



The Australian Society for Medical Research NEWSLETTER

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March 1998

Ninety-eight is going to be a big year for medical research in Australia. It's crunch time! The NHMRC budget has maxed out, no longer able to meet the real costs of medical research in this country. The cut-off for project grants has crept to 8.0 and if the special equipment allocation was not absorbed into the project grants area the cut-off would have been 8.1; this would have translated into seventy-

odd positions lost. Our universities are re-inventing Joe Heller's "Catch 22" on just about every front of higher education - fees, more fees, less research time, larger teaching

loads. Enterprise Bargaining has been delivered on the university sector but who pays for it??? Two obvious, but short sighted solutions have been flagged - shortening staff contracts and cutting into research budgets. Lets make no bones about where the solution lies - *Federal Government*. It needs to increase the allocation from the health budget to medical research to a real FIVE PERCENT. Michael Wooldridge has been most supportive of medical research to date BUT Messers Howard and Costello need to understand that first world health care requires research excellence and it costs.....
Editor Rob Ramsay

**Its An Election Year
MRW Goes National
Enterprise Bargaining
Australia Day Honours
Women In Science
State Reports
NSC 1997**



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Australia Day Honours Medical Researchers

Prominent Australian medical researchers were recognized this year for their service and achievements. ASMR joins the rest of Australia in congratulating them.

AC Professor Grant Sutherland - Science
AO Professor John Funder - Medicine (Past President ASMR)
Professor Hubert Withers (LA. USA)-Cancer Research
AM Prof. Bruce Armstrong NSW; Prof Barry Boettcher NSW
Prof William Cumming NSW; Ass Prof John Duggan NSW

Funder



Steve Wesselingh:-President's Report

ASMR is extremely pleased to congratulate a current member and Past President, Prof John Funder, on his Australia Day Honour. This recognised his achievements in medical research which were the result of a long period of dedication and hard work. However, can our current cohort of science and medical graduates be expected to aspire to similar achievements? The present environment does not encourage graduates into a medical research career. Increases in fees, projected cuts in NHMRC funding, decreases in R&D support, all create disincentives to developing a career in medical research. One of ASMR's prime aims is to improve research funding to create an environment that encourages researchers to aspire to achievements exemplified by Prof Funder. In 1998 ASMR has two major projects to help achieve this aim.

Funding Campaign:- The 1997 Federal Budget saw small increases in allocations to grant schemes. However researchers are worried by the NHMRC forward budget estimates suggesting a 25% decline over the next 3 years. In response ASMR requested financial support from its affiliates to mount a media and lobbying campaign.

ASMR raised more than \$50,000 from our very supportive affiliates, and has commenced the campaign to convince the Federal Government to increase medical research funding to **5% of total health care spending**. We will do everything we can to convince the Government to fund NHMRC at a level that that will enable it to do its job. A job the Australian public expect and demand of a first world medical advisory and research funding body. **NHMRC should be seen as the jewel in the Government's medical research crown. This clearly requires a significant increase in funding. We seriously believe the doubling of NHMRC funding in real terms is essential.** Since the last quarter of 1997 the focus of the campaign has been on representatives of ASMR to meet with Government Ministers to convince them prior to the May budget. The campaign will now concentrate on bringing this issue to the attention of the public via the media. We should not forget that this budget round leads up to the next federal election. This is an absolutely crucial time for us to get our message across.

Medical Research Week:- ASMR is running a nationally coordinated MRW. MRW 1998 is set to be a very high profile event with a national public lecture tour by the 1996 Nobel Prize winner Prof Peter Doherty. This is an excellent opportunity to highlight the great achievements of Australian medical research. We have an outstanding advocate for the need to increase funding in Prof. Doherty. He will meet the public in 6 States to press home this message.

Enterprise bargaining:- EB outcomes are a major concern to medical researchers. Inadequate representation of some employee groups and lack of provisions of funds by organisation such as NHMRC to cover the costs of the new agreements are at issue. ASMR's response has been to facilitate communication between researchers from different work places. Communication is critical since it is the central tenet of EB that each employer and their employees must undergo separate negotiations. A successful outcome to ASMR's campaign for an increase to medical research funding will obviously allow organisations such as the NHMRC's to fund the new agreements. Nevertheless, the introduction of different EB agreements will clearly create even greater employment disparities. This certainly weakens our nation's capacity to perform research in a fair and coordinated fashion.

