



HSLA Newsletter

March 2010

Health Services Liaison Association Inc

Level 30, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne
Vic. 3000

ABN 11 066 654 742

HSLA President's Report

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter for 2010. We trust that you will continue to find this newsletter a way of keeping in touch with who's who, what's what and what's going on in the world of health, complaints management and quality and safety.

The AGM at the end of 2009 saw a few welcome additions to the HSLA Committee. The representation of our rural and regional colleagues has been enhanced by the joining of Jan Phillips from Goulburn Valley Health and Gail Benson from Barwon Health. Marion Cocker from Southern Health has also joined the HSLA and Sue Beck from Peter MacCallum has replaced Armit Dhillon. The complete list of the HSLA Committee can be found in this newsletter. Please feel welcome to contact any of us at any time with suggestions, concerns or queries you may have. You can trust that we value all feedback!!!

We have commenced planning for our workshops for the year and would welcome any suggestions from our members. Our first workshop for 2010 will be held in Shepparton on Monday 24th May. This will be a ½ day workshop covering all aspects of complaint management, including dealing with angry and difficult people. More details are in this newsletter and on our website. We are also planning workshops in the CBD and the current suggestions are 'Complaints and Insurers – Working with the VMIA'; 'Complaints and the Coroner's Office'; 'Death, Grief and Complaints – Sorting through the Issues' and 'Capturing Complaints from the CALD Community'. We do not have the capacity to address all these issues this year, but let us know if you have a preference, or any other pressing issues.

I do hope you have had a good start to 2010 and that you find a way to participate in some of the activities of the HSLA this year.

Warm regards

Caroline Rose
HSLA President
Ph: 8345 2290



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HSLA COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2010

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Gail Benson	5226 7986	gail.benson@barwonhealth.org.au
Lauren Patrick	9341 1343	lauren.patrick@dhs.vic.gov.au

HSLA Peer Support

Do you have a problem or an issue in your role that you would like to talk through with someone? Our Peer Supporters would be happy to hear from you. Just give them a ring:

Metropolitan Melbourne

Ann Howell Caulfield Hospital **03 9076 6127**
Jacquie Flude Royal Melbourne Hospital **03 9342 7806**

Rural Victoria

Jan Phillips Goulburn Valley Health **03 5832 2258**



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Ever wondered what goes on in the Office of the Health Services Commissioner?

If you are working in Victoria, have you attended an orientation session at the Office of the Health Service Commissioner?

If not give them a call on (03) 8601 5200

It is a very worthwhile experience, particularly for those CLO's who have just started in the role.

Interstate Conference For Your Information

8th Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care

6 - 8 September 2010 Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, Perth

The Australasian Association for Quality in Health Care (AAQHC) invites you to Perth for the 8th Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care. Next year's Conference is already shaping up to be an exciting event with the celebrated theme '**Back to the Future - Unlocking the Potential**'. Take this opportunity to network with peers in your industry and keep abreast of the latest developments in safety and quality in health care.

Who Should Attend?

This Conference is the premiere event on the Australasian Safety and Quality in Health Care calendar and will appeal to all Clinicians and Managers from Acute Hospitals, Aged Care and primary care who are interested in providing safe, quality care to patients and their families. A range of local and international speakers will present an innovative program of plenary sessions, invited papers and workshops around the theme of "Back to the Future" examining the major issues in this vital topic.

For further information please contact the Conference Managers aaqhc2010@arinex.com.au



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Literature review centred on the importance of enhancing accessibility to feedback

To generate improvements in patient safety and good health care outcomes, the importance of engaging all health professionals at the point of delivery in seeking and using feedback is a common finding. In regards to measurement and feedback, recent articles confirm the need for transparency and develop proactive measures and robust tools to access and analyse feedback more effectively.

Consumers Health Forum of Australia. (2008). *Submission on the propose arrangements for handling complaints and dealing with performance, health and conduct matters*. Manuka: Consumers Health Forum of Australia.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. (2009). *Developing a Safety and Quality Framework for Australia*. Retrieved from: <http://www.qualityhealthcareconversation.org.au/uploads/36707/ufiles/Developing%20a%20Safety%20and%20Quality%20Framework%20for%20Australia%20-%20CURRENT%20DRAFT.PDF>.

Australian Council for Safety and Quality in Health Care. (2005). *Complaints Management Handbook for Health Care Services*. Retrieved 21 January, 2010 [http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/internet/safety/publishing.nsf/Content/F3D3F3274D393DFCCA257483000D8461/\\$File/complntmgmthbk.pdf](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/internet/safety/publishing.nsf/Content/F3D3F3274D393DFCCA257483000D8461/$File/complntmgmthbk.pdf)

Brand, C. et al (2008) *Measurement for improvement: a survey of current practice in Australian public hospitals*. *Medical Journal of Australia* 189: 5-40

Wakefield, J., & Jorm, C. (2009). *Patient safety — a balanced measurement framework*. *Australian Health Review* 33(3), 8.





