

Branch News – September 2004.

Executive Musings.

We trust all die-hard sport fans lives will return to normal now that the Athens Olympic Games have finished. Given the Crows poor AFL form, most of South Australia is no longer interested in the Ozzie Rules finals unless they support Port Adelaide or Brisbane. Rugby league fans have a little longer to suffer. Of course the sport played in heaven has finished unhappily for Australia and New Zealand.

On with real life.

Implementation of the New Zealand Health Practitioner Competency Assurance Act 2003 occurs this month. David had the pleasure of attending the joint Societies meeting held in beautiful, but rainy, Christchurch early in August and managed to talk to a number of the New Zealand members about the HPCA Act. The clear message was that of uncertainty.

Let us allay some of the concerns regarding this Act and it's affect on respiratory scientists in New Zealand. Following discussions with the NZ Ministry of Health there is certainly no need to panic. Our initial advice is that the Act may not include respiratory scientists at this stage. There are some areas that ANZSRS will be bringing to the attention of the Ministry for clarification. These include, for example, the performance of arterial punctures. This may be included in a group of procedures that are unintentionally caught within the provisions of the Act and will be considered further by the Ministry.

Several key areas need to be considered by the ANZSRS before putting a case for the registration of Respiratory Scientists, under this Act, before the Ministry. They are: potential to cause harm, standard agreed educational qualifications for all scientists and viability of regulatory body.

Self regulation is the most logical path to tread at this stage. "Potential to do harm" exists for almost any person having direct patient contact. Respiratory scientists can demonstrate that there are several procedures where patients may suffer morbidity. Perhaps I have a poor history but there have been 2 patients in my care who have hit the floor from syncopal episodes from either forced spirometry or walking. In fact Michelle and David share one of these episodes. Other patients have accused me or colleagues of inflicting various maladies, from trying to kill the patient to causing peripheral neuropathy from arterial punctures. Happily some of the claims are without substance. Nonetheless, I am sure most of us would have examples where patients were adversely affected in some way.

All respiratory scientists must be able to obtain an agreed qualification in respiratory measurement. This is a significant step in the evolution of respiratory measurement as a profession as all new staff entering the discipline will be expected to obtain this qualification. One of the essential steps is to draw up criteria by which a course can be assessed as meeting the needs of our profession. Charles Sturt University Respiratory Measurement course has previously been endorsed by ANZSRS. However, the criteria for endorsement was not defined. This is in no way a criticism of anyone involved in this earlier process. More recently ANZSRS have been approached to endorse other educational material and courses, but without agreed criteria and guidelines, this has not been possible as yet.

This is entwined within the whole registration process and as such needs to be linked to the Registration Committee. Perhaps members who have a particular bent and interest in this

area should be brought together as a working party, reporting to the Registration Committee, to define criteria and a process by which ANZSRS can endorse tertiary courses.

Lastly ANZSRS needs to be able to establish a financially viable registration body within New Zealand. Thankfully the NZ Ministry of Health recognise this as a limiting factor for our group.

The downside of not being under the HPCA Act in this initial phase is that respiratory scientists within NZ will not be able to call themselves Registered Health Practitioners.

Further representations will be made to the Ministry to clarify our position with certain procedures and as information comes to hand it will be disseminated.

All ANZSRS members, and Respiratory Scientists/Technicians that are non members, should be aware that the NZ HPCA Act is driving this process along and these discussions and subsequent initiatives are relevant to all of us. The goal must be to have uniform recommendations for registration applicable across all of Australia and New Zealand.

In other business, fees are overdue for a number of us. It is important that all members pay their yearly subscriptions. Not even half of the costs for running this Society are covered by subscriptions so non-payment places an even greater burden on other income sources to support day to day activities. Regional representatives will be asked to follow up those members behind in their subscriptions.

We would also like members to note that applications can now be lodged for the ANZSRS 2005 [Education and Research Scholarships](#) and will be accepted until the 30/11/04. The ANZSRS Board has agreed to extend the Scholarships to include members that may not work full-time but are employed in Respiratory Science...Details are available on the Awards page.

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Perth 2005 Local Organising Committee

ANZSRS Annual Scientific Meeting Perth 18 – 21 March 2005

The 2005 ANZSRS ASM will be held at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre located on the banks of the Swan River. The Convention Centre, recently opened, is a state of the art facility, is close to the CBD, hotels and transport and has stunning views over the river and of the Perth City skyline.



We have an exciting program planned with several new features to broaden the scope of activities and opportunities available to delegates attending the meeting. The aim of the programme is to ensure all delegates can go home having found the meeting enjoyable, relevant and mind stretching. The major theme for 2005 is “Extracting the max from your exercise test” and we are very pleased to announce that Professor Jerome Dempsey is our invited keynote speaker for 2005. Professor Dempsey has extensive experience in pulmonary, and more recently cardiopulmonary, physiology with specific applications to the effects of sleep, exercise, hypoxia, acid-base disturbances and heart failure. We are also very fortunate to be able to once again host Professor Robert Crapo and Associate Professor Robert Jensen. Professors Crapo and Jensen will be presenting information on the validation and interpretation of reference data and providing strategies for lifting the bar in the Respiratory Laboratory. Also attending as an invited speaker is Dr Mark Everard who will be presenting the latest information on aerosol medicine.

In addition to the usual program of invited presentations and the showcasing the excellent scientific research conducted by ANZSRS members, the Perth ASM will include a number of new initiatives.

