



SIGNificance

Issue 8

December 2011



Message from the Editor

It's that time of year again when things are winding up and the festive season is upon us. Some lucky members are looking forward to leave and others, probably most, will carry on working right through Christmas and New Year. By and large the public has no idea of the dedication and hard work that Aged Care staff put in day after day and on special days when others are enjoying holidays and family time. It's this sort of commitment to caring for our elders that is commendable and needs to be celebrated.

So here's to each of you, a toast to your tireless enthusiasm and efforts to make a difference to those in your care.

On Monday, 28 November 2011 ACNSIG held its AGM, however with a poor attendance. This was mainly due to members working that day. It is always difficult to find a time that suits members who are shift workers. This is further compounded by the problem of swapping shifts as often there is not enough staff to swap with. As a result the positions of President (Chair) and Treasurer remain vacant. An Extraordinary meeting will be held in the New Year to elect the new executive.

I urge you to take note of the Nomination forms and Membership Renewal forms that arrive with this Newsletter.

If these positions are not filled, this group will have to go into abeyance and possibly fold.

This would be a terrible shame given the progress we have made together with ANF (Vic Branch) in these past few years. In the meantime, you can assist the BWC Campaign by emailing Prime Minister

Julia Gillard to tell her that urgent action is needed to make Budget 2012 the aged care budget. Send your message at www.tiny.cc/emailpm

As outgoing Chairperson it's time for me to say thank you, firstly to my colleagues on the executive:

Swa Sridharan (Secretary 2010)

Lilian Rivero (Treasurer 2010)

Helen Lavery (Treasurer 2011)

Lorraine Andrew (Secretary 2011).

Their support and that of members who regularly attended meetings, who sent in comments and responded to calls for their presence at campaign functions made my tenure extremely interesting. I have learnt a lot over the years of being involved in the ACNSIG, especially from our Professional Officers and supporters at the ANF.

I'd like to sincerely thank Pip Carew, Mark Staaf, Catherine Hutchings, Carole de Greenlaw and Vanessa Standfield for their friendly advice and assistance. They were always ready to help in whatever way was required.

In this final issue for the year, you will find reports from the Chair, the Secretary and a summary of our financial position.

WISHING EACH OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES BLESSINGS OF THE SEASON AND A MARVELLOUS START TO THE NEW YEAR

Erica Kurec

AGED CARE NURSES

Special Interest Group ANF (Vic Branch)

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For further information, please contact ACN SIG Committee on:

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Membership Renewals

All members need to be financial as at 28 November to qualify for our CPD grants, travel grants and study days. Renewal forms are enclosed with this newsletter.

Aged Care Nurses Special Interest Group Report for 2011

This year has been a busy one with a much expanded membership due to the success of our offer of free ACNSIG membership for one year to new subscribers to the ANF (Vic Branch).

These Special Offer members will have to become financial from 29 November 2011 in order to retain membership of the ACNSIG. This date is also scheduled for our Annual General Meeting to be held at the Carson Centre at 11.15hrs. All members are invited to attend.

Our main focus this year has been supporting the BECAUSE WE CARE CAMPAIGN in various ways. Members who had presented submissions to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians were invited to respond to its draft report released on 21 December 2010.

In its draft of 42 recommendations for a major overhaul of many aspects of the Aged Care System, the Report failed to acknowledge that minimum care hours, staffing levels by trained and skilled staff, appropriate skills mix and wage parity were vital for the promotion and delivery of quality care to those entering residential aged care facilities. That these issues have already reached crisis levels was pointed out clearly in the presentations made by several of our members who were invited to attend the Commission's hearings held in Melbourne from 21 to 23 March 2011.

The Final Report released in June acknowledges that urgent reforms are needed, yet workforce issues were not addressed in the way our members felt was imperative. Hence our continuing engagement by supporting the "Aged Care Can't Wait" campaign sending emails and postcards to PM Julia Gillard and Treasurer Wayne Swan urging the Federal Government to act now by making the 2012 budget the Aged Care Budget.

