



Presidents Chapter Report For 2009 Annual General Meeting

ANZBA President's Annual Report 2008

It is with a combination of sadness and pride that I hand over the reins to the incumbent President. I am saddened as my time has come to an end but I am proud of the achievements during my tenure. If the membership would indulge me, I would like to reflect on the significant achievements in the last 3 years, note where we are now and add my suggestions for the future. ANZBA is poised to become a major player in National Health and Prevention projects and the future is bright if we can pull together as a team and continue to capitalize on previous effort and projects that continue to improve burn care.

Disaster Preparedness and Management

Despite the groans from clinicians, burn mass casualty incidents are, in fact, the primary factor which brings us together as an organization and provides the platform, and profile, for lobbying at Commonwealth level. The ANZBA National Model of Burn Care (NMoBC) has now been developed and will be finalized at the Board meeting in Wellington. I hope that everyone in Australia and New Zealand recognizes this as the major step for burn patient advocacy that it is. Proposed in 2004, the current NMoBC supports the notion of a National Burn Network which could both oversee and underpin all health services who treat burn patients in our region. Where other country's standards obviously lack applicability, the ANZBA NMoBC is a significant step towards population specific, and region appropriate, standards for multi-disciplinary management of burn patients. In the short term, the next step is to have the ANZBA NMoBC recognized by the Commonwealth government, as was AUSBURNPLAN. Then, in the next 2 – 5 years develop the Australian and New Zealand Burn Care Standards for accreditation of burn care entities including a statewide burn service of excellence; a multi-disciplinary burn unit; burn care and, or stabilisation beds embedded in a trauma service and finally, a minor burn care facility. The next iteration of this document must also include detail on the minimum requirements of disaster preparedness education and burn service staffing (see below). Finally, I believe the only 'surefire' way to enhance clinician accountability and prevent the iatrogenic sub-optimal outcomes for burn patients is legislation. Every one of us has an anecdote to illustrate how poor treatment impacts negatively on post-burn outcomes.....

Education

One of the pillars of ANZBA's influence is education. ANZBA and its members are heavily involved in the education of professionals (local and international), pre-hospital clinicians as well as patients and the community. EMSB is obviously the flagship of this activity. Thanks to the Peter Maitz and his (ever increasing) merry band of faculty and coordinators, EMSB has been firmly established as an internationally renowned, well conducted and practical course. With this, the collaboration between ANZBA and Interplast is now solid and set to expand. Self maintaining EMSB franchises are established in UK, Netherlands and South Africa. Developing cells include Bangladesh, Malaysia, Vietnam and PNG. ANZBA supported EMSB education will continue in the smaller nations of the Pacific Rim and South East Asia as able. Finally, we must lobby, on the back of Commonwealth funding of EMSB for rural GP's, for continued support by the Government for burn care training and facilitate the understanding of the impact of prompt post-burn treatment on outcome.

Burn nurses have benefited greatly from Sheila Kavanagh and now, Jill Clausen's Postgraduate Burns Nursing Course. The flexible study package engages and enables students from around Australia and overseas. ANZBA has supported it each year since inception with the provision of a full tuition scholarship. This year the recipient was Stephanie Damong from PNG. I wish her the best of luck on behalf of all members and we thank the Flinders University for their support of Stephanie's place. I am sure ANZBA will continue to support this venture into the future. That said, I think it is well overdue for the ANZBA Burn Therapists to consider developing a similarly flexible postgraduate practical course. And, while EMSB clearly engages the medical fraternity, there is a significant challenge moving forward in developing career burn surgeon numbers. The

HOUSE Committee might consider the development of short 'recent post-graduate' courses for doctors or 'tapping into' medicine undergraduates with burn related Bachelor of Medical Science projects, for instance.

Thanks to the hard work of Siobhan Connolly and team, the ANZBA Prevention Committee took flight last year. The fledgling group have a huge task ahead of them – educating the community (and health care professionals) in burn injury prevention. This will necessitate many forms of education technique though with the upgrade of the Bi-National Burn Registry, the group will have some firm data to work with, in the next 6 months (I am assured). I am sure that this group will continue to develop into a strong force within and for ANZBA, particularly in light of the current Government focus on health prevention and the flavour of the top projects listed at the 2020 Summit in Canberra last year. In particular, it is time to all pull together to enact and support the national strategy for first aid and disaster survival (including burns) training in schools. This is possibly the major challenge for the new President. This venture must involve the Commonwealth Government, ANZBA and NGO's such as the Red Cross. Watch this space. Excellent outcomes have been achieved through the South Australian, NSW and WA school programmes. These need to be brought together without prejudice and with sufficient manpower eg Dr YES model, to achieve a national programme.