1998 is a very important year:- ASMR is optimistically looking forward to this year when we will increase the profile for medical research to an unprecedented level and use the next election to push for a commitment by the Federal Coalition and Labor parties for an increase in research funding to a realistic 5% of the health care budget.

The 1997 National Scientific Conference in Adelaide was a resounding success in more ways than one thanks to the conference sponsors and the tireless efforts of the members of the local organising committee. Invited speakers (7 international and 34 Australian) highlighted some prime examples of exceptional medical research.

National Scientific Conference

The broad spectrum of science presented provided sessions of specific interest for each delegate, but also gave some valuable insights into fields of research endeavour that are outside our own increasingly specialised foci. Some interesting highlights were Keith Godfrey's account of the relationship between birth weight and various adult diseases and John Chandler reminded us that regardless of the pressure to publish we must ensure that all researchers adhere to the highest standards of integrity.

One of the most successful aspects was the media coverage the conference received. There was daily local and national radio, television and print media coverage. Of particular note was a 10 minute interview with Keith Godfrey that was broadcast nationally by Channel 9. There were interviews with the President, Kieran Scott, and President-elect, Steve Wesselingh, broadcast on national radio and television about issues of political importance to medical researchers.

The recipient of the Champion-Ma-Playoust Award for 1997 was Matthew Bidgood from St Vincent's Hospital NSW. AMRAD-ASMR Young Investigator awards were presented to: Justine Smith, SA; Daniel Ng, Vic; Claire Ravenhall, Vic; Brian Stein, SA; Naomi Rogers, SA; Shawn Rowe, SA; Philip Gregory, SA; Lisa Butler, SA; Cameron van den Heuvel, SA; Christina Bursill, SA. The NARF Award went to Gino Vairo of WEHI, Victoria. There were 22 ASMR Travel Awards granted to students.



There were plenty of opportunities for our 300 delegates (a significant increase in numbers over recent years) to rekindle old friendships and make a few new ones at various social functions. These kicked off with a welcome reception in the bright and airy atmosphere of the quaint old Jolly's Boathouse overlooking the River Torrens. Pearls of wisdom from Past Presidents, John Finlay-Jones and John McDougal and our MC and last minute replacement for Michael Hutchence, Rob Ramsay, provided plenty of material for after-dinner discussion at the Conference Dinner at the Grand Hotel, Glenelg.

The trade exhibitors were pleased with the response to their displays, although the size of the hall made attendances appear low. Conferences such as this

rely heavily on income from trade exhibitors, so it is important that they feel they are getting value for their money. In Hobart this year make them happier by forcing them to talk until they're hoarse.

The success of the conference was in no small way due to the generosity of a variety of sponsors. The major sponsors of the conference were: CSL Limited, AMRAD Pharmacia Biotech, Parke-Davis/Pfizer, Roche Products, Genzyme and The Centre for Sleep Research at the University of SA. There was also invaluable sponsorship received from sources too numerous to mention here.

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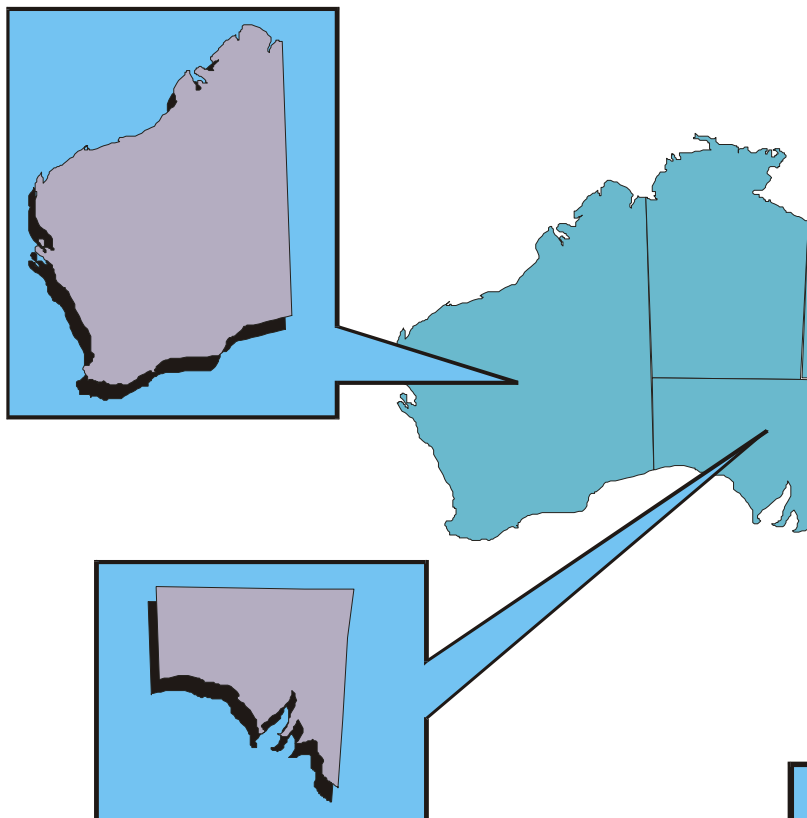
Members of the Local Organising Committee were Jacky Bentel, Moira Clay, Bill Kalionis, David Leavesley, Peter O'Loughlin (Convenor), Sarah Robertson, Joe Simonetta and Steve Wesselingh.

