



# ACT State News



The Annual General Meeting of the ICA ACT was held on the 9th July 1997. The new office bearers are:

President:	Margo Ward CNC Operating Rooms Lidia Perin Memorial Hospital
Secretary:	Denise Sharp CNC 4E (Surgical) Calvary Hospital
Treasurer:	Susan Blake Infection Control Officer Canberra Nursing Home
Publicity Officer:	Elaine Men CNC Infection Control John James Memorial Hospital
Journal Sub-Ed:	Di Dreimanis AVg CNC Infection Control The Canberra Hospital

Elaine Graham has been past sub-editor since the inception of our journal in 1994 and I personally, along with all our members, wish to thank her for the input and time she gave to this role. Elaine is a member of AICA's Credentialling and Certification Sub-Committee and to further her general understanding on this topic she recently spent the day in Sydney at a workshop. She met three of TCHs Nurse Educators in the -6°C frost and they "tootled up the Hume in the Guvvie car". The day was organised by Ausmed Publications on Credentialling Competencies and the Credentialling of Advanced Clinical Skills. The Workshop Co-ordinators were Professor Margaret McMillan, Dean Faculty of Nursing, the University of Newcastle and Chairperson of the Development of Competency Standards for the Advanced Nurse Clinician Project which was auspiced by the Australian Nursing Federation ANF; Jan Andrews, Director of Educational Services, NSW College of Nursing and member of the Research Consultation Team for the competency standards project; Associate Professor Penny Little, Director, Problem Based Learning Assessment and Research Centre, the University of Newcastle.

The progress of the National Nursing Organisations (NNO) was reported on and it is envisaged that there will be broad overall competencies, then specialty competencies formulated by the individual organisations. How the overall and specialty credentialling will actually be achieved has not been determined but there will be consultation with Royal College of Nursing Australia and the ANF. Three nurse practitioners with considerable clinical experience and expertise presented case studies which focussed on the application of competency standards. On the day there was discussion with two other members of AICA's Sub-Committee, Jo Winchcombe from the Hornsby Hospital and Pauline Cepak from Royal Rehabilitation Centre of Sydney. Although this workshop broadened her knowledge, Elaine believes there are still many issues to be resolved.

At the Canberra Hospital we are looking at embarking on



**Back row L-R: Elaine Men, Denise Sharp**  
**Front row L-R: Di Dreimanis, Susan Blake, Margo Ward**

a research project to look at the incidence of hospital acquired bacteraemias within our hospital. The second phase of the research will be to implement and evaluate an intervention to reduce the incidence of hospital acquired bacteraemias. This major research will be under the direction of our ADN Research, CNC's Infection Control, Infectious Diseases Physician and Microbiologist and the Quality Management Unit.

**Di Dreimanis**  
**Sub-Editor ACT**



# NSW State News



Much is happening in Infection Control in NSW. The Northern Rivers Region is very busy doing a wonderful job in preparing for our State Infection Control Conference in October at Coffs Harbour. Hope to see you there.

The Education and Career pathways Committee has just finalised the extensive work they have been doing on Competencies and are circulating it for comment.

The Journal Committee is always active and encouraging and always willing to support others to write articles for the journal. Please continue to send any research or quality activities to the Editor-in-Chief, Dianne Dalton, The New Children's Hospital, PO Box 3515, Parramatta 2121.

Currently the data for EpiNet is being reviewed. They are also looking at the possibility of collecting this data in Access.

An Epidemiology interest group continues to meet quarterly. There is great fun as we quiz each other on methodology and statistics, although we could not do this so well without the help of Dr M.L. McClaws. If you would like further information about this group please contact M. Evans (02) 9382 6339.

The interest and/or enthusiasm of the computer interest group appears to have waned. Is there a need for this group or has sickness taken its toll? If you have any comments could you please contact the association?

In the area of Infection Control, the NSW Health Department has been extremely active. Cathryn Murphy has written the following report which shows the commitment the Department has to this very important area.

## NSW Department of Health Infection Control

The NSW Department of Health has a strong commitment to infection control. Infection control in the Department is a program of the AIDS and Infectious Diseases Branch within the Public Health Division. The Department has established strong links with the Infection Control Association NSW Inc and other related professional groups involved in the provision of safe, patient and health care worker environments.

In the past three years a number of infection control initiatives have been undertaken by the Department including the establishment of the Infection Control Resource Centre, the 24 Hour Needlestick Injury Hotline and ongoing work on surveillance. Two recent infection control publications include the Report of the Findings of NSW Nosocomial Infection Taskforce and the Infection Control Training and Information Resources Kit.

The NSW Health Infection Control program includes three key committees these are:

1. The Infection Control Advisory Group (ICAG) – a group of technical infection control experts representing microbiology, sterilisation, area management and infection control practitioners.
2. The Infection Control Management Group (ICMAN). This group was established in May 1997 and advises the

Department on the financial and administrative implications of infection control policy and recommendation.

