



AAIMHI NEWSLETTER

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Guidelines for contributors

AAIMHI aims to publish quarterly editions in March, June, September and December. Contributions to the newsletter are invited on any matter of interest to the members of AAIMHI.

Referenced works should follow the guidelines provided by the APA Publication Manual 4th Edition.

All submissions are sub-edited to newsletter standards.

Articles are accepted preferably as Word documents sent electronically. Send to Shelley Reid at email:

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AAIMHI Annual Report 2008

President's message

First I would like to apologise for being unable to be present at the Annual General Meeting and to thank Lynn Priddis for chairing in my place. Lynn has been fulfilling the role of Vice President this last year.

It is heartening that government and other organisations seek our comment about issues to do with infant mental health and that our position statements are being widely used. However there is a long way to go in many areas and the national productivity recommendation for parenting leave being so limited is one area where we need to continue to advocate for infants.

I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work of all the committee over the year and to the South Australian committee, which has organised our conference this year. I would also like to thank Nicholas Linke from the Fisher Jeffries legal firm for donating the time to recommend constitutional changes. And this year the National Committee has decided to pay a special tribute to Marianne Nicholson, one of our founding members, current Public Officer and incoming Treasurer. Marianne works tirelessly for the association, always stepping up when there is a job to do. Her contribution to our work is immeasurable.

Achievements in 2008

This year has seen some important developments for AAIMHI, especially the building of a new web-based database that will enable members to update their own details and to make payments online. We thank Victor Evatt for

his hard work and persistence in this. Victor has been a special appointment to the National Committee this year to undertake this work.

There are some changes to the AAIMHI constitution to be voted on at the AGM, which will enable smoother functioning for the National and State Committees and bring us up to date with the use of technology for communication.

Our website continues to get interest from around the world and our position statements are used and quoted in many different circumstances. Keep an eye on the website as we are continually developing it and adding more information. You will see that we now have a statement of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on our home page. The website now has more detail about our National Committee and the constitution is available on the site for members.

We are pleased to launch our third position statement at this conference, on Time Out. Other position statements are being worked on so we can continue to put our point of view and expertise in the public arena. We have also developed some guidelines for working with the media.

We continue to advocate for infants where we can and have focussed this year on paid parental leave with submissions, both written and verbal, to the inquiry and promoting the issue wherever the opportunity has arisen. We also made a submission to the inquiry

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President's report (cont.)

into breastfeeding. We have not had a separate advocacy representative on the National Committee this year. This role does increase our focus on advocacy, so we need to look at this again next year.

Dr Campbell Paul represented AAIMHI at the WAIMH meeting in Yokohama, and some other Australian members attended as well. The National Committee had some concern that WAIMH proposed to change the definition of infancy from birth to three years up to from birth to five years. The National Committee had advocated against this change in order to keep the focus on infancy. This was agreed to at the WAIMH meeting. Campbell has been our representative on the WAIMH organisation and we thank him for his commitment and work in this area. We are proud that both Campbell and Brigid Jordan were recognised at the world meeting for their work and dedication in their international roles.

In other developments, we are forging closer links with the newly formed New Zealand Association for Infant Mental Health and we look forward to sharing news, joint initiatives and some transferable member benefits, such as conference discounts.

Our newsletter has been a major vehicle for news and information and we thank Shelley Reid for her great work in getting it organised, getting it out and getting contributions – no easy task with busy professionals!

We are also in the process of setting up a new branch of AAIMHI in the ACT. There are many infant mental health enthusiasts in the ACT and we offer them our support in establishing a branch of AAIMHI there. We would also like to support a new branch in Tasmania if there is enough interest so would be pleased to hear from anyone there who would like to be involved in starting a branch.

Pam Linke

National President, November 2008

Rules, Objects, the Act and You

While associations such as AAIMHI do not necessarily have to become incorporated, many special interests groups do so to be a legal entity for the benefit of their members and to protect them from the debts and liabilities of the association. Incorporation gives an association certain legal advantages in return for accepting certain legal responsibilities. An incorporated association receives recognition as a legal entity separate from its members, so that it can function as an individual and can legally do things in its own name regardless of changes in membership.

Incorporation is achieved at state level even if the organisation operates at a national level, usually in the state of origin or where most activity occurs. AAIMHI is incorporated in NSW under the *Associations Incorporation Act* (NSW) 1984 and branches in all states and territories must abide by this Act. Obligations include maintaining proper financial and membership records and registers. Oversight of associations is undertaken by the NSW Office of Fairtrading (see www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au).