The ANZBA website is still a work in progress. It was upgraded recently but has a way to go before I would be happy to say that it is functioning well. We do have a new administrator who will hopefully convert the dream into reality. This is one of the projects which I predict will be an important source of education opportunities and coordination in the near future, if we keep our nose to the grindstone. When fully functional, the minimum that you should find on the website will be: local burn service contacts, activities and events; professional and community / public information and resources; education calendars eg EMSB, disaster preparedness courses; member's burn research projects and publication links; ANZBA's history chronicles; useful links to journals, burn organizations and support groups and discipline specific forums and resources.

ANZBA continues to support international visitor education in the form of the Guest Assistance Programme (GAP). The application and selection processes are now documented clearly and are more accountable. The recipients this year are Mrs Amara Perera (PT) and due to a very late change of plan, Mr Chinthaka Piyasena (OT) from Sri Lanka. Please make them welcome in Wellington (and Auckland). Don't forget, applications close in February for attendance at the ASM of each year. So, if you have international developing burn services that you are in contact or collaboration with, refer possible applicants to the ANZBA website sooner rather than later.

Lastly, while it was resolved ~2½ years ago, establishment of the ANZBA Travel Education Scholarship has not developed as I had hoped. Last year, the funds were made available opportunistically for two therapists to travel to the Burn Rehabilitation Conference in San Antonio. A fruitful venture as Tanja Healey and Frank Li are now co-authors on the subsequent JCBR publication. This year, the travel funds will be used to support the development of the relationship with Vietnam with Drs Chu Anh and Nguyen Nhu from Hanoi to attend EMSB and the ASM in Wellington. Though it was my remit, I have held off on the documentation of the application criteria for this award in order to assess the level of engagement by the membership. The apparent lack of enthusiasm for the ANZBA Conference Scholarships over the last 2 years leads me to believe that this is not how the membership wish to progress. So, I believe this signals an opportunity for re-development of the ANZBA Research Grant, in line with another pillar of ANZBA. The options in my mind include the return of the research seeding grant; a top-up scholarship for enrolled post-graduate clinical research and, or some form of partnership grant where ANZBA matches dollar for dollar to assist an ongoing project. For discussion at the Board meeting in Wellington.

Evidence Based Practice

The ANZBA Allied Health Guidelines were ratified in 2007 and are available for those who wish to access them on the website. These Guidelines are a current best evidence and clinical consensus document. In line with the development of burn service accreditation, the ensuing edition will focus on rating the evidence in order to progress towards measureable standards for burn care and post-burn outcome assessment. The burn nurses might also consider the task of updating the obsolete ANZBA Nursing Standards in order to prepare for Australian and New Zealand burn service accreditation. The ANZBA NMoBC, as previously noted, provides

consensus and best practice evidence for burn facilities and medical and allied services. It was noted with the development of the NMoBC that more detail was necessary with regard to adequate staffing levels for burn services. Thus, ANZBA supported Margaret McMahon to conduct a region-wide multi-disciplinary workforce survey in 2008. Margaret will be presenting the detailed report as ANZBA's guest this year in Wellington. This benchmarking information will be important for all burn services and should be viewed as a useful support in the case where staffing shortfalls needs to be addressed.

There is also a chance that ANZBA may revisit its own scientific publication to provide another option for dissemination of research and practical information. I think that there is 'space' for such a venture, particularly in light of Web 2.0 developments. The idea of the ANZBA Burns wikipedia may be ahead of its time but it will be where the 'kids' and university students are looking for information right now. Consider such an idea being the 'front of the wave' in terms of minimizing cost for greatest possible exposure of ANZBA documents, practical training and, or research evidence. We will hear more in Wellington.

Lastly, though not officially an ANZBA project, ANZBA members have made the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Online Burns Node possible. I would like to recognize the expert reference group members' contribution and thank those who have worked on the project to ensure its success. We will see a demonstration of the JBI Online services and information in Wellington. The evidence summaries developed through JBI will be integral to the ongoing development of the ANZBA NMoBC and discipline specific standards.

