

NEWSLETTER

Message from the Chair

I hope that 2009 has been an interesting year for you. The ongoing busyness and controversy arising from the Medicare Better Access scheme is intense. Questions are being raised about the training of psychologists, national registration will impact on supervision requirements and the role of post graduate training. The overwhelming focus on mental health issue has caused us to lose sight of the fact that many psychologists work as organizational psychs, in sport, education, child development, neuropsychology and other areas that are not necessarily described in the DSM. Gaye Foster's report highlights the APS view that national registration is the time to legislate to control the use of psychological tests. This also means we could get involved in arguments (discussions) about what is a psychological practice – testing is one thing, but is hypnosis or counseling a practice that should be restricted? There are many counselors in our community; counseling psychologists wish to be seen as having the same expertise as clinical psychologists – where and how do you draw the line on counseling and how do we combine the various skills contained within the profession of psychology?

We have been encouraged by the good attendance at Branch meetings every two months. Great presentations by Angela Huntsman and Todd Zemek recently rewarded members who are interested in meeting their colleagues. Of course, this happens at a cost – the cost of maintaining the energy of your volunteer Branch committee. We began with a big committee, but our numbers have dwindled as a result of relocations, babies and study commitments. As a result, there have been delays in finalizing the local directory that we talked about back in April. It will be out soooooon. Please take the

time to consider how you can assist the Branch to maintain its profile and be effective at a local level. Call me if you would like to discuss possibilities.

We have psychology week coming up in November. In recent years we have lacked the numbers to set up public displays or get involved with the media. Do you have any suggestions for how we can participate this year?

Stay on the lookout for reports from Kelly Callaghan as she, the Division of General Practice and other service providers examine the impact of reorganizing the ways in which chronic disease and primary health care are managed throughout Australia! There are big changes ahead. Our profession which has been dominated by public sector employment and limited scope, now has opportunities that have never existed before. However, we need to be capable, realistic and balanced as we approach the second decade of the 21st century. The presentation by Nambour Hospital staff psychologists on 7 October is an excellent opportunity for you to see how psychological practice is changing in the health field. We hope that panels representing other fields of psychology will come forward to share their news and views in the year ahead.

Three cheers for Maggie, Kay, Kathy, Kelly, Gaye, Di, Rosanne & Sally – your Branch managers.

Brad Levingston

Hi

The times have been busy and I do apologise for the rare appearance of the Newsletter this year. Nevertheless, I do hope that with the APS bulkemailer we have done our best to update you on all the forthcoming events and activities that you might have found of interest.

We have had some remarkable presenters to date. Angela Huntsman, Todd Zemek and Paul Rushton have entertained us with their wisdom. Thank you all for the ongoing inspiration.

I will be following up with some of you as to the information provided for the Sunshine Coast Directory before its final print. If there is anyone who has not responded and would like to be included in the directory please email me. The late entries will be closing on 15 October 2009.

The Psychology Week is nearly upon us. To plan your events please visit <http://www.psychologyweek.com.au/> and join in the festivities.

Hope to see you soon
maggie



National Registration: An evening with Lyn Littlefield

On 27 August I attended a meeting with Brad Levingston at the Bardon Conference Centre, Brisbane, at which Prof Lyn Littlefield (Executive Director of the APS) provided a comprehensive review of details & implications of National Registration to over 100 psychologists from Brisbane and other Branches.

National Registration will commence 1st July 2010. However, there are a number of issues that concern the APS because of the impact these matters are likely to have on our profession.

On 8 May 2009, the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council reached a national consensus on how the new national registration and accreditation scheme for the health professions will work. The scheme is expected to enable health professionals to move around the country more easily, reduce red tape, provide greater safeguards for the public and promote a more flexible, responsive and sustainable health workforce.

Lyn said that the motivation for national registration included the need for greater uniformity of standards as well as Government concerns that Australia is facing a shortage of psychologists and therefore streamlining registration will ensure more psychologists are able to join the workforce.

Ten professions will be covered by the national scheme from 1 July 2010 - chiropractors; dental practitioners; medical practitioners; nurses and midwives; optometrists; osteopaths; pharmacists; physiotherapists; podiatrists; and psychologists. It was proposed originally that one registration board would oversee all these professions. However the professions successfully argued for separate boards. The National Psychology Board which will consist of 12 people, (made up of at least 50%, but no more than 66% psychologists). It will be based in Melbourne but details re the state structure have not yet been worked out. For the time being the current Queensland Board will look after state matters. The annual cost of registration has not been determined.

