



HSLA <http://hsla.com.au/>

President's Letter

Welcome to HSLA's first newsletter for 2008. Welcome to all our new members and thanks to the committee members for their untiring effort last year – your time and commitment is very much appreciated. Also, thank you to those who have contacted me with updated information.

I am pleased to have been elected as the President of HSLA for another year. The Committee worked enthusiastically in 2007 in developing a Strategic Plan to embrace our Vision, Mission, Values and Key Strategies for the next three years. This is now in place and provides a great base for our future progress.

HSLA had a successful year in 2007 with great attendance at our two seminars. Based on the interest last year, we are planning further workshops in 2008 both in rural areas and the Melbourne CBD (see below). We do manage to have some fun – no, complaints management doesn't have to be all tedium! I'm also always amazed at how much is to be learnt from this informal networking.

HSLA's commitment is to its members and this is our foremost priority as we endeavour to make it a useful resource to assist in meeting the challenges which complaints management entails. As part of this commitment we provide ongoing support, education and resources for our members.

We do believe that the knowledge and experience of CLOs is incredibly valuable and I urge you to share your experiences with us. We'd be happy to include your letters, papers, suggestions and ideas in future newsletters.

Regards

Ann Howell
President HSLA
a.howell@cgmc.org.au

HSLA Committee Membership - 2008

Ann Howell – President – a.howell@cgmc.org.au
Caroline Rose – Treasurer - caroline.rose@rwh.org.au
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Future Conferences/Seminars:

1. Bold Aims – Bold Outcomes

6th Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care. 1–3 September 2008, Christchurch, New Zealand. Hosted by the Australasian Association for Quality in Health Care. For more information, visit: <http://www.aaqhc.org.au/>

2. The Hospital After Hours (call for abstracts open)

29-30 May 2008 Sydney, NSW. Visit <http://www.changechampions.com.au> for further information.

4. World Health Congress of Health Professions

26 – 29 March 2008 Perth

“This world congress represents the first time that all health professions across all sectors, have been invited to meet. It is an opportunity to meet those in the forefront of developments in health, to hear experts share their vision of our future and to network with leaders in health from across the world. There will be five themes addressing the challenges and opportunities we face as health shapers and providers in a rapidly changing world.”

Visit <http://www.worldhealthcongress.org/> for further information.

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act

Have you heard of it?

Do you understand it?

Are you wondering what the impact might be on your health service and your complaint management process?

Are you wondering what you need to know or what you need to do?

The HSLA is holding a morning seminar (followed by lunch) on 4 July 2008 to address these issues. We will explain and examine the Charter and its implications for health services. We will also use a number of case studies to deepen our understanding of this important Act.

More details to follow shortly.....

Interesting websites:

1. **Victoria's new Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities** – The Age newspaper reports on this new Victorian Act.

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/opinion/karen-kissane/2008/01/07/1199554567698.html>

2. Maternity services website for parents

The UK Healthcare Commission's maternity website has been launched following a review of maternity services. The review, published in January 2008, found significant variations in the quality of care across the country. As part of the review, the Commission ranked 22% of maternity services as "fair performing" (32 NHS Trusts) and 21% as "least well performing" (31 Trusts). Some 26% of Trusts were "best performing" (38 Trusts) and 32% were "better performing" (47 Trusts).

The website enables users to get comprehensive information about their local maternity service, details about the research performed and how to make a complaint about a maternity related service.

The site also allows search capabilities to access information on each Trust, to see how they scored on three key questions:

- Are practices in place to help ensure a high quality and effective maternity service?
- Are women informed, counselled and supported to ensure they have a positive maternity experience?
- Is there adequate staffing and facilities and are these used effectively?

The website also gives Trusts' maternity services a score out of five on 25 different areas, including how well each local Trust provided recommended antenatal screening, on appropriate use of caesarean sections and on the quality of support they offered parents in caring for the baby after discharge.

The website can be found at www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/maternity.cfm

The Healthcare Commission is committed to publishing the results of its work in a way that is relevant and accessible to the public. In addition to maternity, it already offers similar websites for diabetes and heart surgery, and in future will also provide this for mental health services.

Recent journal articles of interest:

1. An overview of clinical governance policies, practices and initiatives

The objective of the research is to map the emergence of, and define, clinical governance; to discuss current best practices, and to explore the implications of these for Boards of Directors and executives wishing to promote a clinical governance approach in their health services.

- The authors reviewed and analysed the literature on clinical governance from 1966 to 2006 and found issues in the literature as key to effective clinical governance. These included: ensuring that links are made between health services' clinical and corporate governance
- the use of clinical governance to promote quality and safety through a focus on quality assurance and continuous improvement
- the creation of clinical governance structures to improve safety and quality and manage risk and performance
- the development of strategies to ensure the effective exchange of data, knowledge and expertise and
- the sponsoring of a patient-centred approach to service delivery.