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Case Study : A Snapshot of Working in a Mental Health Service

I work in mental health and I have done so for approximately 25 years and I will continue to do so until I retire. I like my job, respect the knowledge, experience of my colleagues and I believe it is a privilege to be, if only for a short time, a part of someone else's life. So far it sounds great and it can be but sometimes the work can be very challenging both mentally and emotionally. Recently a 65-year-old woman – mother, wife, daughter, and sister – was admitted to the facility at which I work. A capable and independent woman, who had managed a large family and worked part-time for many years. Her family were supportive and caring but unable to explain the recent changes in her behaviour. Why was she admitted to a psychiatric facility? Her memory had started to develop "holes" and she "wasn't the person she used to be". Not an unusual story at all but as always a huge learning curve for the family. She was very soon diagnosed with early signs of dementia.

As a health professional I find the word frightening. I know what it entails, where it leads and whom it affects. For this family the word itself was devastating. They quickly became a group of loosely connected people each reacting in a way that reflected their own story. Guilt, anger, fear, loss and grief became the basis for what appeared to be a systematized attack on the hospital, the staff, and any policy or procedure that vaguely related to their situation. The complaints varied considerably in severity, some relating to the thickness of the teacups and others relating to the standard of care.

Staff became cautious and reluctant to engage in interactions with any family member. A family meeting was arranged between the Psychiatrist, the Complaints Officer and any family member able and willing to attend. What transpired was nothing new or indeed a revelation. The family were in crisis.

It had been assumed that each member of the family possessed a basic understanding of dementia and future considerations regarding accommodation, finances etc. Not so. The family were offered education as required. They were given support and linked in with appropriate organizations that provided or assisted in the provision of future services. Each family member was given the opportunity to be involved in this process thus returning them to "pre diagnosis" world.

As I wrote in the first paragraph, "I like my job". Although difficult at times it mostly proves to be rewarding and fulfilling. Being a complaints officer adds another dimension, which forces an alternative way of thinking.

Jo Snibson





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Committee Member Profile

Each newsletter we profile one of our fabulous committee members in order to give you a little of our 'flavour'

Name: **Gail Benson**

Position: **Consumer Liaison**

Organisation: **Barwon Health**

How long have you worked in your current role: **12 months on 12th January 2010**

Where do you live ? **Grovedale, Geelong**

What skills do you use mostly in your role?

My most used skills would be listening and identifying the primary issue of concern when someone is relating their concerns to me and not jumping to conclusions or solutions before I have reviewed the facts.

What is your favourite part of the job?

The role can be very challenging so if the person I am speaking with leaves with a better understanding, realistic expectations and thanks staff and myself for our help, then that is very satisfying.

Describe your role in three words:

Diplomacy Patience Resilience

What gets under your skin in your job?

Staff who see my role as a negative element in their work rather than a support role.

How do you deal with stress?

I drink, smoke and see a great counselor!! Hehehe. Actually I believe having someone to de-brief with and vent is very important. I also ride a motorbike and like to get out on that (only nice sunny days)- it forces you to concentrate on staying upright not uptight.

Have you checked out our new website?????



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Dial 000 from hospital bed

A man who was bleeding after surgery in a Tasmanian hospital had to call the triple-0 emergency number for help when he could not raise nurses.

The man woke from surgery in the Hobart Private Hospital to find he was bleeding from a wound drain.

After no-one responded to the nurse call bell or a phone call to the nurses' station, the patient resorted to calling the emergency number.

The hospital said the situation was unavoidable and occurred at a time when all nurses were busy with other patients.

The hospital has since moved high-dependency patients to another area.

The man took his case to the Tasmania's Health Complaints Commission which has recorded a 30 per cent increase in the number of complaints against health services.

The commission dealt with 243 complaints last financial year, mostly involving treatment, a lack of communication, difficult access and long waiting times.



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Complaints Management

You are invited to a half day seminar being conducted in Shepparton which will cover the following areas:

- * **Why People complain**
- * **Managing difficult situations and angry people**
- * **Systems to address the complaint**
- * **Using the complaint to improve quality**

Who should attend	Anyone who ever receives complaints, however big or small, in any health service, and is interested in strategies for dealing with these effectively
Date	Monday 24 th May 2010
Time	9am Registration (light refreshments) 9.30am – 1pm (Lunch)
Presentations by	Caroline Rose Consumer Advocate, Royal Women's Hospital. Gail Benson Patient Advocate, Barwon Health.
Venue	Elsie Jones Education Centre Goulburn Valley Health Graham Street Shepparton
Cost	\$45.00 pp includes morning tea and lunch
RSVP & Enquiries	18 th May 2010 Jan Phillips (03) 58322258 Jan.phillips@gvhealth.org.au

This workshop can be used as 2.5hrs towards your continuing professional development.



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TAX INVOICE & REGISTRATION FORM

Session/Course: **Complaints Management**

Date: 24th May 2010

Participant: _____

Organisation: _____

Email: _____

Payment Options

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT/Post)

Account Name:

HSLA

BSB : 063349

Account Number : 10022284

or

Cheque made payable to:

HSLA

And sent to

Level 30

570 Bourke Street

Melbourne 3000



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