ACNSIG members have also met with Members of Parliament to gain their support by signing a Pledge of Commitment to Quality Aged Care. In Victoria we have met with Adam Bandt, MP - Member for Melbourne, Anna Burke, MP - Member for Chisholm, Mike Symon, MP - Member for Deakin, Senator Gavin Marshall, Laura Smyth, MP - Member for La Trobe. These meetings have taken place over tea hosted by facilities or by invitation to Members offices where lively discussion ensued around issues raised by residents and care staff.

In the meantime, the committee continues to publish our Newsletter *SIGNificance* keeping our members up to date with developments within the group and with the BWC campaign.

Since the introduction of National Registration and subsequent mandatory 20 hours of Continuing Professional Development requirements, the ACNSIG is offering 4 grants per annum of \$250.00. Application forms are available for download from our website.

Also this year we were fortunate enough to combine with the Nurses for Continence SIG to present a joint study day on *Incontinence in The Elderly*. This was a most successful day with presenters providing interesting and up to date information on this important issue.

At our last general meeting a range of ideas was presented for future events and activities including visiting the Coroner's Court, wound product manufacturers, and 'model' residential facilities to further our knowledge and extend our experience beyond the familiar. Membership of the ACNSIG remains at \$30.00 per annum and is open to all members of the ANF (Vic Branch) working in Aged Care.

The ANF and ACNSIG once again calls on participation from our members in this activity. Keep up to date with the campaign by logging onto www.becausewe care.org.au

Continuing Professional Development Grants

We had one successful applicant for the CPD grant of \$250.00 in the second round this year.

This grant was awarded to Robyn Collins who is researching aged care in rural residential care settings. Our congratulations and we wish you well Robyn.

Secretary's Report for 2011

This has been a very hectic year, and especially so for Erica who not only has held the Chairperson's role but took over the Treasurer's as well, following Helen's departure early in the year for personal reasons. So we certainly express our appreciation for all that Erica has done!

We also extend a very warm welcome to all our new members, and look forward to supporting each other as we strive to provide the highest standards of care possible, for those that we care for.

The Because We Care Campaign has been at the forefront of the Aged Care Nurses Special Interest Group, and again Erica has been the person who has steadily represented us with Ministerial signing of The Pledge to improve aged care for our ageing Australians.

The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Aged Care in March provided the opportunity for 3 ACNSIG members together with ANF (Vic Branch) Professional Officers to express our concerns relating to the marked decline in our aged care system today.

A highlight later this year was a very informative combined education session with the Continence Nurses Special

Interest Group in September. Following this, a wonderful attendance to our scheduled SIG meeting was most exciting in anticipation of future meetings. Currently we have 119 members, however sadly it has been increasingly difficult to recruit ordinary members and to obtain nominations for the executive positions.

Finally, once more on behalf of the ACNSIG, I again extend heartfelt thanks to Erica Kurec for all that she has so willingly and passionately contributed in her various roles within the group over a period of several years. Thank-you also to Mark Staaf, ANF Professional Officer, for his unwavering, ongoing enthusiasm together with Carole de Greenlaw in provision of ANF SIG Secretarial Support, who so brilliantly puts *SIGNificance* together for us.

A happy and safe Christmas to all.

Lorraine Andrew

Our Next Meeting

The Extraordinary meeting will be held in the New Year with notification sent out once the date has been set

Aged Care Nurses Special Interest Group Financial Report to 30 June 2011

INCOME

Membership subscriptions	\$690.00
Interest	\$12.00
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	\$702.00

EXPENSES

Badges	\$528.00
Grants	\$500.00
Meeting Expenses	\$121.00
Members Pamper Night Dinner	\$555.00
Printing and Stationary	\$57.00
Sundry Expenses	\$68.00
Travelling Expenses Grants	\$300.00
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	\$2,129.00

Current Assets

TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS \$8,000.00

AGED

CARE NURSES

Special Interest Group
ANF (Vic Branch)

**Aged Care Nurses Special Interest
Group ANF (Vic Branch)**

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**A Jolly Christmas
and New Year to you
all**

We're on the web:

www.anfvic.asn.au