3. The Infection Control Practice Group (ICPAC). This group met initially in July this year and includes representatives from each Area Health Service, the Private Hospitals Association and the Private Health Care Branch. The Group will play a key role in disseminating infection control information to and from the Department. Other objectives of this group are as follows:

- (a) to assist in the review of the role of the Infection Control practitioner as recommended by the Report of the NSW Nosocomial Infection Taskforce;
- (b) for members to act as an expert resource for area staff to contact should they require information or clarification regarding infection control matters;
- (c) for members to assist the department in investigating infection control breaches;
- (d) to act as a conduit for the exchange of practical infection control information from Area Health Services to the Department;
- (e) to assist NSW Health in the review of Infection Control Policy;
- (f) to advise NSW Health on practical issues relating to compliance with infection control standards under the health professional regulations;
- (g) to develop a series of department endorsed auditing tools for self administration in private and public practices.

If you would like any further information on the NSW Health Infection Control program, please contact either Deborah Best, Policy Analyst – Infection Control on (02) 9391 9275 or Cathryn Murphy, Senior Policy Analyst – Infection Control on (02) 9391 9869.

**Compiled by NSW Journal Committee**



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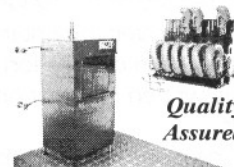
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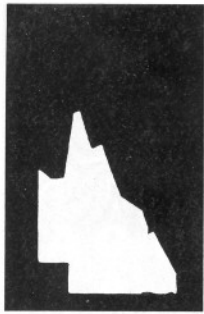
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# Queensland State News



The focus of this edition of the Queensland State News is – people.

Whilst events help us to mark our progress and celebrate achievements, it is the people who work with and around us that really make a difference.

Madeleine McPherson recently visited Brisbane, affording ICPAQ the opportunity to host a reception where members were able to meet and chat with Madeleine. This was a very successful evening marked by a spirited exchange of ideas and information.

Jenny Stackelroth is to be congratulated for coordinating yet another successful Infection Control short course. Over thirty people attended the course which provided up-to-date education in infection control issues and also provided a forum for participants to establish and strengthen professional networks.

Robin Brumpton works part-time as a Clinical Nurse at Dalby Hospital. During the recent 'Immunisation Week' Robin coordinated an awareness campaign for her local region. This campaign involved a lot of work with limited resources but effectively raised awareness of the problems and promoted affirmative health practices. Congratulations Robin.

Murial Fletcher has recently retired after working at the Wesley Private Hospital, Brisbane in infection control for approximately ten years. Good luck Murial and congratulations on your retirement.

Next month there will be some changes to the ICPAQ executive. The association would like to acknowledge the contribution of the following members: Amanda Mendies has been assistant secretary for the past two years. She has participated in the planning of two state conferences and a review of the ICPAQ Starter Kit. Thank you Amanda for your enthusiasm and willingness to work.

Carolyn Wills has been a Secretary to the Association for the past two years. This has been a most demanding role and Carolyn has met those demands with enthusiasm. She has been responsible for streamlining the secretarial functions through the acquisition of supportive technology. Carolyn has also been involved in two state conferences and review of the Starter Kit – all this whilst embarking upon postgraduate medical training! Good luck Carolyn and thank you.

**Glenn Gardner**  
**Queensland Sub-editor**



# South Australia State News



## **South Australian Private Hospital MRSA Working Group**

A working group was established in August 1996 to discuss concerns about the perceived increase in numbers of new MRSA isolates occurring in private hospitals. Members of the group included Infection Control Practitioners and Infectious Diseases Physicians from major private hospitals in South Australia.

The objectives of the group were to ascertain data to confirm an increase in MRSA positive inpatients within the private hospital sector; to develop protocols for identifying new MRSA isolates and to coordinate management of inpatients confirmed as MRSA positive.

Strategies recommended for patient management were directed toward early identification of a positive isolate to prevent entrenchment in the hospital, reducing the risk of transmission of infection to other patients and providing clear, written information on MRSA to patients, relatives and staff.

The document begins by providing epidemiological features of the organism. General ward management

protocol explains the implementation of additional precautions including allocation of the patient to a single room or cohorting of more than one MRSA positive patient to a designated area of the ward.

Information on the use of topical agents and systemic antibiotic treatment has been included in the treatment section of the document.

The document further explains the rationale for and appropriateness of staff screening and the ensuing management of staff carriers.

Two Patient Information leaflets were designed to inform patients of the precautions staff are implementing during routine care procedures and reasons for further screening of the patient for MRSA.

The working group recognises that time brings change and will be reviewing the document and data collected by each participating private hospital over the next six months.

**Paulina May – Infection Control Co-ordinator,**  
**St Andrews Hospital**  
**Member of the SA Private Hospital**  
**MRSA Working Group**





# Victorian State News



## AICA Conference

The 11th National Conference of the Australian Infection Control Association was held in Melbourne on May 7th-9th at the Melbourne Convention Centre.

