



HSLA Newsletter

December 2009

Health Services Liaison Association Inc

Level 30, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne
Vic. 3000

ABN 11 066 654 742

HSLA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Annual General Meeting November 11th 2009

It was just over a year ago when the 2008 AGM was looming that it became apparent, for a variety of different reasons, that the HSLA were about to lose almost the entire committee. This caused quite some angst amongst the committee at the time and we seriously wondered about the future viability of the HSLA. When I look around the table today, and reflect on all that we have achieved in the past 12 months, and what a wonderful bunch of people stepped forward to further our cause, I do feel very fortunate.

Over the past few years the committee has often discussed the need for the HSLA to represent the broadest possible spectrum of consumer advocates and patient representatives across the entire health services spectrum. I am delighted that we now have representatives from both metropolitan and rural health services, from both private and public health services and from mental health services. I hope that we can continue to broaden our representation over coming years, in order for the HSLA to remain useful and relevant to as many people as possible.

The Committee began the year with a review of our Strategic Plan and Priority Action Work Plan. This resulted in a focus for the committee over the past 12 months of reviewing and updating our website, providing training opportunities for members, publicizing the work of the HSLA as widely as possible and continuing to foster peer support amongst members.

In August 2009 we had a very successful workshop presented by Dr Grant Lester. Grant is a Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist who has developed a reputation as a very informative and entertaining speaker on the subject of dealing with difficult and angry complainants. He has completed several research projects and published on this topic. He has consulted widely throughout Australia to a variety of organisations and has recently developed a training program to assist organisations with the management of difficult complainants. Over 60 people very well attended this workshop and the feedback was extremely positive. It was also encouraging that we had a diverse audience including people from rural Victoria and interstate, and a mix of patient representatives and other health professionals.

The second event for the year was a late afternoon gathering with wine and cheese and a presentation by the Health Services Commissioner, Beth Wilson, on Informed Consent. Justin Brady, courtesy of Beth, also treated us to a rendition of the Infection Control song, complete with audience participation, and some wonderful music. The attendance at this event was small however those present thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. It was designed to be an informal networking opportunity and clearly met this aim for those attending.



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HSLA President's Report (cont'd)

Opportunities to talk about what we do and how we do it, as well as what keeps us awake at night, are always more productive over a glass of wine. It would be good to continue these events throughout 2010 and build up the attendances.

In line with our commitment to providing training in rural and regional areas, the HSLA plan to run a workshop in regional Victoria early in 2010.

The committee made a decision to revamp the HSLA website to make it more user friendly and also to allow us to add to it and change it as necessary without relying on a third party, as has been the case in the past. I would like to particularly thank Tim Chiragakis for driving this improvement. The new website is bright and easy to navigate and allows us to load up newsletters and other information as soon as it becomes available.

As part of our plan to foster peer support and networking, we have recently developed a flyer to raise awareness of HSLA, its activities and contact details of committee members. Many thanks in particular to Glenys Andrew who produced a bright, eye-catching brochure that has been distributed at workshops throughout the year.

The quarterly newsletters have continued to be produced, thanks to Jacquie Flude and Tim Chiragakis. I am aware that it is not always an easy task, especially trying to gently persuade others to write for the newsletter, and to do the research to ensure they remain informative and relevant. Thank you to Jacquie and Tim for coordinating this for the past year.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank Beth Wilson, the Health Services Commissioner, for all her support in so many different ways, to the HSLA. The provision of meeting space and muffins, workshops held at the HSC offices, speaking at workshops, and encouraging her staff to attend HSLA events are all enormously supportive and much appreciated. I would also like to thank Lynn Griffin who represents the HSC on our committee. Lynn has provided a very important link with the HSC as well as providing continuity with a constantly changing committee.

Finally I would like to thank the entire HSLA committee for their constant support and commitment through out the year. Together we have brought positive energy and new ideas, as well as providing a supportive collegial atmosphere for each other and the entire HSLA membership. I believe we have a good foundation on which to build in the coming year.