Because Queensland has only one house of parliament it is quicker and easier to introduce the legislation here. Once it has passed through the Queensland Parliament it is expected that the other states will simply adopt the Queensland legislation.

Lyn provided an overview of some of the details of the new legislation:

- Specialist Titles – Details are lacking, but titles may be based on APS college membership.
- Non-practicing registration category – will distinguish between practicing and non practicing psychologists.
- Teaching and research – Psychologists working in the fields of teaching and research who previously did not have to be registered may be asked to register under the new scheme.
- Student Registration – Students who have client contact will be required to register.
- Special registration – Where there is a shortage of psychologists (eg. in rural areas or aged care), practitioners may not be required to have the same qualifications as those required for full registration. The APS views this as a reduction in professional standards and is pursuing the matter.
- Criminal history checks – Full criminal checks for new registrants. Clarification is being sort as to whether allegations have to be disclosed. This is seen as unreasonable and unnecessary.
- Compulsory Professional indemnity insurance
- Demonstrate continuing competence- Mandatory professional development.
- Proposed Complaints and Discipline – 3 areas
 - 1) Performance management
 - 2) Health management
 - 3) Conduct management

The APS has concerns about many aspects of the legislation, including:

- Mandatory reporting of other practitioners with unsatisfactory professional conduct. For example if a colleague came to you experiencing symptoms of depression you may be required to report them. The APS and members present expressed great concern over this.
- An willingness to legislate to restrict the administration of psychological tests to psychologists.

Many of the psychologists present expressed concern and distress at this. One member from the US stated that

the psychologists in the US would never stand for something so outrageous.

Lyn said the APS has “tried and tried” to change the legislation re test administration but to no avail. As a result the APS is now asking members to lobby Members of Parliament to alert them to our concerns and to ask for the legislation to be changed. (Note from Brad. The administration of tests has never been controlled by legislation. It has been an agreement between the profession & the suppliers.)

Finally, Lyn stated that “massive reforms” are expected as a result of the health & hospital reform proposals. She advised all psychologists to take a close interest in what happens over the next six months. For example, will suitably qualified psychologists seek prescribing rights in a new health setting?

For more information please check the Queensland Registration Board June 2009 newsletter - <http://www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au>

- Accreditation
- Support for continuing professional development
- Criminal history and identity checks
- Mandatory reporting of registrants
- Changes to registers
- Student registration

Gaye Foster
Committee Member

Special Event National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

The College of Organisational Psychologists (COP) Qld, in partnership with Griffith University, will be hosting a one-off special event on 5 October 2009 (between 5.30 - 7.30 pm) about the imminent introduction of the National Regulation and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professionals, and its potential impacts for ALL psychologists (including ‘non-health’ psychologists).

This important forum is FREE and we are encouraging ALL psychologists from across Queensland to attend. We are offering an option for rural/regional people (only) to link in via teleconference.

The session will be facilitated by several Queensland members of the COP National Regulatory Developments Working Party, who will discuss several specific and substantial areas of concern and provide resource materials to assist with individual lobbying.

Please follow the below link to the APS events calendar where you can access the flyer and register to attend the forum: <http://www.psychology.org.au/Events/EventView.aspx?EventID=5274>

Kind regards,

Dr Crissa Sumner B Psych Sci (Hons) PhD MAPS
Queensland Chair crissasu@psy.uq.edu.au

Please note that the SCAPS Committee is trying to organise a tele-conference link to Brisbane from the Sunshine Coast. We will keep you informed as to the availability of a local venue.

Your committee

APS Sunshine Coast Branch
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MOOLOOLABA QLD 4557

Please email newsletter contributions to mb@maggiebailey.com.au

Office Bearers for 2008 – 2010

As a committee we will also meet on the second Tuesday of each alternative months – so please contact us if there is anything you would like to raise with us. Your committee contacts are:

Chair	Brad Levingston	brakerry@optusnet.com.au
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Calendar of events 2009

Date	Topic
30 Sep- 4 Oct	APS Annual Conference, Darwin
7 October 2009	Psychology Services at the Nambour General Hospital, Laural House, Maroochydore
21 November	Christmas function, Headland Gold Club, Buderim