There were over 240 registered delegates from all parts of Australasia. Two delegates travelled from Papua New Guinea, one from England, and several from New Zealand, two of whom presented papers.

International speakers were led by the keynote speaker Dr Raf Metens, Scientific Institute of Public Health – Louis Pasteur, Brussels and guest of AICA. Dr Mertens spoke of the Belgian and the wider European experience of infection surveillance.

Other international speakers were Dr Janine Jagger from the USA., Associate Professor Roland C.C. Leung from Hong Kong and Dr Adrian Duse from South Africa. These speakers were sponsored by various companies with an interest in the healthcare field.

The program was ably supported by local experts and the conference was opened by Dr. Graham Rouch, Chief Health Officer, Department of Human Services, Victoria. Sessions were chaired by the State Presidents including the current President of AICA Madeleine McPherson.

Nine poster presentations were on display.

The Annual General Meeting of AICA was conducted during the course of the conference and the minutes will be distributed in due course. One of the issues discussed was the frequency of National Conference and their relationship to State Conferences.

Several sub-committees of the AICA Executive were held and it was for some of us to become acquainted with those

we have only communicated with per telelink or similar. It was good to put faces to names!

The conference was a success and much of the credit goes to the organising committee; Mal Butler, Bronwyn Holbeche, Joy Humphreys, Kevin Kendall, Janine Malcolm and Sue Scott, all members of the host Executive, VICNA. Also credit to Sue Markey and Kylie Ayres from ICMS Pty.

The 'Trade' was most supportive and this support was a factor in ensuring the success of the conference.

The post conference assessments are being studied and the results will be made available to the organising committee of the 1998 conference to be held in Perth.

Melbourne was cold and wet and while this is its reputation (undeserved) this weather followed a sustained season that was convivial to outdoor activities. Unfortunately this season ended a few days before the conference.

The conference Dinner was held in the Grand Dining Room at The Windsor a fitting end to an excellent program.

## Infection Control Survey

The Department of Human Services commissioned an infection control survey to determine current practices and resources available to manage infection control risks in all Victorian acute public hospitals.

The survey, involving visits to all public hospitals by the auditors, is now complete. It now remains for the Taskforce to make public the findings. This is expected at the end of October. It is expected that positive change will flow from what has been viewed as a useful exercise.

VICNA members involved in the Taskforce were Mellissa Aberline and Mary McCrory.

### **The National Standards are now Available for Purchase** **Order Form: Australian Infection Control Association** **National Standards**

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# Western Australia State News



## Education Sessions

In March a successful Infection Control seminar was held at Kellerberrin. Approximately 40 enthusiastic delegates attended from Kellerberrin and surrounding rural areas. Evaluations from 36 attendees were very positive. The four ICAWA members who presented at the seminar found it a rewarding experience particularly meeting the 'locals'!

In April a half day seminar was held at Fremantle Hospital on a Saturday covering the topic of Endoscopy. 89 delegates attended from such specialities as infection control, endoscopy centres, operating theatres and microbiology departments. Much debate took place on the issue of microbiological testing on the lumen of endoscopes to determine adequate decontamination.

Approximately 60 delegates attended a half day seminar at the Perth Zoo. With a backdrop of a sleepy python (in a cage) presenters covered topics such as: EQuIP and infection control, Standard and Additional precautions, hepatitis C, vaccinations from womb to tomb, herpes, and tuberculosis.

Two further seminars are planned for rural areas this year. One in Albany in October and another in Kalgoorlie in November. Four Association members have volunteered to present at these seminars.

## AICA National Conference Melbourne

Despite the considerable distance, ten ICAWA members travelled to Melbourne for the 11th National AICA

Conference. Four members were partially funded by ICAWA and two WA delegates presented papers. Reports from the Conference have been published in the ICAWA Newsletter.

## 24th Annual Educational Conference and International Meeting of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC): New Orleans June 1997

Two ICAWA members, Helen Cadwallader and Megan Reilly, attended the above Conference in June. The Conference occurred over five days with both pre and post conference workshops and courses. Both ICPs have kindly presented very comprehensive reports which will be published in the October issue of the ICAWA Newsletter.

## Review of ICAWA General Meeting Format

The ICAWA Executive have decided to review the format of the General Meetings of the Association. To obtain the opinion of members, a questionnaire is being distributed with the August issue of the ICAWA Newsletter. The aim of this exercise is to ensure that ICAWA is serving its members in the best possible way. Therefore it is very important that all members complete the questionnaire and return it in the reply paid envelope. Results will be forwarded to members when available.

**Gabby Robathan**

**Sub-Editor ICAWA, PO Box 674  
Claremont, WA 6010**



WA group advertising 1998 AICA Conference in Perth

Back row: Barbara Elliott, Madeleine McPherson, Helen Cadwallader, Colleen Lark, Gabby Robathan, Sue Nikolett  
Front row: Terri Orrell, Sylvia Gandossi, Heather Smith, Rebecca McCann