



AUSTRALASIAN SLEEP ASSOCIATION Inc.

NEWSLETTER

March 2000

President's Report

We look forward to the best ever annual scientific meeting in April. Matt Naughton has worked extremely hard to put together the scientific and social content, ably assisted by his organizing committee. Thank you Matt. We are hopeful that the neurological flavour of the meeting and our guest speaker Prof Jacque Montplaisir will serve to attract neurologists and others to the meeting and perhaps spark their interest in sleep disorders. Particularly for Melbourne members we ask you to spread the word.

Sleep Medicine training and credentialling of sleep study reporters continues to be a hot issue for the ASA. The Executive has been disturbed by the final outcome of the (retrospective) credentialling of sleep study reporters conducted in 1999. After the results were made known of the credentialling exercise, in which the ASA and TSANZ were represented, a vocal minority objected loudly to the results and methods used and threatened the special societies with legal action. The Royal Australasian College of Physicians and Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand conducted a review that in the end saw almost all appellants effectively "passed". Rather than draw a "line in the sand" regarding training standards and experience it seems to the ASA that these two organisations have adopted a position of "inclusivity". The ASA believes that, while this has significantly lowered the temperature amongst disaffected physicians it has also lowered the standing and practice of sleep medicine, which has implications for current and future trainee physicians. A meeting has been scheduled for later this month between the various parties to discuss these recent events and hopefully find a way forward to guarantee future high standards of sleep medicine training and practice.

We are pleased to announce that in 2007 the ASA will host the international meeting of the World Federation of Sleep Research Societies. The Executive has asked Ron Grunstein to Chair the organising committee for this meeting, and he has accepted. John Wheatley will be his deputy. The ASA have already begun to participate more actively in the affairs of the WFSRS and along with other countries has made some suggestions for structural and procedural changes to the organization that will make it more democratic and representational.

The Orofacial Special Interest group will be meeting at the time of the Melbourne meeting and Leon Lack is asking for expressions of interest in forming an Insomnia SIG. I would encourage people to get involved in these groups if they have a special interest or expertise in these areas. The Executive invites other special interest groups to form as need and enthusiasm dictates.

Sincerely

Doug McEvoy

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Special Interest Groups

Objectives of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are:

(i) To foster the exchange of information and collaboration in research among clinicians and scientists within defined areas of interest

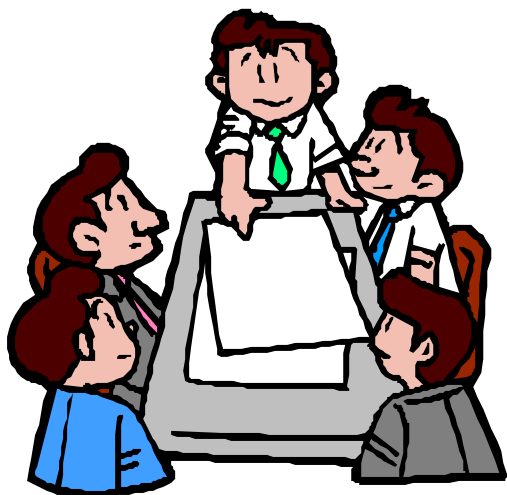
(ii) To serve as resource groups to the ASA executive and its subcommittees in the provision of specialised expertise, development of position papers and educational material.

(iii) To contribute to the planning of Annual Scientific Meetings by submitting proposals for guest speakers or content for part of a meeting and/or by responding to requests from the scientific programme committee.

INSOMNIA SIG

I have taken on the task of forming an Insomnia SIG within the ASA. If you have a special interest in Insomnia and are interesting in joining this SIG, then please let me know, via the secretariat, or if you would like to discuss this with me you can contact me at: leon.lack@flinders.edu.au, phone 08 8201 2391. It is hoped to hold an informal meeting of this group during the ASM in Melbourne, so please let Stephanie Blower or I know as soon as possible.