**Peter O'Loughlin,
NSC Convenor
1997**

Our activities over the last quarter have been focused on the issue of National Health Research Funding. We have had meetings with several WA Federal politicians including Ms. Ricky Johnston (Federal Member for Canning), Sen. Campbell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Minister for Health), Mr. Kym Beazley (Leader of the Opposition). Furthermore, at a meeting convened by Sen. Bishop, we had the opportunity to discuss matters with Senator Forshaw (Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Minister for Health) and Mr. Michael Latham (Shadow Minister for Education and Youth Affairs). Other marginal WA Seats, or those represented by a member with a portfolio relevant to health research are being approached. We have been welcomed and generally there has been an appreciation of the difficulties those in the research community are presently experiencing. MRW plans are under way and will be quite different from recent years. There will be a research/industry forum held with the Scientific Suppliers Association, who will be showing us their wares at heavily discounted prices. Public forums on topical issues will be held in evenings to accommodate the wider community, there will be a 2 day public display held in the Perth CBD and we have introduced a secondary schools competition. Finally, WA attendance at the NSC has been rather poor and we are investigating ways in which student attendance might be encouraged. Incentives for students presenting original data are proposed and those interested should contact an ASMR representative. **John Mamo**

In March 1997, a forum was convened by the SA Health Commission (SAHC) to provide strategies for improving the support of biomedical research. The Forum's findings have been released recommending various actions including cuts to infrastructure funding, recognising the loss of medical research expertise from SA, developing a coordinated approach to commercialisation of medical research, restructuring of medical scientists awards in line with their peers in the academic sector, and establishing targeted research fellowships for new graduates. The SAHC supported the Forums recommendations and has nominated Dr Michael Jelly (Chief Medical Officer) to liase with SA medical researchers. An ASMR SA Branch committee has been formed; chair - Doug Brooks (Women's and Children's Hospital), deputy chair - Kathy Gatford (U of A), treasurer - Llew Spargo (Hanson Centre for Cancer Research), secretary - Sarah Hudson (U of A). The committee is looking forward to a very busy year encompassing MRW activities including the Peter Doherty tour, and quarterly workshops. Sonia Schulz is the convenor of the MRW Scientific Meeting, to be held on Friday June 5 at the Orphanage Teacher's Centre. Kathy Gatford and Naomi Rogers are organising the MRW Dinner. The first workshop for 1998 will be held in mid-March; the keynote speaker will be Prof Margaret Jones from Michigan State University. **Moir Clay**

STATE REPORTS



BIostatistical EXPERTISE IN AUSTRALIA

John Carltn and colleagues pointed out recently that there is a dearth of trained biostatisticians in Australia, and proposed the establishment of scholarships for Honours students in biostatistics plus work experience in institutions funded by NHMRC's Public Health Education and Research Programs (Carltn *et al.*, *Australasian Epidemiologist* 1997; 4, 12-13). The emphasis in this article was on the sort of biostatistics practised in the field of epidemiology. However, it has seemed to me for some time that the problem is as great, if not greater, in the laboratory and clinical biomedical sciences. That is it is well-nigh impossible to get authoritative advice on the rather special forms of statistical analysis used in these disciplines, where experimental groups are usually very small and are acquired by randomization rather than by random sampling from defined populations. I am also bothered by the continuing high prevalence of flaws in statistical analyses and presentation of outcomes in even high-class biomedical journals. I have some ideas on how the situations described above might be improved, but before mounting a campaign I would welcome the comments and suggestions of readers. If you have some, would you please send them to me by Fax: (03) 9388 3137 or Email: JohnLudbrook@Bigpond.com **John Ludbrook**