Caroline Rose
President
Health Services Liaison Association



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HSLA Committee Membership 2009 - 2010

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If 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 and particularly for those CLO's who have just started in the role.

It has been discussed HSLA meetings identifying best practice in complaints management. If you have any strategies that your organisation uses that may be useful for discussion please pass on your valuable information

PEER SUPPORT HELPLINE

Metropolitan Melbourne

Ann Howell	Caulfield Hospital, Vic	03 9076 6127
Jacque Flude	Royal Melbourne Hospital, Vic	03 9342 7806

Rural Victoria

Jan Phillips	Goulburn Valley Health, Vic	03 5832 2258
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ANNOUNCING THE DIVERSITY IN HEALTH 2010 CONFERENCE

The Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health is proud to present the Diversity in Health 2010 Conference in Melbourne between 7 and 9 June 2010.

If you are working to improve health and wellbeing, you will find this conference invaluable. Cultural diversity is part of the fabric of Australia and whether you work in a hospital, a community agency or within government, the way in which you respond to diversity will directly influence the impact you can make.

Addressing diversity is not a tick-box exercise; it needs to be explored at many levels. Are patients missing out on vital information or treatment because they cannot understand us when we talk about treatment options? Can generalist public health campaigns work in a multicultural society? Can patients from non-English speaking backgrounds have equitable access to mental health services? How should chronic illnesses such as diabetes be managed within the Indian or Pacific Islander communities?

Themes for Diversity in Health 2010

Diversity in Health 2010 will feature three major themes:

Cultural integrity in service delivery

A holistic service response that places the client at its centre, recognising diverse cultural and linguistic needs.

Right to health

The right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, extending to the determinants of health, freedom from violence and discrimination, and access to health-related information and education.

Modern multiculturalism

The rationale that created multiculturalism is no longer valid but we are not living in a multicultural Eden. Is it time for multiculturalism V.2?

The conference will also feature several minor themes, representing key issues in diversity and health:

- Aged care
- Cultural rights
- Culture, health and sexuality
- Language services
- Mental health
- Problem gambling
- Refugee health and wellbeing



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EVENT REVIEW: WHAT'S HOT IN HEALTH

On Thursday 22nd October, HSLA members and guests were treated to a presentation by our Health Services Commissioner, Beth Wilson, entitled **'Informed Consent – What part of 'informed' do you not understand?'**

As usual, Beth provided an informative and entertaining talk on the topical issue of informed consent. There were many examples given of where consent of treatment was not sought and the negative ramifications for patients, carers and health professionals. It was a great reminder that clear communication and information between all concerned is the key for informed consent.

There was also a highly enjoyable musical performance by Beth and a member of her band, The Disinfectors. This included a rendition of their song "Infection Control", complete with audience participation.

This event proved to be a great chance for colleagues to meet over wine and cheese whilst being educated and entertained. For further information on events such as these, please keep an eye on the HSLA website and newsletter.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION : INTERESTING WEBSITES:

There was an interesting article in The Age on Tuesday 17th Nov by Hugh Mackay on the issue of an apology (in relation to the Forgotten Australians) and the need for forgiveness.

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/its-a-sorry-state-of-affairs-when-forgiveness-is-not-the-main-objective-20091115-igav.html?comments=26>

Open Disclosure: is a frank discussion with a patient and their support person about a patient-related incident that may have resulted in harm or injury to the patient available on-line accessed 1 December 2009 www.health.nsw.gov.au/quality/opendiscl/index.asp

Health Complaints - Complaint Expert (UK) death of a loved one is concerned, good complaint handling becomes crucial. Care ... answers to what they see as unacceptable health care ... UK Consumers Encouraged to Complain; www.complaintexpert.co.uk/health-complaints.html

Aged Care - Public Input Sought for Complaints Review

25 July 2009 Aged Care - Public Input Sought for Complaints Review ... members of the public, consumers ... of the NSW Health Complaints Unit and Commissioner for the NSW Health Care www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/042D43738EB1223CCA2575FE



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

www.hsla.com.au