



November/December 2009

**THE INJURED NURSES
SUPPORT GROUP**

PATRON: JUDITH DURHAM, OAM

Best Wishes and Thanks

I wish Members all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

Also thanks to all in the INSG and the ANF who contributed to a successful 2009 for the INSG.

This is the final INSG Newsletter for 2009.

Our first 2010 meeting will be at 11am on Tuesday, 16 February.

INSG November 2009 Meeting

The details for this meeting are:

Date: Tuesday, 17 November 2009
Time: 11.00am
Location: 2nd Floor Boardroom, ANF House, 540 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Member review of the INSG

December 2009 Meeting

The details for our final INSG meeting for 2009 are:

Day: Tuesday
Date: 15 December
Time: 11.00am
Location: ANF House, 540 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Member Christmas Function

I will be there at 10.45am so that members can raise matters with me prior to the meetings.

INSG Committee

The INSG Committee will discuss the 2010 INSG program at its 15 December meeting.

Postal address: ANF (Vic Branch) Box 12600 A'Beckett Street PO, MELBOURNE VIC 8006
SUPPORTING INJURED NURSES ♦ PAIN & INJURY MANAGEMENT
♦ RETURN TO WORK PROGRAMS ♦ WORKCOVER ♦ MEDICO-LEGAL ISSUES
♦ RETRAINING/REHABILITATION ♦ INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS

INSG October 2009 Workshop

Members appreciated the October workshop with Laurie Lacy.

Laurie is a physiotherapist, yoga teacher and ergonomist. He provided useful information and advice to members.

ANF (Vic Branch) Stop the Violence Conference

The ANF (Vic Branch) *Stop the Violence Conference* held on Thursday, 17 September 2009 explored 'Zero Tolerance, Action Not Just Words'. The keynote speaker was Professor Duncan Chappell, Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention at the University of Wollongong.

Workers' Compensation Legislation

The Victorian Government is finalising legislation for new workers' compensation arrangements. The Stakeholder Reference Group examining the draft legislation held its final meeting in October 2009.

The Government decisions follow the Hanks Review of Victorian Workers' Compensation. The Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC), ANF (Vic Branch) and the Injured Nurses Support Group (INSG) made submissions to Mr Hanks. The INSG supported the VTHC's Fix WorkCover campaign.

The Government announced its intentions in June 2009 which improved on the Hanks recommendations. The majority of the changes will come into effect for injuries occurring after commencement of the new legislation in 2010. Peter Moylan reported on the changes at our September meeting.

The VTHC has indicated to the Government that it still has concerns with:

1. Eligibility for compensation for stress
2. Return to work
3. Dispute resolution.

The VTHC concerns include the Government's intention to add a further five preclusions to stop workers claiming for stress injuries caused by 'reasonable' management actions on:

- o Appraisal of workers' performance
- o Counselling a worker
- o Suspension or the standing down of a worker
- o Training a worker for employment
- o Investigating a breach of a Code of Conduct or misconduct.

Travel for Medical Treatment and Rehabilitation

In October, I wrote Greg Tweedly, Chief Executive WorkSafe, on behalf of the INSG requesting an increase in the reimbursement for private vehicle travel to and from medical treatment or rehabilitation.

WorkSafe compensates an injured worker 30 cents per kilometre, which is significantly less than the Australian Tax Office (ATO) allowance for work related car expenses.

The Nurses Return to Work in Hospitals Project

In 2007 WorkSafe approved the ANF (Vic Branch) application for funding under its Return to Work Fund Initiative for a three year project to identify barriers to and factors for successful return to work of nurses injured or ill through work in hospitals.

This Project was conducted by the ANF in partnership with the Victorian Hospitals' Industry Association (VHIA), and with the support of the INSG and Dr Helen Sutcliffe. Five hospitals (three metropolitan and two regional / rural) also participated in a pilot program and case studies as a part of the Project.

The free *"Return to Work – Let's Talk About It!"* Conferences are open to anyone who is involved in, or affected by, return to work of injured / ill nurses and will be held in:

Monday, 16 November 2009

ANF House Conference Centre
540 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, Victoria

Monday, 23 November 2009

The Mercure Ballarat Hotel and Convention Centre, 613 Main Road, Ballarat, Victoria

I have been a member of the Steering Committee for the Project and will make a presentation at these Conferences.

All INSG members have received a copy of the brochure, which included the registration form.

As numbers are strictly limited, with the Melbourne seminar close to capacity, if you wish to attend one of these conferences you **MUST** register either by online registration at www.anfvic.asn.au/calendar or by returning the completed registration form to Carole de Greenlaw ANF (Vic Branch) OHS Unit.

Victorian Nurses Health Program (VNHP)

Since August 2006, the VNHP has been providing a professional discreet program for nurses, midwives and students of nursing and midwifery who have health issues relating to their drug and alcohol use and / or mental health concerns. The Program is funded by the Nurses Board of Victoria (NBV) through registration and operates as an independent entity overseen by a Board of Directors,

The VNHP offers information, referral services, individual sessions, support groups, screening for mental health issues and case management for those with substance use concerns.

The VNHP has appointed Natalie Spencer in the new role of Rural Case Manager. Natalie is a Division 3 nurse with a background in the mental health and alcohol and other drug fields.

The VNHP Rural and Regional service commended in early October 2009 in Ballarat, Shepparton and Traralgon.

The VNHP can be contacted Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm on 9415 7551 or e-mail can be sent via their website www.vnhp.org.au

National OHS Laws

Comments closed on Monday, 9 November 2009 on the draft model Safety Act to replace the Victorian OHS Act.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC) are seeking improvements to the draft legislation.

The VTHC held a rally on 28 October 2009 outside the Annual VTHC Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) Conference. The VTHC's concerns include those about the election, training and assistance for HSRs.

Commonwealth and State Ministers are due to decide on the content of the new National OHS laws on 8 December 2009.

The new law will come into force by the end of 2011. Information is available from the VTHC website www.vthc.org.au

INSG Webpage/Newsletter

The INSG Webpage with details of upcoming meetings, the INSG membership application form, newsletters and contacts for members is at www.anfvic.asn.au/sigs

Contact Karen or Annie

1300 760 602 (Monday to Friday 10:00am – 5:00pm)

This is the number for INSG members. The landline caller cost is the local call cost. Mobile charges depend on the mobile contract

Regards

Karen