The Qld state committee is well on the way to organising all the events for MRW. It will be the most successful yet as we will be building on last years Health and Medical Research Expo. Expo 1998 will be at the Science Centre in George Street on Sunday 31st May and Monday 1st June. The event will be opened by Peter Doherty where he will also present awards to the winners of the AMRAD primary school poster competition. Admission is free and many health and medical research organisations will be represented. This central

location will ensure the event is highly accessible to the general public. The Expo is convened by Nigel McMillan and Lindsay Jordan with assistance from Michelle Lagana (QIMR). Once again, thanks to the generous sponsorship of AMP Queensland, the AMP Biomedical Research Awards will be contested. Postgraduate and early post-doctoral researchers will be asked to submit abstracts for these awards. Three finalists in each category will be invited to present their work to the public at the Bancroft auditorium, QIMR, on Tuesday 2nd June. All eligible researchers are encouraged to submit abstracts. The convenor of the awards is Des Richardson. The dinner will be on Thurs 4th of June at the Customs House. **Judy Halliday**



The NSW branch is busy organizing activities for MRW. The highlight of MRW will be a public lecture by Peter Doherty at the Sydney Town Hall on June 3rd and his presentation of prizes to the winners of the AMRAD poster competition. Our usual MRW activities have not been forgotten. Due to the Doherty visit on the Wednesday, the Scientific Meeting will be held on Monday June 1st and this year's venue, the Australian Museum, should add a novel atmosphere to the scientific presentations. On Thursday, June 4th the seminars for the school's career program will be held at the State Library of NSW. Medical research in the regional areas continues to gain strength and the branch is delighted to be in contact with Libby Rodgers from the Hunter Region. Libby and other members of the ASMR are working diligently to increase the profile of medical research in their Region and is enthusiastic about the upcoming formation of the Hunter Medical Research Institute. **Kathryn Quinn**

MRW will be held once again at Melbourne Central. The AMGEN Award and media luncheon, The Premier's Award, Medical Research Careers for Secondary and Tertiary Students and the MRW dinner will be featured. AMRAD is our major sponsor with whom we are introducing a new initiative, " the ASMR Journalist

Award" which will be conducted as part of the Doherty Tour. The Award will be made to the journalist for the best medical research story published this year in Victoria (print or electronic media). To increase the exposure of Medical Research to secondary students, ASMR will bus students from country areas to Melbourne Central to view the exhibition. The exhibition will run the entire week (Sunday to Friday) and Institutes or Departments can elect to have space for the Sunday to Tuesday or Wednesday to Friday. Exhibition space can be booked through Mike Pickford at ASN (tel 0359 832 400, fax 0359 832 223). **Matt Gillespie and Rob Ramsay**

MRW planning got under way in Jan. The Peter Doherty Tour has generated a lot of enthusiasm, and our informal contacts suggest the Primary School Poster competition will be well received by the Education Department. MRW will be used as a vehicle to promote the re-establishment of an active branch structure, which has been lacking in Tasmania for a while. Recent concerns, such as the refusal of both Universities and the NHMRC to fund salary increases resulting from enterprise bargaining agreements has hit regional universities particularly hard. Direct State support of medical research is essentially non-existent at the U of T and now a successful NHMRC grant may now be more of a financial liability due to unmet costs! The only way we can remedy this situation is to become much more active at the state level. Finally, the NSC, to be held in Hobart Nov 22nd-25th, is coming along well with an exciting program on offer; watch this space! **Bruce Lyons**

New Initiatives for Women Scientists

On the 11th December last year the Women's Initiative Group (WIG) hosted Christmas drinks at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI). The evening was well attended by students, support staff, post doctoral scientists, lab heads and institute directors from member Institutes of the CRC for Cellular Growth Factors and other research institutes in Melbourne.