Incorporated associations are required to formulate Rules and Objects (usually known as a Constitution) which set out the way that the association is to function as specified by the Act. The Rules cover such matters as membership, committee structure, conduct of meetings and various other management issues. In the Act, Objects are the goals of the association and activity should be directed to achieving these Objects.

AAIMHI became an incorporated association with Objects and Rules in 1988. Twenty years on, there have been changes in technology and the way AAIMHI now operates that do not fit well with the Rules. An update of the Rules is required, however the way in which Rules are changed is mandated by the Act.

Changing the Rules requires a special resolution, which is a decision by voting at a meeting. The voting must be held at a scheduled meeting (such as the AGM) or a meeting held for the purpose of making the special resolution. The Act requires that a majority of not less than three-quarters of members must pass a special resolution. Voting may be done in person, by appointing a proxy as a representative at the meeting, or by postal vote sent to an appointed Returning Officer (not a member). If this majority is not achieved, the special resolution cannot be passed.

At the last AGM held in Adelaide, nine resolutions were presented for voting. However, numbers of votes fell very far short of the required three-quarter majority. This means that the resolutions must be presented again at another meeting before they can be passed. The main aim of changing the Rules is to allow AAIMHI to function more effectively given technological advances, and to reflect other changes that have made some Rules no longer relevant (such as the need for a Regional Vice President of WAIMH). Some proposed changes are minor but nonetheless require a special resolution before they can be changed therefore they have been included for expediency.

A meeting is scheduled for Monday 16 February in Sydney and since this will not be convenient for most members we hope you will take up the options for proxy or postal voting. We urge members to cast their vote so that the required majority is achieved. Every vote counts.

Shelley Reid

AAIMHI National Secretary

STATE REPORTS

Victoria

The AAIMHI-Vic committee meeting in October saw the allocation of portfolios with Nichola Coombs taking up the role of President, Jane Brooks accepting the nomination for Secretary and Sue Breese will assist Julie Stone as Assistant Treasurer. The Victorian branch would like to acknowledge out-going President Brigid Jordan for her excellent guidance and leadership over the past two years. Brigid will continue on as a committee member.

The final scientific meeting for 2008 was held in November and addressed issues arising from Artificial Reproductive Technologies. A presentation by Dr Jane Brooks, clinical psychologist at Alfred CAMHS, highlighted the experiences of couples who failed to conceive with IVF and in particular the experience of recurrent loss and grief. She was then joined by Dr Colin Feekery and Dr Ann Morgan for a panel discussion as the meeting reflected on the place of the infant in the midst of IVF and the consequences of proposed legislative changes in Victoria.

Planning continues for the next AAIMHI conference which is due to be held in Melbourne in 2009.

Western Australia

WA Committee members

President: Lynn Priddis

Vice President: Elizabeth Seah

Membership secretary: Annie Mullan

Minutes Secretary: Sharon Elsley

Treasurer: Anne Clifford

Members: Ella Scott, Dalveen Godwin, Libby Fitzpatrick, Jennifer Newbould, Sue Coleson, Jane Doyle and Marion Russell

Reporting member: Lynn Priddis

2008 Activities

Two monthly member evenings have been held, with the committee meeting in the month in between.

The last event for the year was a film discussion evening of "Help Me Love My Baby" by Dr Amanda Jones from the Anna Freud Centre in London. The two-part series was shown on ABC recently. This movie stimulated considerable interest and resulted in a high attendance and some interesting discussion (movie cost \$248 for licence to show to non profit audience from ABC via internet).

Our September meeting was the AGM followed by a panel presentation from those who attended the WAIMH congress in Japan. This was enjoyed by about 30 people who attended; snippets of the opening address at WAIMH stimulated comment. Lynn reported a little on her attendance at the affiliates meeting at WAIMH. We hope that this evening will have inspired members to think about attending future conferences, both national and international.

Membership

We have 71 paid members.

Issues

At our AGM we had a partial turnover of committee members. We called for a conference committee to explore holding a National AAIMHI conference in WA towards the end of 2010 or early 2011.

A recurring issue is how to include rural members in our presentations and discussions.

Plans

In 2009 we plan to focus on the 2010 or 2011 AAIMHI conference which we have undertaken to host.

STATE REPORTS

NSW

I would like to start this report with a thank you to all members of the NSW AAIMHI committee who tirelessly committed themselves to the 2007 AAIMHI conference in Sydney and the visit in February this year of Maria Aarts. Our committee organised her five days of presentations which were held at Westmead and Liverpool Hospitals.

