



20 October 2018

General Forum - Transcription

Diana Francis

Hi, I'm Diana Francis. I've had the pleasure of presenting the Australian hand therapy basic introduction to hand therapy in Mongolia via Interplast and I just want to thank the alliance that AHTA has with Interplast and I think that was negotiated by Karen Fitt, so just a thank you. It was very successful, and it will be presented again in a Papa New Guinea next year by Penny McMahon and the slides will be interpreted in Mongolian through funding with AHTA. So, thank you very much AHTA.

Nicola Cook

Thank you very much. Diana. I don't know if, if everyone is aware as this usually goes out in a committee, members report what's happening, but for when Karen was in the research and scholarship role, they were, I think we've had two years where the philanthropic funds, which is four and a half thousand dollars allocated per year available had not been allocated. So, she sought to find a way because one of the pillars of the association is to support education and development of hand therapy in developing countries. So, she approached Interplast and said, well, could we train some people who volunteer for Interplast to present the introduction to hand therapy course. Yeah, to present the introduction to hand therapy course in those countries. Um, and we'll invite them to come to our course, which means obviously the cost of the association is the enrolment fee for that course that there'll be trained up to use the material.

The other commitment we made was to pay for a translator to translate the course material into the local language and all of the presenters that worked for Interplast have exactly the same standards to follow as people who present within Australia for the AHTA and like sign a confidentiality clause and such like, so that the work can't be distributed wider than their audience. That's been agreed. Um, and so the, and then, so we're at the point now where we're going to read and not renegotiate, but just re-establish that connection with Interplast because the philanthropic funds first and foremost for our members and anyone doing individual projects is welcome and to apply for philanthropic funds. And all the details are on the website, but if there's money left over then we are more than happy to keep supporting the Interplast relationship. And the other thing that it's kind of come down to now is that because we do have some trained presenters, probably the, the outgoings will be much smaller now because it will put the, the majority of the ongoing costs with be translation fees, which is a couple of hundred dollars, so there's highly likely to often be that available from philanthropic funds.

So that was just the background to that. But thank you for bringing that to everyone's attention.

Claire Maple Brown

First of all, thank you Nicola and the Management Committee for all your hard work. You do so much work and um, it's just amazing how, how you run it all.

I was really pleased to hear that in the future that you're looking to get a CEO and with the change to a limited company structure, I think that would be really positive going forward. Um, I, my point about the lawyer before is, and also congratulations on the credentialing council having independent members I think we're extremely skilled professionals as hand therapists, but I think a good governance now dictates that we need a diverse range of um, and congratulations to Rosie who's doing an MBA and that's amazing. But yeah, some accountants and lawyers can be quite helpful people sometimes and I think that would help the load of the management committee. So, I guess it's probably all in your strategic papers, but as you move towards the limited company structure, a will that then make um, independent positions available for other people with diverse skill sets to join the, uh, essentially a board of directors. Is that something that's in?

Nicola Cook

Hi, my answer would be I don't know. So, the aim of moving towards not the aim of the plan in terms of structuring moving towards the CEO and company limited by guarantee is on the agenda as a priority for next year strategic plan. So, every other year we have John Peacock from Associations Forum and so he is the General Manager of the Associations Forum from Australia and had, has a very, very weighty background in managing and running association. So, our plan was to try and map out the details in June next year, but does anyone else, Dave, Dave's always got something to say.

Dave Parsons

Yeah, I can take that point, it probably hasn't overtly being discussed, but certainly what I would hope is that as we move from a management committee governance structure to a board governance structure that that board does bring in expertise in regards to accounting and legal is with any good governance. And then there are the machinations and running over the association should fall from the management committee which are currently hand therapists down to the CEO, which hopefully have a business and health background to execute the operations side. So, I would certainly hope that that's where you moved to just good governance and good. It's kind of stimulated. So, I hope that that's what we do.

Olga Alkin

Because uh, we also looking to arrange the next year it hasn't been discussed, but because it's all still in a preliminary stage, it's called a risk and management council, which means all Business Risk Assessment Council, which means that there's going to be an independent board that's comprised of lawyers, accountants, sorts of things like that that has the issue arises regarding association sort of, um, with financial risks due to claims or anything like that that we do have somebody on our knowing how the association operates and who we are to support us in dealing with those issues. Um, and it's certainly in the plan, but it hasn't been actually eventuated yet,

but we're certainly thinking about organizing that and do the city meeting of biannual or something along those lines to make sure that we are sound in terms of how it's run and what, what's the rule of the law. So, it certainly in the plan.