Senator Judith Troeth, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Primary Industries and Energy spoke about her efforts at raising a family of five children whilst maintaining a career in a small country town before going into politics.

She is actively involved in one of the WIG initiatives to provide funding via the NHMRC for a post doctoral fellowship for women wishing to return to a scientific career following maternity leave.

WIG was established by the Education and Training sub-Committee of the CRC for Cellular Growth Factors (CRC-CGF) in 1995, involving participating Institutes (WEHI, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, CSIRO Molecular Chemistry, Biomolecular Research Institute and AMRAD Operations Limited). The aim was to explore ways women in science could optimise their careers focusing on practical ways of solving common problems for women with young families. Clare Scott, a PhD student in the CRC-CGF and presently Chair of WIG, summarised WIG activities in 1997.

These included a seminar series, "Women in Science," which has highlighted the major contributions made by women scientists. Speakers have included Prof Mina Bissell, President of the American Society of Cell Biology and Dr Kate White who described the current contribution of women in academia in Australia.

Further talks are planned for 1998, beginning in Feb with Dr Elaine Dzierzak, an international speaker, who will discuss facets of her career in haemopoiesis. One major focus has been on improving communication skills. A course on communication offered to CRC members has now been completed by scientists.

Career-building seminars also examined the way individuals could identify and improve their skills in the work place.

A maternity leave proposal has been drafted including a variety of practical ways for women to maintain effective contact with their laboratory during maternity leave. The suggestions include financial help with childcare to enable women to attend key seminars

and meetings, provision of critical scientific literature, assistance with home computing, as well as advice and information to facilitate the transition back to full time work. The proposals are of minor cost and yet of great benefit to women. WIG has also hosted an ongoing series of discussion groups to examine the non-family related issues confronting women in the workplace.

WIG's achievements over the last few years have been many, and provide a model for positive ways in which changes in the scientific workplace can allow women to achieve their potential and to pursue a rewarding scientific career whilst meeting the demands of motherhood. The issues for young women trying to become established in science are common throughout Australia, and the sensible initiatives of WIG have fostered a positive attitude and increased awareness in four Australian research institutes. Their experiences offer an innovative role model to guide other institutes establishing similar programs.

Michelle Zorbas & Claire Scott



The 1998 Annual Scientific Meeting of the Southern Health Care Network.
"Current issues in Clinical Endocrinology and Internal Medicine"
Thursday 19th and Friday 20th November 1998 Monash Medical Centre, Clayton, Victoria
A meeting to mark the retirement of
Professor Henry Burger, Director of Endocrinology 1969-1998

The meeting will feature prominent national and international speakers who will discuss a wide range of topics relevant to the practice of clinical endocrinology and medicine. The emphasis will be on current issues and the challenges facing these disciplines in the 21st Century



Warwick Anderson: where next NHMRC

Medical research is about change - changing knowledge, techniques, health. One change is the merger of the previous MRC and the PHRDC into a new committee, the Research Committee [Public Health and Medical]. This merger means that NHMRC can now fund research in a seamless way across disciplines and research approaches. The merger has been of concern to some in both public health and biomedical research. It is the responsibility of the new Research Committee to ensure that the best features of the previous committees are not lost, and to allow new research initiatives. We

can now develop a new funding mechanism; "Health Research Networks".

These networks will link multidisciplinary research teams to address questions in areas of major health need. Public health research is already affected by the rapid growth of knowledge about the regulation of gene expression and human genetics. In turn, biomedical researchers know that their basic findings require translation into practice. It is hoped that biomedical, clinical and public health researchers, and those interested in health care delivery will form multidisciplinary networks. Grant applications will be investigator-initiated, but may be called for in specific areas. Under consideration are some of the current priority areas (cardiovascular health, cancer control, injury prevention and reduction, mental health, and diabetes mellitus), and the existing NHMRC Special Initiative areas (eg Aboriginal health, prostate cancer, alcohol and substance abuse, nursing and allied health, injury, schizophrenia and dementia).

The Research Committee will promote a stronger Fellowship stream for researchers working in clinical and public health. The different training and career paths of clinicians and public health researchers can be a disadvantage in the highly competitive nature of the current Fellowship scheme. If these investigators continue to undertake their professional duties, their research productivity may be disadvantaged compared to full-time researchers. Accordingly, the Research Committee is investigating the possibility of introducing fractional Practitioner Fellowships, in partnership with health authorities.