- Saturday will feature a series of parallel workshops designed to provide “hands on” approaches to extracting the maximum information from your exercise tests, aerosol medicine and standardisation. The workshop series will conclude with a panel discussion with Professors Crapo and Jensen.
- Two workshops, one on attaining CRFS and another on completing Laboratory Accreditation will be conducted on the Monday following the main meeting.
- The Perth local organising committee, in conjunction with the ANZSRS Executive, is very pleased to announce that for the first time ANZSRS abstracts will be published in *Respirology*. As a result abstract submissions will be brought forward to early December. The required format of the abstracts will also change and details will be sent to members soon.

We believe we have developed an exciting and stimulating programme and look forward to seeing you all in Perth in 2005.

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New South Wales

Nothing Received

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New Zealand

Well, what a month August has been. The Christchurch Respiratory Physiology Laboratory has undergone a bit of an upheaval this month. Not only has one Scientist

left us to go to Scotland to play rugby (and we wish Karne all the best), but we have just been relocated to a new lab. We have, however, been ultra lucky to not only have a fabulous new laboratory (specially designed for our purposes), but to have Josh Stanton from Palmerston North, joining our team in a couple of weeks time. Now we will have both the NZ board representatives working in the same lab! Just as well it's election year!

The ANZSRS New Zealand Branch ASM was a great success on the 6th of August with a good turnout of ANZSRS members attending. The Lung Function Workshop run over the 3 days of the joint meeting by Maureen Swanney and Dr Lutz Beckert received an excellent turnout by the General Physicians, Respiratory Physicians and Respiratory Scientists. It was brilliant to see so many people discussing the technical, procedural and interpretive issues that we face day-to-day.

We would like to thank Dr Christene Jenkins, David Johns, David Schembri, and Maureen Swanney for their excellent presentations covering topics such as "What is the difference between asthma and COPD", "Pitfalls in interpretation of spirometry", "Why bother with spirometry testing", "Diagnostic algorithms" and much more.

The ANZSRS Business meeting stimulated a bit of conversation and interest especially in regards to the Registration of Health Practitioners in NZ and National Training Guidelines for Respiratory Scientists in New Zealand. There were a number of items on the agenda which left little time to even partially discuss these issues but at least it gave us the opportunity to get everyone up-to-date with what has been happening behind the scenes so far. A big thank you to David Schembri for attending this meeting and presenting his President's Report. It was fantastic to have both David Schembri and David Johns at this ASM and we hope that they enjoyed their time in sunny Christchurch (not that the weather was that good, sorry ☹).

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Queensland

This month's branch meeting was held on Wednesday 25th August with a very interesting and informative presentation by Dr Geoff Eather from the Princess Alexandra Hospital on the topic of vocal cord dysfunction and difficult asthma. This sparked some keen discussion between members, especially when it came to the issue of "hysterical females" ☺. Many thanks to Geoff for making the time to speak at this meeting and sharing his knowledge with the group.

The TSQ annual scientific meeting is scheduled for the weekend of the 16th-17th October in Mooloolaba on QLD's Sunshine Coast. Pencil this one into the diary and watch this space for further details. It promises to be another fantastic weekend away.

A few good luck wishes to spread around. A big one going to the crew in Christchurch who are in the process of moving to a new lab. I'm sure we can all

appreciate what a mission this would be! Also best wishes to anyone and everyone currently preparing for the next round of CRFS examinations, keep up the good work!

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Nothing received

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Victoria

Our next Branch meeting will be held on Wednesday 8th September at Monash Medical Centre. The topics up for discussion include:

- Review of a journal article on idiopathic hyperventilation.
- Interpretation of spirometry – it is refreshing to review well worn territory. Be prepared for plenty of discussion on this controversial topic!
- We encourage members to bring along difficult to report or interesting lung function results to further enhance this discussion.

If you did not receive your invitation, please get in touch so we can ensure your contact details are correct.

Board elections are coming up in October/November. Danny will not be putting his hat in the ring for a further term having served two terms already and Brigitte has yet to decide whether she will stand for re-election. So we are on the look out for any interested members wishing to represent the Victorian members' interests on the Board, as well as actively contributing to the growth and development of The Society. We will briefly discuss the roles and responsibilities of board representatives at the next branch meeting and our experiences in this role. We are also happy to speak with interested parties on an individual basis, so please feel free to contact us.

Danny Brazzale and Brigitte Borg

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Western Australia

Not much to report from WA. August continued to be busy as the winter increase in respiratory cases continued (& so did the rain), as does planning for the Perth ASM. Expect a lot more from us in the next couple of months as we get closer to the meeting. We hope everyone is getting their abstracts ready!!

There was a WA Branch meeting on Wednesday 18th at SCGH which focused on CRFS. We hope to hold a couple more CRFS workshops during the year. Thanks to Bob Bird for sponsoring the meeting. You can always rely on Bob to provide great 'prizes', and in true sportsmanship, everyone present got a prize! The next meeting will be at RPH on Wednesday 15th September.

Graham Hall & Robert Tagliaferri

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CRFS news

The next round of CRFS exams is scheduled for November 2004. Applications should reach me before 25 October.

This month's CRFS questions are on Lung Volumes. These questions, and the answers to last month's questions, are accessed from the Members Only Area of the web-site.

Stephen West, CRFS

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