- Develop a Media/Social Media presence to disseminate scientific knowledge, position statements
- Investigate development of podcast framework and delivery
- Training opportunities: access to trainers & supervision
- Deliver a biannual Speaker Tour
- Develop mentoring opportunities for members
- Support AAIMH members to seek out opportunities to join relevant advisory and working groups that inform policy and workforce development planning
- Support AAIMH members to contribute to feedback rounds during the development of national frameworks and strategies that impact on infancy and families; membership to be provided with submission templates they can adapt
 - Provide scholarships to support attendance at professional development events.

Progress in 2023

2.1 The Continuity of Care position statement was launched at the 2022 AGM and has been published on the website.

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org |
www.aaimhi.org

Page 6 of 9

Affiliated with the



WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

The infants in refuge position statement is almost finalized and will be available shortly.

2.2 The National Tour by Dr Claudia Gold was planned and ready to go when Dr. Gold was forced to cancel for family reasons. This has caused a small loss to AAIMH, and a loss of earnings, with the whole of organisation financial position still being worked out at the time of writing. Reporting for next AGM.

2.3 Scholarships to support learning

2.3.1 Sue Morse Scholarship provides access to high quality supervision for a year for the successful applicant/s. Funded by a bequest by long term member and gifted Infant Mental Health specialist from Victoria, Sue Morse. This year's recipient was an early in career member from SA.

2.3.2 . SA Branch allocates up to \$20,000 for philanthropy grants for South Australian members. Each year, the AAIMH SA committee decides whether and how the funds will be allocated. This may vary from year to year. The money available may be divided into a number of grants of varying amounts allocated in any year, including attending training, conferences, and developing resources. Not all funds maybe allocated each year. This year scholarships were provided to attend the Dr Claudia Gold national tour which did not go ahead.

2.4. Activities at branch level have included:

- Seminars by all branches.
- Seminars provided by Chandra Gosh Ippen in several states
- CPP training advertised and fully booked.
- The Ann Morgan Prize had the highest number of submissions ever, giving a rich offering of perspectives of the infant to honour Ann Morgan's contribution to infant mental health.

3. Educate, inform, and support professionals to implement evidence informed professional competencies and standards in infant mental health.

Activities:

Develop a plan to support the implementation of competency frameworks for members and organisations.

2023 Achievements:

- Plans for the Technical and Training Support Visit are well underway and will coincide with the 2024 National Conference to be held in Sydney.

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org |
www.aaimhi.org

Page 7 of 9

Affiliated with the



WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

- Qld, SA and Victoria join WA in aligning professional development seminars with the competency framework to assist members in monitoring and achieving their professional development needs.
- 20 people have achieved IMH Endorsement® in the Competency Framework in WA, 2 more than last year.
- South Australia has also been exploring mentoring of Aboriginal workers through the Competency Framework.

4 Reviewing and enhancing good governance

Activities:

- Annual governance training for Board and Committees
- Yearly review of governance and processes
- Register of governance issues arising during Board and Branch Committee meetings
- Growing and supporting membership diversity (e.g. through scholarships and free membership)
- Develop and implement an ongoing framework to seek and incorporate member feedback
- Establish a framework to ensure community and stakeholder input

2022 Achievements:

4.1 Annual governance training and risk review is embedded into normal practice at each planning day. Governance also includes the self evaluation to monitor effectiveness of the Board.

4.2 The Governance committee has led the recruitment and appointment of the new Treasurer under a newly adopted policy for executive roles.

4.3 With the transition to the Microsoft suite of services the Board has been gathering policies and governance documents that are now easily available for all Board members

4.4 Board and committee members have also had access to free governance training. The NT Branch President and several committee members completed a '10 things you need to know about not-for-profit governance' seminar.

4.5 Information gathered at the time of applying for membership has been reviewed by the Victoria Branch with suggestions for further information to be sought.

4.6 The WA branch committee has reviewed the Endorsement Project governance to prepare a Business Plan on its sustainability after the Mental Health Commission's funding ended on 31st March 2023.

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org |
www.aaimhi.org

Page 8 of 9

Affiliated with the



WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

At the end of the 2020-2023 strategic plan all strategic priorities have been met. Activities to achieve the strategic priorities that weren't undertaken were:

1. Develop a National Advocacy Agenda that includes state as well as national priorities
2. Develop a Media/Social Media presence to disseminate scientific knowledge, position statements
3. Investigate development of podcast framework and delivery
4. Develop and implement an ongoing framework to seek and incorporate member feedback
5. Establish a framework to ensure community and stakeholder input

The Board decided to invest in the website over social media as the main way of communicating with members and the public.

AAIMH Membership Numbers:

	ACT	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	NT	total
2023	14	41	44	67	10	141	88	10	415
2022	15	38	46	75	10	126	107	0	412

Organisations:

5 (1 large, 4 small)

Nicole Milburn
Board Chair

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Limited

44 Fullarton Rd Norwood SA 50697 Australia | ABN 88 625 753 522 | ACN 625 753 522 info@aaimhi.org | www.aaimhi.org

Affiliated with the