The NHMRC currently supports clinical trials with \$5M. Clinical trials are a key element of health research, but they do not fall easily into a 3 year project grant format. The Program Grants Committee is formulating new policy in this area, considering issues such as the ongoing surveillance of trial success and the question of partnership support with other organisations for specific trials.

In 1997, there were over 1,600 applications for project grants in all categories (biomedical, clinical, preventive, public health and health services research). There were 23 RGICs, 18 program reviews and 4 reviews of block-funded institutes; the Training Awards Committee examined more than 450 applications. Each year, courier trucks pull up outside the Albemarle building in Woden and disgorge tons of paper products containing our carefully crafted grant applications. Then, using a pigeonhole system only slightly post-dating Dickens, the office of the NHMRC turns this paper into electronics (except the research plan and publications) and the copies are dispersed into piles for assessors, RGICs, and so on. **All has changed because GRANTNET is here!** Leone Moffat and her group of contractors have constructed the electronic grant submission process. It is not totally bug free, but a very large amount of work and consultation has gone into making sure that we have a good, robust system which, in the first instance, looks similar to the old form. As many of you now know grants are assembled on-line through the internet, using secure mechanisms. The Research Plan Section is prepared on your own computer and then electronically submitted to GRANTNET which you can visit on the NHMRC home page.

Prince Henry's Institute of
Medical Research
6th Annual Symposium on
*"Hormones and Women's
Health-The Reproductive Years"*
14-16 October 1998; Contact
03 9686 0899

Members of the Research Committee
Prof Warwick P Anderson (*Chair*)
Prof Kerin O'Dea (*Deputy Chair*)
Prof Val Alder (*Chair: Training Awards Committee*)
Prof Robert Baxter
Assoc Prof John Finlay-Jones (*Chair: Fellowship
Committee*) Mr George van der Heide,
Prof Stephen Holdsworth (*Chair:
Program Grants Interview Committee*)
Prof John Mattick, Prof Fred Mendelsohn,
Prof Nic Nicola, Assoc Prof Terry Nolan,
Prof Alan Pettigrew, Dr Sally Redman, Dr David Roder
Prof Tania Sorrell (*Chair: Projects Grants Committee*)
Prof Ronald Trent

Finally, I am committed to ensuring that researchers are provided with as much information as possible about policy issues. I will continue to post Chairman's newsletters on the NHMRC home page, and we will be seeking feedback on specific policies, which will also be posted. We genuinely seek your e-mail comments on the newsletter and policy, or on any other matter related to NHMRC funding. **Warwick Anderson**

NEW MEMBERS 14/8/97 - 27/1/98

Overseas

Dr Tania De Koning-Ward

NSW

Ms Regina Cramer
Dr Frances McNamara
Dr H Cai
Ms Sharon Leong
Jacky Arkell
Professor Lesley Barclay
Dr Dirk Van Helden

Vic

Dr Melissa Robbie
Dr Annet Hammacher
Miss Christine Nakhla
Miss A Caragounis
Miss Georgia Giannakis
Ms Catherine Lenaghan
Dr Sylvia Metcalfe
Dr Deon Venter
Dr Heather Wheat
Mrs Melinda Munns
Dr Joerg Heierhorst
Miss Joseline Ojaimi
Ms Anita Quigley
Mrs Sally Roufail

Qld

Dr J Garcia-Aragon
Professor K Ellem
Dr Amanda Spurdle
Dr J Curlewis

SA

Mr Max Meany
Ms Christina Bursill
Ms Alison Morris
Mr Adam Elshaug
Ms Patricia Grant
Dr David Kennaway
Mr Andrew Potter
Mr Claire Roberts
Dr Brian Stein
Miss Athena Voultsios
Ms Sarah Blunden
Mr Adam Fletcher
Nicole Lamond
Ms Jeanette McMahon
Ms Kathryn Reid
Ms Jennifer Roy
Ms Andrea Varga
Mr Paul Bogacki
Ms Eleanor Farrall
Miss Kim Hemsley
Dr Justine Smith
Mr Christian Toouli

WA

Prof Assen Jablensky
Dr Devanshi Seth
Mr Janni Mirosevich
Mr Nikolajs Zeps
Dr N Davis-Pointer