Leon Lack
Convenor, Insomnia SIG



OROFACIAL SIG

A meeting of the Orofacial SIG will take place during the forthcoming ASA Annual Scientific Meeting, over lunch (12:30-1400) on Saturday 8th April. This will provide an excellent opportunity to meet and discuss the direction of the SIG over the next year. We hope to have a good attendance. Any items you wish to include on the agenda should be forwarded to either Jack Gerschman (jack@bigpond.net.au) or myself (p.cistulli@unsw.edu.au). The theme for the scientific component of the meeting will be Sleep-related Bruxism, taking advantage of the presence of Professor Jacques Montplaisir, who is the keynote speaker for the ASA meeting. Professor Montplaisir is Professor of Psychiatry and Neurosciences at the University of Montreal and has an international reputation for his research on the pathophysiology and treatment of sleep disorders, including bruxism. Dr Gerard Kennedy is a psychologist from the Victoria University of Technology, and completed a doctoral thesis on bruxism.

The programme for the meeting is as follows:

12:30-13:00 Business meeting

13:00-13:30 Prof Jacques Montplaisir

Sleep-related bruxism - physiology and pathophysiology

13:30-14:00 Dr Gerard Kennedy

Sleep-related bruxism - a clinical overview

I hope that you are able to attend the meeting, and contribute to the continuing evolution of our Orofacial SIG into a truly multidisciplinary and collaborative group.

Peter Cistulli
Co-convenor, Orofacial SIG

Annual Scientific Meeting 2000

This years Annual Scientific Meeting will be our Associations 13th meeting. It will be held in Melbourne, Friday April 7 to Sunday April 9 and will immediately precede the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand's Annual Scientific Meeting, to be held in the same venue.

Our guest speaker is Professor Jacques Montplaisir MD PhD CRPCc from the Centre d' etude du sommeil, Hopital du Sacre-Coeur de Montreal, Montreal, Canada. He is an established international authority on periodic limb movement disorders, narcolepsy, sleep apnea and the neurophysiological sequelae. We are very pleased to have him spend some of his time with us and I hope that many of you will enjoy his presentations and make him welcome.

The meeting will have a neurological flavour this year. We have a number of local neurologists who also have an international reputation in the fields of stroke, nocturnal epilepsy, dementia and drug effects upon sleep – areas that most practicing sleep physicians grapple with daily. We all stand to learn an enormous amount by hearing from these experts. Our local Australian sleep community also has a high international status and a number of experts will be debating issues which are highly relevant to our daily practice such as auto titrating CPAP devices, new drugs and standardising the examination of the sleep patient. Several illustrative "curly" patients will be presented by experienced clinicians.

With the combined input of all local speakers and that of Professor Montplaisir, plus nearly 50 original scientific abstracts to be presented in oral and poster form, I have no doubt that the meeting will be a great success. I look forward to your attendance and contribution to this years meeting.

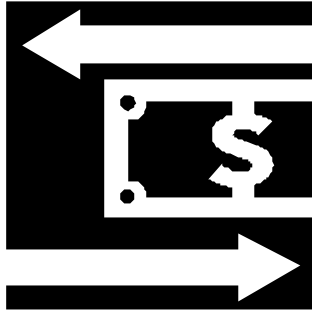
Matthew Naughton
ASA ASM 2000 Conference Convenor



ASA Executive, from left to right: Stephanie Blower, John Wheatley, Matt Naughton, Jack Philpott, David Joffe, Bruce Thompson, Doug McEvoy, Peter Cistulli.

Treasurer's Report

As I come to the end of my term as Treasurer I am grateful to my colleagues for their support over the last few years. I am also grateful for the increasing support that Stephanie Blower our Executive Secretary provided, particularly keeping the Association on a more professional footing.



The Association currently faces a number of issues, such as relative value study, credentialling of Sleep Physicians and other professional and scientific matters which see increasing need for the Executive Secretary. As such, the Association must be in a financial position to provide the resources that it needs to advance the interests of Sleep Medicine throughout Australia and New Zealand. Increasing demands are being placed on the Executive Secretary's time and the ASA Executive recently increased the number of hours provided for the Association's business.

