

## **President's Notes: (Bruni Brewin)**

This is my last message to you before the AGM. By the time you read this the AGM will probably be past and we will be into a new year for the AHA.

### **PACFA:**

The PACFA register at the last count have approximately 126 therapists registered with more on the way. We have told PACFA that our members, while being counsellors and/or psychotherapists, are proud of their additional specialty as 'Hypnotherapists' and would like to be acknowledged as such. We said that the general community does not see 'counsellor' or 'psychotherapist' as covering the professional specialty of Clinical Hypnotherapy. We have re-submitted our standards and asked them to consider the separate category of 'Clinical Hypnotherapists'.

We sent two articles to PACFA, one from the Sydney Morning Herald and another from The Daily Telegraph where the writing was about the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report findings. An estimated 800,000 Australians suffer depression each year. Depression also accounted for a third of the 10 million visits to GPs for mental health conditions in 2000-2001.

The report findings stressed the importance of supporting GP's with more funding and education to treat these patients. The article acknowledged these are conditions that cannot be treated in a short GP consultation. We requested PACFA to lobby the Government as a group that is already in place - thus avoiding tax payers funding and having to educate another part of the sector that is already overburdened. Our letter has been acknowledged and we will be interested to see what develops.

### **Western Australia legislation:**

The Department of Health, Western Australia sent us a discussion paper – "Review of Practice Protection – (Core Practices) for Regulated Western Australian Health Practitioners."

As a Stakeholder in the interests of Clinical Hypnotherapy, our input was directed to the current restrictions of Hypnosis to Psychologists.

In relation to Hypnosis, the Department of Health has already received submissions to support the deregulation of Hypnosis and accordingly it was recommended that hypnosis be deregulated.

We supported that recommendation submitting evidence that practices are already in place that satisfies the NCP legislation. We have requested notification of the outcome of the discussion paper.

### **GESA:**

Affiliate Member, Horace Drew sent us an article in February on a study using hypnotherapy for Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). The study used 250 unselected IBS patients and the outcome showed that through the use of hypnosis, improvement is long-lasting and reduces health care costs. Horace contacted the

hospital on our behalf and put me in touch with them. They sent us their findings and information on the hypnosis techniques used and offered to help us set up a similar study in Australia. In the UK hospital where this study was done, they now have 6 non-medical Clinical Hypnotherapists working at the hospital dealing with IBS patients.

I then contacted GESA (Gastroenterological Society of Australia) advising them of this and suggesting I come and talk to them about the study. I received a favourable response from Professor Peter Gibson, Professor of Gastroenterology at GESA who had heard of the study and said that some of them were also interested to know more and would be pleased to arrange a meeting with me later in the year. We have been in touch recently and spoken about a meeting in August with a possible collaboration to do some work together. I will advise you further after our meeting.

**Smoking:**

The NSW Health Department is working toward further reducing smoking in the community by encouraging smokers to quit.

The NSW Quitline service has been expanded. The Quitline provides callers with referrals to locally based smoking cessation services available to individuals and workplaces in NSW, as well as southern QLD and northern Victoria (cross-border services).

The AHA has submitted details for all States to be included, including the 1800 Free Advisory Line.

**Health Funds:**

I contacted quite a number of Health Funds. You will see the results in another part of Hypnopatter. Those funds that currently do not support reimbursement for Hypnotherapy were approached again with details of the UK IBS study. Each one came back to acknowledge receipt and said that they would pass it on to be looked at when their next reassessment became due.

**Malpractice & Public Liability Insurance:**

It's a wonder my poor computer isn't complaining of all the work its been doing. You wouldn't believe how many Insurance Company's and Brokers I have been sending things too. I have been to the UK, NZ, USA and all over Australia. Unfortunately, most have come back telling me that either they do not provide cover outside of their own country, or suggested we stay with whoever we are with now, as it would be too expensive with them. I still have a couple that are trying for us and I am using my visualisation for a favourable outcome.

**Accolades are due:**

I would like to thank the Executive for their support and input of work this year. Without their help things just wouldn't get done. You have truly been the Professionals you are.

I sincerely hope that some of you will volunteer to give a hand for the forthcoming year. Remember, the Association is not the Executive – the

Association is YOU. Each and every one of us make up the whole. It can only be as good as we are.

Thanks for having me this Term. Sincere regards, Bruni.