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SH&FPA Office 2012

The last quarter of 2011 was a time of great change for SH&FPA with the commencement of Dr Joanne Ramadge as the new CEO, the recruitment of Sarah Kirk to the position of Senior Policy/Project Officer, the SH&FPA Annual Forum, the preparation of two major funding proposals and the relocation of our offices to Phillip, ACT. So much for slowing down prior to Christmas!

After a hectic end to 2011, we have finally settled into our new offices and have welcomed new staff member, Louise Symons, to the position of Senior Project Officer. A small but committed team, we are eager to progress the SH&FPA work plan for 2012.

SH&FPA's main focus for 2012 will be to progress the *Growing a National Approach* (GNA) project and to continue to build strong net-

works with other sexual and reproductive health and family planning organisations and private industry. The GNA incorporates actions that support our strategic plan and will bring benefits to SH&FPA and its Member Organisations (MOs).

Importantly we are committed to progressing a national agenda with our MOs, who have all been extremely helpful and supportive during our period of change. Value for SH&FPA also needs to include value for its MOs and we will explore this more over the coming months.

Our strategic plan and organisational effort is on improving sexual and reproductive health and rights for all people with an immediate focus on the at risk and high needs populations.

During Q1 in 2012, we will

further develop the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Special Interest Group (SIG) and establish two others, focused on SRH for people with disabilities and youth. We are also working with the three Professional Working Groups to progress a range of issues and activities – more on those later.

SH&FPA is also represented on a number of professional fora and we will bring you news of those meetings, as they occur.

SH&FPA has recently been accepted as a member of the Australasian Society of HIV Medicine (ASHM) and a founding member of the newly established Australasian Sexual Health Alliance (ASHA). We hope these memberships will see a closer working relationship between sexual and reproductive health and HIV medicine.

Annual Forum

The SH&FPA Annual Forum was held on 11/12 of November 2011 at The Realm Hotel, Canberra. Forty staff drawn from across all Member Organisations attended, representing CEOs, managers, nurses, doctors, health promoters, educators, communications and research staff and the SH&FPA Council.

The forum provided the opportunity for participants to develop a shared understanding of the "Growing A National Approach" project, its scope, activities and deliverables. In particular, the forum supported the development of annual work plans for the three Professional Working Groups (Medical Professionals, Edu-

cation/Training and Health Promoters and Nurses) and facilitated discussions about how the SH&FPA network will translate research into national policy, professional development and service delivery activities, through the use of three Special Interest Groups (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Youth and Disability).

Indonesia Conference

Our CEO Joanne Ramadge is a member of the Steering Committee of the Asia Pacific Alliance (APA) representing SH&FPA and travelled to Yogyakarta in October 2011 to attend a workshop, steering committee meeting and conference.

The advocacy workshop, jointly convened by APA and Family Planning NZ, aimed to strengthen NGO leadership through its advocacy capacity. This was followed by a presentation by Jill Sheffield from *Women Deliver*, whose 3rd global conference will be in Kuala Lumpur, May 28-30, 2013. The associated

conference was the Sixth Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights (6th APCRSHR) with the theme "Claiming Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Asian and Pacific Societies". The theme of the conference

was designed to explore reproductive and sexual rights in Asian and Pacific societies, which is one of the current challenges faced by the Asia-Pacific region. The history of the APCRSHR began in The Hague during the 1999

ICPD +5 Review and Assessment, when delegates from Asia Pacific felt there was not enough opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences in SRH in the region, and have been held every two years since.



Professional Working Groups (PWGs)

Medical Educators PWG

The MEPWG has sprung into action this year, led by Katrina Allen of Shine SA and Jenny Leung of SHFPACT, with Steve Blackwell of FPWA as the CEO liaison. Special thanks to former leader Alison Creagh of FPWA. The group's recent activities have included expanding access to IUD insertion training, developing a contraceptive counselling card

for GPs, and updating "Contraception: an Australian clinical practice handbook". This year, they plan to explore e-learning as a professional development tool.

Nurses PWG

Hilary Freeman of SHFPACT leads the NPWG, with Robyn Wardle of FPWNT as CEO liaison. The NPWG is currently concentrating on the scope of practice for sexual and

reproductive health nurses. Recently, several members were integrally involved in developing the Australasian Sexual Health Nurses Association (ASHNA) national core competencies for SRH nurses. Out of these, the NPWG aims to develop a national course.

Education/Training and Health Promoters PWG

Cecelia Gore of FPQ has taken over leadership of the ETHPPWG from Tim Bavinton of SHFPACT. Tim stays on as CEO liaison and we thank him for all of his work to date. The ETHPPWG will develop a number of FAQ sheets on sexuality and relationships education and will progress this work throughout 2012.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SIG is being led by Kaisu Vartto of Shine SA. Internal membership of the group has been agreed and external members are currently being sought. SH&FPA staff have met with NAC-

CHO and negotiations regarding an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SRH symposium to be held later in 2012 are being progressed.

The Youth SIG (YSIG) is being led by Lynne Jordan of FPV and the Disability

SIG (DSIG) is being led by Glenn Campbell of FPT. Draft Terms of Reference for these two groups are being discussed and nominations for internal and external membership will be sought in the very near future. Please contact us

if you are interested in being involved in one of these groups.

This year SH&FPA plans to increase the number of SIGs to focus on current and emerging issues.

Let's focus on what we all want

Let's focus on what we all want – reducing the need for abortion.

Contrary to the ongoing debate in other parts of the world, Australians are generally very supportive of a woman's right to have access to safe and legal abortion services. What can be lost in the international rhetoric is the need to focus on reducing the need for abortion – and this means universal access to family planning.

A recent report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Guttmacher

Institute (2012), *Induced abortion: incidence and trends worldwide from 1995 to 2008*, noted that the number of worldwide abortions are no longer falling, "and the proportion of all abortions that are unsafe has increased".

The report also made the point that there are fewer abortions in countries where women live under liberal abortion laws. Countries that have liberal abortion laws tend to be countries with easy access to family planning methods.

What both sides of the pro choice/pro-abortion, pro life/anti-abortion debate need to talk about now is how we can work together to prevent abortions by addressing the unmet need for family planning. That is, enabling access to modern and effective contraceptive methods to all women and men who wish to use them, regardless of which country they happen to live in.



National Sexual and Reproductive Health Conference

SH&FPA, in partnership with the Public Health Association of Australia, will be hosting the first *National Sexual and Reproductive Health Conference: A Call to Action*, in Melbourne from 20-21 November 2012. This will be the first Australian conference to bring together practitioners, policy makers, scholars and others enthusiastic about improving the sexual and reproductive health of all Australians.

With international and national experts in the fol-

lowing areas, the conference aims to shed new light and consider current evidence about:

- prevention of unintended pregnancy
- effective sex education;
- new contraceptive horizons
- men's sexual and reproductive health
- access and equity and workforce needs for Australia's future sexual and reproductive health.

The conference will be an

excellent opportunity to hear the most recent research and practitioner wisdom and to make your own contribution to implementation ideas foreshadowed in the new National Women's and Men's Health policies.

A call for abstracts is currently being made and further information and regular updates for the conference are available at <http://www.phaa.net.au/NSRHConference.php>



Our vision:

All people enjoy safe and respectful relationships and are afforded their sexual rights



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SH&FPA Partners

National Partners

- State and Territory Sexual Health and Family Planning Organisations
- Organisational Member of Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM)
- Founding Member of the Australasian Sexual Health Alliance (ASHA)
- The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing
- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
- Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)

International Partners

- Member Association of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
- Member of the Asia Pacific Alliance (APA) on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