It is one of the Association's long-term goals to foster sleep research and to this end the Association is committed to supporting such ventures as the Helen Bearpark Memorial Scholarship. Obviously this requires adequate finances and I signal to Association members that subscriptions will need to rise to fulfil these goals. Justification for a subscription increase will be presented to the members at the forthcoming AGM along with plans for defining levels of membership.

The Society has now applied for an Australian Business No. and is GST ready. I remind members that GST will be imposed upon subscriptions when these fall due on 1st July.

Once again I thank Stephanie Blower for her support over the last two years.

Jack Philpott
Honorary Treasurer.

Special Resolution to Change the Constitution

Members will note that there is attached documentation to this newsletter regarding a special resolution to change the ASA constitution. This resolution relates specifically to the membership categories that are available for the ASA, and the changes have been made in order to bring us in line with other professional organisations. It is hoped that this will clarify some of the problems that occasionally arise in placing members into the correct categories. There will now be 6 categories of membership: Emeritus, Ordinary, Associate, Student, Sustaining and Retired. The new categories are those of Student, Sustaining and Retired.

The original constitution document did not specifically have a Student category, and we have generally used Associate Member status for this group. However, we would like to recognise the special contributions that students make to our association by offering them reduced registration and membership rates. It is anticipated that when they complete their studies they will move to full Ordinary Membership.

The Sustaining Member category has been developed to accommodate representatives from companies or businesses which have a commercial interest in the broad field of sleep and sleep disorders. The executive believe it is important that we encourage representatives to be involved in our society but are concerned about possible ethical implications of such members holding office in the ASA. Accordingly, this category has been created so such representatives can be active members of our association and support us, while they will not be eligible to vote or be elected to office within the ASA.

The Retired Member category has been created to accommodate members who retire from active practice and wish to continue their involvement in the Association but at a reduced financial cost.

The ASA executive has fully endorsed these changes to our constitution, and will present them to the membership at the upcoming Annual General Meeting for discussion and ratification.

John R Wheatley
Immediate Past President ASA

National Science Week 2000

This Year National Science week, organised by the Federal Government, are to run a national experiment, attempting to engage all Australians in an activity requiring the public to think about the nature of science and experimentation.

It is intended that this experiment will be a sleep study, requiring all participants to keep a sleep diary for two weeks. The ASA and ASTA have been asked to assist in the organisation of this, and David Joffe and Bruce Thompson are working closely with the organiser.

This is a wonderful opportunity to raise the profile of the ASA, and should result in the largest data of sleep ever correlated in Australia, and maybe the world.

We will keep you posted on this activity, but if in the meantime you are interested in learning more about this, or would like to assist, please contact David Joffe on:

djoffe@mail.usyd.edu.au

Web Page

Over the past few months I have been working closely with Kustas Tiivas to create a Web page for ASA. Unfortunately it is taking us some time to get a .org address, but hopefully this should be arranged shortly. In the meantime the Web page can be viewed on:

www.pages.on.net/ASA/index.html.



Please take a few moments to look at this and let me have your comments, good and bad, and also your suggestions for what should be included on the Web Page, and links you feel would be useful. I

can be contacted on:

djoffe@mail.usyd.edu.au

I look forward to hearing from you.

David Joffe
Honorary Secretary

6th World Congress of Sleep Apnea

It was good to meet many of you at the 6th World Congress of Sleep Apnea held recently in Sydney with over 800 delegates. The organisers were kind enough to offer ASA a booth area at the Congress which was much appreciated as an opportunity to raise the profile of ASA amongst both the Australian and Overseas visitors. A number of people joined up on the spot, and if the number of application forms that were given out are anything to go by then we are due to have a large influx of new members.

Stephanie Blower
Executive Secretary



President, Doug McEvoy, joins up a new member at the 6th World Congress of Sleep Apnea