The authors concluded that a comprehensive approach to clinical governance includes the active participation of Boards and executives in sponsoring and promoting clinical governance as a quality and safety strategy.

Braithwaite, J. and Travaglia, J.F. *Aust Health Rev* 2008; 32 (1): 10-22

2. Exploring experiences and attitudes about health care complaints among pregnant women, mothers and staff at an Opioid Treatment Service

This article presents research informing the management of complaints with opioid-dependent women. Interviews were conducted with 13 opioid-dependent women and 10 staff at an Opioid Treatment Service.

Difficulties that prevented women making complaints included the anticipation of not being taken seriously, the fear of repercussions including infant removal, and practical difficulties in making written complaints. Staff reported that complaints at the dosing window were often delivered emotively and could be personalised. They had difficulty assessing complaints to determine whether there were substantive health care issues that should be followed up. Women and staff believed that case managers had a role in providing support for the complaints process.

Finney Lamb, C.E., Boers, M., Owens, A., Copeland, J. and Sultana, T. *Aust Health Rev* 2008; 32 (1): 66-75

3. Press Ganey - Satisfaction Snapshots

January 2008 edition – this US based review provides evidence to show that incorporating consistent satisfaction measurement, acting on patient feedback and developing leaders to elevate the priority in these areas improves patient loyalty, improves operational efficiency, improves the capacity to treat more patients, retains staff and ultimately provides increased financial returns. The January 2008 Satisfaction Snapshot provides three newly released research papers that shows strong evidence of the impact high patient satisfaction has on future volumes, shows that providers focusing on patient satisfaction see higher levels of profitability and highlights the relationship between high patient satisfaction and enhanced efficiency.

See: snapshot@pressganey.com.au

HSLA PROFILE: Getting to know the team on your Committee!

Each newsletter, we hope to continue this popular item usually asking a CLO to answer some questions. This time we have asked HSLA Committee member, Ben Black what makes him tick!

Here it goes.....

Name:

Ben Black

Position:

Consumer Feedback Officer/Safety & Service Improvement Program Assistant

How long have you been in this job?

Had to check.. 18 months now.

How did you get into this line of work?

I worked in Residential Aged Care for 8 years specialising in Accreditation/management systems and wanted to escape into Acute.. so when I saw this, my current job, I jumped at the chance.

What is the favourite part of your job?

Favourite is not a word I would use, but I do like to close off complaints – “bag it’n’tag it” as I call it. It makes me feel like I’m always moving forward. I also love 5pm and an ADO once a month ☺

What gets under your skin in your job?

Angry, tearful, anxious even aggressive consumers I can deal with, however, it is the odd staff member who thinks they are God and above reproach that tests my nerve.

What would make your job easier or better?

Obviously it would be to reduce the instances where consumers feel they need to provide the hospital with negative feedback about their experience. But more realistically, better communication about appointments, position changes, division/unit changes etc.. so I can keep track of who I need to send concerns to.

How do you relax & look after yourself?

I more relax than take care of myself. Love to spend time with my friends, I like to ride my mountain bike, PS3, eat, drink and be merry.

What are you exultant about?

I can’t say that I’m ever really ‘exultant’ about too much, but spending time with my nephews and nieces certainly does makes me very happy.

Favourite book?

It’s a science fiction series of 6 books by Kevin J. Anderson. Saga of the Seven Suns.

Favourite movie or TV show?

I have 3 - American Dad, Family Guy, Drawn Together.

How do you deal with stress?

Bottle it up into a fiery ball of rage and swallow it like a bitter pill.

Favourite word?

I have two - expectation & perception ☺

What word don’t you ever want to hear again?

It’s a patient’s surname, which can never be spoken of again because each time I do I get a phone call from them.

Tell us about the funniest situation that you encountered?

I went to greet a consumer who wanted a 'walk up' interview. I saw a gentleman with what appeared to be a handbag over his shoulder. I introduced myself and invited him to the interview room, but he mentioned he was waiting for his wife who was in the toilet. I laughed a little and said, "I didn't think that was your handbag" thinking he was minding his wife's bag. His smile disappeared and he said, "It is actually".

What have you learnt from your work?

Patience, compassion, counselling skills, time/workload management, how to navigate a large bureaucracy and how to spot 'crocodile tears' a mile off.

Feedback:

We would welcome your thoughts on the newsletter!

What do you think of the format and subject matter? Do you have any suggestions for future content?

Please let us know - g.hann@alfred.org.au