Tas

Dr Katherine Marsden
Mr Michael Rist

Affiliate

Australian Atherosclerosis Society

Affiliate Member Organizations

Arthritis Foundation of Aust
Aust Kidney Foundation
National Heart Foundation of Aust
Ntnl. Multiple Sclerosis Soc
Muscular Dystrophy Assoc of SA Inc
Comm Hlth & Anti-Tuberculosis Assoc
Aust Cystic Fibrosis Assoc
Haemophilia Foundation of Aust
Juvenile Diabetes Fndn of Aust
Biota Holdings Ltd
Bristol-Myers Squibb Pharm. Pty Ltd
C S L Biosciences
C S L Ltd
Eli Lilly Aust Pty Ltd
Johnson & Johnson Rsh Pty Ltd
Pfizer Pty Ltd
Roche Products Pty Ltd
Servier Laboratories (Aust) Pty Ltd
Amrad Pharmacia Biotech
Assoc of Aust Medical Research Institutes
Australasian Assoc of Clinical Biochemists
Australasian Menopause Society
Australasian Soc for Free Radical Research
Australasian Soc for HIV Medicine Inc
Australasian Soc for Immunology
Australasian Soc for Infectious Diseases
Australasian Soc for the Study of Hypertension in Pregnancy
Australasian Soc of Blood Transfusion
Australasian Soc of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists
Australasian Soc of Clinical Immunology and Allergy
Aust and New Zealand Bone & Mineral Soc
Aust and New Zealand Soc for Cell & Developmental Biology
Aust and New Zealand Soc of Nephrology
Aust Association of Neurologists
Aust Diabetes Soc
Aust Neuroscience Soc
Aust Physiological and Pharmacological Soc
Aust Rheumatology Assoc
Aust Soc for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Aust Soc for Psychiatric Research
Aust Soc for Reproductive Biology
Aust Soc for the Study of Obesity
Cardiac Soc of Aust and New Zealand
Clinical Oncology Soc of Aust
Endocrine Soc of Aust
Fertility Soc of Aust
Gastroenterological Soc of Aust
Haematology Soc of Aust
High Blood Pressure Research Council of Aust
Human Genetics Soc of Australasia
Paediatric Research Soc of Aust
Perinatal Society of ANZ
Thoracic Society of Aust and New Zealand
Transplantation Society of Aust and New Zealand
Australian Atherosclerosis Soc

Membership Report

This month final reminders have been sent out to unfinancial members who total just under 20% of our membership. With an election coming any day we need your support and that of your colleagues so please renew ASAP.

Since we are continuing to expand our public and political awareness campaigns to provide better service to our membership it is in your interests to maintain your contacts with the Society. ASMR is the most effective voice to take medical research issues to the forefront of political notice. **Carol Armour**

Finance Report

The finances of the Society are under constant pressure from an ever increasing number of activities being undertaken by the ASMR. There have not been parallel increases in our regular sources of income, that is, membership subscriptions (ordinary, affiliate and supporting) and profits from the National Scientific Conference. It is imperative that all members endeavour to make subscription payments without delay following receipt of 1998/99 subscription renewal notices in April. It is also important that members who are not financial for the current year pay their subscriptions now. The activities of the Society benefit all medical researchers in Australia, so encourage your colleagues to become members. Membership subscriptions are the only way to maintain the reserve funds needed for the Society to function efficiently. Recently we embarked upon other financing arrangements for new activities. For instance, we have generated support for major new initiatives such as the current medical research funding campaign by targeted one-off funding strategies. The campaign is being supported by generous donations from: *Australian Menopause Society, National Heart Foundation, National Association of Research Fellows, Faculty of Health Sciences Uni Tasmania, Faculty of Medicine Uni Melbourne, Australian Physiology & Pharmacology Society, ASMR NSW Branch, ASMR Vic Branch, Australian Society for Experimental Pharmacology & Toxicology, Australian College of Emergency Medicine, Scientific Suppliers Association of Australia, Australian & New Zealand Society of Nephrology, Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, Uni of Western Australia, Health Sciences Uni of Sydney, Faculty of Medicine Uni Sydney, High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia, Australian Association of Neurologists, Endocrine Society of Australia, Australian Society for Reproductive Biology, and Society for Free Radical Research.* Funds received so far total \$49,500.

Peter O'Loughlin

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