A special thank-you to our secretary Martha Birch and Shelley Reid who did much of the organising for Maria's visit. Shelley is also the publisher of the broadsheet and newsletter so you would be aware of how much work she puts into the organisation. For many years we have been lucky enough to have Marianne Nicholson as our treasurer and I would like to give her a special thank you for all her years of hard work

AAIMHI presidents can only serve for two years so this is my last year for a while. Victor Evatt will take over in 2009 and I know from past experience he will be an exceptional choice. Victor has been in northern NSW for the past few years but will be returning to Sydney soon.

I would like to thank AAIMHI for including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into their conference themes over the past two years and am hoping the trend will continue in Melbourne in 2009, with their committee keen to keep it up. Chryne Griffiths has been critical in making sure this happened and will continue to ensure that we all keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in mind.

Next year we are hoping to facilitate a mini introduction to infant mental health possibly six to eight sessions so keep your eyes and ears open for more news. Good luck Victor in 2009.

Trish Glossop

Announcement

New ACT AAIMHI Branch

We would like to announce the formation of an AAIMHI Branch in the ACT for residents of the ACT and region. An interim committee has been elected and is in the process of organising a launch and professional development activities for next year. ACT residents who are currently NSW AAIMHI members will be offered the choice of having their membership transferred to the ACT Branch. Residents of the region who would be likely to attend professional development in Canberra are also invited to transfer their membership.

Committee

Interim President: Sonia Costello
sonia.costello@marymead.org.au

Interim Vice President: Anna Huber
anna.huber@marymead.org.au

Interim Secretary: Dr Judith Bragg
judith.bragg@act.gov.au

Interim Treasurer: Belinda Hendry
belinda.hendry@bigpond.com

Please contact one of us if you would like further information or to join the ACT Branch.

Sonia Costello

Interim President
AAIMHI ACT Branch

Letter

2 December 2008

AAIMHI - South Australia Branch

To the 2008 AAIMHI and Torres Strait Islander Perinatal and Infant Mental Health conference organising committee.

On behalf of the National Executive Council of AAIMHI I would like to congratulate the South Australian branch conference organising committee for their outstanding efforts. The recent joint national conference was a wonderfully stimulating occasion. The presentations were of a uniformly high quality with many exceptional speakers and a variety of topics. I heard many mentions of delight about the full dinner serves rather than entrée serves dished up by all the main speakers, leaving conference participants satiated and with plenty to digest. This was especially true for those fortunate enough to participate in the post conference workshops. The venue was excellent, the service and food amongst the best of any conferences I have attended in recent times. In addition, the technological expertise was always available when needed and competent to boot and to top it off it from a consumer's perspective the organisation seemed effortless. The dinner was yet another fun filled occasion characterised by some merry melodies from many merry fellows.

The Executive appreciate your efforts in bringing about the conference. It requires much hard work and commitment to be successful. Thank you again for your efforts.

Faithfully,

Lynn Priddis
AAIMHI Vice President

Future events**Australian Childhood Foundation Seminar**

The neurobiology of childhood trauma and attachment - Understanding the brain science of modern attachment theory and its relevance to practice with children, young people and families.

A seminar with Dr Allan Schore (USA) 2009

**Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Drive, Darling Harbour, Sydney
17 March 2009 9.30am - 4.00pm**

Event Cost: \$260

This seminar is a unique opportunity to hear first hand from one of the world's leading authorities on early childhood trauma, neurobiology and attachment theory. The seminar will focus on understanding and interpreting up to date neuroscience research about the impact of stress and trauma on bodily-based processes, emotional regulation and early experience-dependent brain maturation. It will also examine how to apply this knowledge base about the brain systems which underlie attachment to support positive developmental outcomes for children and young people who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Dr. Allan Schore is on the clinical faculty of the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, and at the UCLA Center for Culture, Brain, and Development. He is author of three seminal volumes, *Affect Regulation and the Origin of the Self*, *Affect Dysregulation and Disorders of the Self*, and *Affect Regulation and the Repair of the Self*, as well as numerous articles and chapters.

This workshop will appeal to case workers, case managers, residential care workers, therapists, teachers early childhood professionals, medical professionals and others who are involved in supporting children and young people to recover from trauma. It will have direct relevance to practitioners working in the fields of Child Protection, Out-of home Care, Early Childhood Intervention, Family Support, Disability, Indigenous Services, Mental Health, Private Therapy, Sexual Assault, Drug and Alcohol, and Family Violence Services.

AASW Learning Credits Awarded

Registration Fees

Early Bird Fee 1/8/08 – 30/11/08 \$260 (GST inclusive)

Standard Fee 1/12/08 – 31/1/09 \$280 (GST inclusive)

Late Fee 1/2/09 and after \$300 (GST inclusive)

Website: www.childhood.org.au

Email: info@childhood.org.au