Nicola Cook

Thanks. Okay.

Tracey Clark

Let's talk about the strategic plan and to um, as a member just um, I'm interested in, um more transparency to the members about the progress with the strategic plan. Um, for example, the strategic plan wasn't available on the website until I sent an email to the association last week to ask it to be made available. Um, and the members don't have any idea from during the year, um, how progress on the strategic plan is going and even the annual report, um, it sorts of, it doesn't give a very detailed overview of the strategic plan. The association invests a large amount of money in developing the strategic plan every year. So about \$10,000. I think the members need to be able to have some ongoing information about the direction of the strategic plan, like why some objectives were achieved and not achieved. And now there's reasons why things changed over the time, but it would be good if members were able to have a little bit more information about how that's progressing throughout the year.

Nicola Cook

Thank you. Thanks Tracy. So, can we just table that to strategic planning next year? Thanks

Liz Ward

Hi I recently went to the APA national conference which was in Hobart and attached to that conference they had a cultural awareness training day and I don't think we do much as an association for raising cultural awareness about aboriginal culture and it was really eye-opening and um, really changed my thoughts and so I think it might be something worth considering attaching to the next conference in Perth. I just wanted to put that forward.

Nicola Cook

So next conference is in Brisbane, next conference in Brisbane.

Liz Ward

Yeah, it's something that you can easily attach to a conference agenda and then it's open to all members and I think it's something that we need to think about as an association in closing the gap.

Nicola Cook

Okay, cool. Thanks Liz. And what, so who were the group that Karen was talking to? I've forgotten indigenous. No. Oh, sorry. My brain. There's an indigenous associations group that Karen was in contact with and we were looking to work more closely with them and they failed to respond to communication. She had a, she had an initial burst and then the, everything that she sent to them was not responded to, so I don't know why from their perspective that, that fell to the wayside, but. So we'll pass on your feedback to the um, conference organizing committee, but also know

that the management committee kind of have been aware of that as a national issue and we have tried.

Renee Lim

Il just wanted to raise a few things in relation to that AHT credential and recertification. I just wanted to clarify with, I guess members of the accreditation committee, um, and have it on the record that to maintain that AHT accreditation, is it necessary to keep your CHT registration current with the AHTC or if you resign or let go, that five year renewal. Do you still keep your AHT credential current?

Nicola Cook

Can I ask you to answer Tracey? That'd be okay. Thanks.

Tracey Clark

Thank you. No, the CHT is required for the application for AHT. There's no obligation to maintain CHT. It's not part of the ongoing obligation for maintaining AHT.

Renee Lim:

Excellent, thanks and my other thought was in terms of the contributions to the profession, I noticed when it came out that for the supervision of undergraduate students, that was one point for every 20 days that you have a student and I guess in terms of the amount of work that that takes in terms of taking sort of senior students and preparing them for work as an OT or a physio that, that doesn't reflect the amount of work in actually how big a contribution to the profession that is...

Tracey Clark

I'll respond to that as well because like I don't agree with that either, but we just carried over the pre-existing um, maintaining membership, um, guidelines. Um, because the introduction of the AHT you can understand was a massive task. So that was one of the things that we changed. We just carried over what people already had to do to maintain their membership and it is on the agenda to review all of these categories and I would agree with you wholeheartedly as a student supervisor myself, that that's really underestimates the amount of work that you have to do. So, thank you for bringing that up.

Nicola Cook

Yeah. Cool. Thanks Tracy. Katie, do you want to make any comment? Are you happy? Don't you. Oh, just supervising a student. You only get one, um, contribution to the Profession per 20 hours. Sorry. Yes, sorry. Yeah, I am. And it was felt that that wasn't, that didn't reflect the amount of work that goes in to taking a student, preparing them and especially when you're supervising a senior (inaudible), like level student who's just about to go out into the workforce. So can I, can we table that and say that it will be discussed at the next credentialing council meeting? Would that be okay? No. Or does it go to the membership committee meeting?