Research: Bi-National Burn Registry

The Bi-NBR is, I believe, the legacy of my tenure as President. It is yet to reach its full potential but the upgrade project is in the final stages with some exciting years ahead. After forging the two contracts between ANZBA and the funding partner, Julian Burton Burns Trust (JBBT), and ANZBA and Monash University Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, the project commenced in March 2008. With enthusiastic Steering and Reference Committee members, the progress was smoother than expected initially. Then, an opportunity to gain a heightened profile at Commonwealth Government level was grasped. The Australian Commission in Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQH) injected funds and extended the project to incorporate the development of quality indicators for the registry and the clinical processes it recorded. This slowed overall progress for a time but the project has now delivered all milestones and will exceed expectations before the conclusion of this phase, in March 2010. The registry web-based system went 'live', with training for those involved, in July this year. Please continue to feedback to the Monash team where you find difficulties or inconsistencies.

The future is bright for the Bi-NBR in development. The plan over the next 2 years or so, once the platform is running well with all burn services contributing, is to focus on publication of results and epidemiological reports in appropriate scientific and government forums. In this way, by the end of 2011, the aim is to have a sustainable, funded and maintained burn registry that burn services can confidently approach for high quality information to guide practice and prevention. Access to competitive grants is on the cards to support the registry and develop related research projects. I foresee, that we will use the Bi-NBR outputs as a means of benchmarking, developing improved standards of care and accountability and providing evidence to guide research. I also foresee the development of one button data extraction and a disappearance of double entry of data in the next 6 months.

I would like to acknowledge JBBT for their foresight and support of the upgrade project. It would not have been possible without their assistance. Similarly, I respect and acknowledge the hard work and effort from Peter Cameron, Heather Cleland and respective teams in Victoria. Last, but not least, thank you to all involved in the Reference, Steering and various working (quality) committees for your enthusiasm and responses. Again, the project could not have happened without your support.

Fiscal and Secretariat Matters

It has been a rollercoaster time with respect to the financial management of ANZBA. The organization remains in a good position with equivalent consolidated funds to 3 years ago. However, it is recognized that the real value of these assets have decreased over time, which is of some concern. That said, ANZBA does not have the same likelihood or extent of damage

related to a failed conference due to insurances and the increasing quality of the science presented at the ASM. This was originally the primary reason for maintaining these funds. To further improve the chances of success for an ANZBA conference by meeting certain standards and expectations, the Board have endorsed a new set of requirements for hosting an ANZBA conference. These will be available on the website. Lastly, to ameliorate the chances of conference disaster, the Board resolved to investigate the possibility of a single national or bi-national conference provider to improve the consistency of the 'ASM product'.

ANZBA now has a solid income stream from EMSB and this is likely to creep up over time despite the current global financial situation. A new income source has been realized in the last year due to copyright proceeds from the EMSB manual. The initial windfall was ~\$50K but it is unclear how much future proceeds will amount to, if any. Some of these funds may be initially re-invested to develop resources for languages other than English and, or upgrade the EMSB equipment library.

As to the Secretariat, we continue to be in a purple patch with Jillian Custance contracted to ANZBA 3 days per week as of early this year. Hopefully this has reduced the competition for Jillian's time which was impacting on her stress and ability to service ANZBA in her previous position. The move has reduced ANZBA's ongoing secretariat costs though it is likely with the expansion of EMSB, Jillian may extend her hours in due course. During the past couple of years, Jillian has updated the ANZBA Policies and Procedures manual which is the road map to running the organization. An important piece of documentation for new Board members (or those aspiring) to be familiar with.

Finally, I hope that Jillian's personal and health challenges are behind her now though I doubt that anyone would have noticed any change to the consistent, high level of service ANZBA continues to receive from Jillian. I thank her for her help and support during the past 3 years and I commend her executive and organizational prowess.

JBBT Initiatives

We will hear from the JBBT in Wellington. Once again, they have supported Burns Nursing Postgrad Scholarships, ANZBA conference travel and the Bi-NBR, apart from numerous local projects. Most burn services would have been visited, or contacted, by a Trust representative to look at the status and development of community prevention programmes. I think that JBBT will play increasing support and coordination roles in this area both at local level and in national projects. They are likely to announce a number of new ventures in Wellington which will be exciting for ANZBA members.

In summary, if I had my time again, I am sure there were issues I could have handled better. However, I hope that the new ANZBA era is one where we all continue to move forward as a team with a unified purpose, accountability and reduced silo-ism for the good of all past, present and future burn patients. I wish the new President all the best of luck and I will support them, as their corporate memory, moving forward.

See you in Wellington. No, we will not be discussing the rugby.

Cheers Dale

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