Tracy Clark

Yes, you can do that Nicola. I'm just not sure that it's on our, the credential, the council's priority lists to be reviewing the, um, that when those membership criteria changed, they have to be changed with notice and then in the cycle of the reaccreditation so that, that's the problem I think. Not that they don't need to be revised, but like...

Nicola Cook

If they do need to be changed, when would they have the opportunity to be changed?

Tracy Clark

That depends. So it'd be like, uh, either as an annual change, like so from one year to the next or in a five year cycle change, but that would need further discussion about when that was the most appropriate time to bring that in.

Katie Whittle

Can you email Sarah at info@ahta.com.au and then we'll put it on the agenda at the next management committee meeting.

Cassandra Chiesa

I guess just in relation to the growth of and, and the growth of our profession. I think a lot of it needs to come down to people in private practice growing their own business and therefore growing the knowledge of hand therapy in the community and employing more staff and doing all those types of things. And there's a lot of education out there for private practice and people in the to better their own skills, but I just feel like in future conferences I really feel like they should always be something for business owners or people in to go to like either a pre-conference workshop or something to um, yeah, to just assist the private practitioners to grow in their own businesses. Um, and I just don't know where that comes down to in terms of the conferences always asked for clinical papers and things like that. So, there might not be people putting themselves forward to do those types of, um, education sessions. But I think that they tend to be quite popular and I think, um, the more that individual business people in our AHTA community can have skills, then I just think that's really gonna help the growth just as much as all the other avenues that are happening at the moment.

Nicola Cook

Cool. Thanks Cassandra. We'll take that back to education and the conference committees.

Bridget Evans

Um, we had a resignation from our subcommittee for the marketing, so if anyone's interested in social media, you've got big shoes to fill, but we'd love to hear from you. So, if you can flick me an email. Please do. Just marketing@ahta.com.au

Nicola Cook

So the only thing that I needed to raise was about the creation of code of conduct and complaints and feedback. Um, policy. Um, so I've just got a little bit of a history. As the membership base grows and we seek to meet the needs of such a broad and diverse group, it's inevitable that

conflict will arise. In order to support the management committee and the members we have created a code of conduct for the association and that's already on the web site. The on the website is, isn't it? Okay. That will be on the website as soon as possible. Um, I would encourage you to remember that all members serving on the committee and in subcommittees are volunteers. They are voted in by members and they do their very best to carry out their role with diligence and in good faith. We look forward to formalizing a feedback / complaints procedure in the near future. This is to increase accountability and ensure that all concerns or comments from members are heard and responded to in a fair, predictable and reliable way. This will probably be over the next three to four months, but as I say, the code of conduct is done and that can be published immediately, but the complaints procedure will probably be linked or sorry, should the feedback procedure will be linked with the new website and it's just an opportunity as I say, so that anyone who wishes to raise an issue or to give feedback to the management committee can do that in a predictable way and there'll be a predictable way to respond, but it's also to take away the feeling that when a person receives feedback that it's targeted at that individual because everything will be responded to by the management committee as a whole rather than it being an individual. Most people communicate beautifully and professionally and some people don't and there have been some challenges and issues this year that we felt that we needed to make the structure for that to happen more robust as I say to support the people who serve the AHTA but also to support the people who are members of the AHTA, so I hope that that will be helpful moving forward.

Does anyone have anything else you wish to discuss? And I think we are done for seven minutes early, so. Well done everyone.

Yeah. So do I need to formally say that? Okay. Yeah. No, no, but Katie's asking do I need to say formally about me resigning. Okay. Well just it so, I mean it was alluded to earlier when in response to one of Tracy's questions, but as I say, I've had a terrible year basically and have personal health issues and have a child with problems and lots of appointments and issues and a husband who is quite near nervous breakdown because of all of that and have a financial thing that's happened to our family this year. So yeah, I can't do the next year of the term.

Tracy Clark

Oh, Hi Nicola. I wanted to thank you for your, um, your role as president with the association. I apologize for my attention to detail to the subcommittee appointments and that inadvertently caused this problem. I beg your pardon and I do thank you for your commitment to the association. Really greatly appreciated. Thank you.