

Provincial Fellows

The 2009 Provincial Fellows Annual Scientific Meeting was again a success. It was held at the Cable Beach Club Resort in Broome, Western Australia, and was attended by over 150 Fellows, Diplomates, Trainees, medical students and exhibitors. The Provincial Fellows Committee has focused on the continued support of rural Diplomates through the incorporation of Diplomates Days into the program of each Provincial Fellows ASM. This integration of Diplomates Days is seen as a positive way to provide important education and clinical review, while at the same time, meeting the continuing education criteria of the relevant colleges of our Diplomates. The Diplomates Days are developed in close collaboration with the GP Obstetrics Advisory Committee. Incorporating Diplomates Days into the Provincial Fellows ASM program provides an opportunity for Diplomates and Fellows to network with colleagues in similar areas of social and occupational isolation. It was encouraging that both Diplomates Days at the 2009 Provincial Fellows ASM were oversubscribed with 50 Diplomates attending. The Provincial Fellows look forward to the continued strengthening of their relationship with rural Diplomates.

Enthusiastic support for specific rural-based College continuing professional development (CPD) activities has been demonstrated by our Provincial Fellows. In 2008, the Commonwealth Government provided funding for an eighth round of CPD projects for rural specialists, under the Support Scheme for Rural Specialists (SSRS). The College successfully applied for funding to repeat two projects that had been run in previous years; the Perinatal Mortality and Morbidity Audit and the Practice Visit project. Reports on these projects follow on pages 29 and 30 of this Annual Report. In addition, the Clinical Teleconference Series has been well supported

with 17 Fellows participating in the 2009 series, which included the following topics: Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology; Thrombophilias in Pregnancy; Screening for Ovarian Cancer; Chemotherapy in Gynaecological Oncology; Twin Pregnancies; and Management of Germ Cell Tumors.

The ongoing funding for the Specialist Obstetricians Locum Scheme (SOLS) during 2008-2009 was welcomed, as was the expansion of SOLS to include GP obstetricians. SOLS is an important rural workforce support mechanism, providing ongoing relief of our Provincial Fellows. The Provincial Fellows look forward to SOLS continuing in the coming years and support the development of the GP Anaesthetist Locum Scheme (GPALS) using the SOLS model, under the auspices of The Australian Society of Anaesthetists.

In 2009, the Commonwealth Government announced the introduction of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Area (ASGC-RA) classification to replace the RRMA (Rural, Remote, Metropolitan Area) code classifications. The Provincial Fellows group awaits further information, to assist in the assessment of the impact that this classification change will have on Provincial Fellows. It is hoped that these changes will result in more inclusive and positive outcomes over the coming year.

Dr Tom Cottee
Chair, Provincial Fellows Committee

Kate Lawrey
Coordinator, Provincial Fellows Committee



TWO FIGURES c. 1970s Stone Lithograph. RANZCOG Research Foundation.

Asia Pacific

RANZCOG continues its educational involvement in the Asia Pacific region with activities coordinated through its Asia Pacific Committee (APC). The Asia Pacific Committee regularly updates the Executive and Council on various initiatives. A two-year strategic plan for the APC has been approved by the Executive Committee. The strategic plan confirmed continuation of the focus for the committee in the Pacific region for this period, as it is clear that the College can, and is, making a significant contribution to education and training, and ultimately standards in women's healthcare in our close neighbouring countries. The APC includes in its membership Fellows currently resident in the Pacific or with a special interest in the Pacific, representatives of the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), the Fiji School of Medicine (FSM), the Pacific Society for Reproductive Health (PSRH) and several RANZCOG Councillors.

Continuing support for UPNG and FSM to enable these institutes to offer their O and G training programs is critical if we are to contribute to capacity-building and sustainable solutions to the Pacific O and G workforce crisis, both in the short and long-term. In response to a need for additional lecturers for the Pacific teaching programs, a number of Fellows have visited UPNG and FSM for the first time during 2008-09 and the number of Fellows enrolled on the RANZCOG Volunteer Register has risen to approximately 100. These Fellows will regularly receive email information and news about College-linked volunteer opportunities in the Pacific region.

A number of opportunities for professional development were made available to Pacific O and G specialists during the year, including a colposcopy workshop delivered in Suva, Fiji, in July 2008. An impressive number of RANZCOG scholarships and funding sponsorships were secured to enable high attendance of Pacific O and G Specialists to the Pacific Society for Reproductive Health 8th Biennial Scientific Meeting and the AOCOG/RANZCOG ASM in Auckland, March 2009. The PSRH meeting also provided the opportunity for the launch of the RANZCOG/PSRH/University of Auckland Pacific Ultrasound Training Course, which was attended by approximately 20 participants at Middlemore Hospital, Auckland. This ultrasound training package was again conducted in Samoa in 2009 to a receptive group and it is clear that this is an area where both basic and advanced training are needed by those using ultrasound with varying degrees of formal training.

Since 2004, RANZCOG has provided 16 Brian Spurrett Foundation Fellowship placements for Pacific midwives in educator and leadership roles. This enables recipients to undertake four to six-week placements to experience a range of high quality and safe midwifery services and learn about simple clinical research, which can then be implemented in their own local hospitals to improve practices and outcomes. In late 2008, three Fellowships were hosted at the Sydney South West Area Health Service, with two midwives attending from Fiji and one the Federated States of Micronesia. In March 2009, a further two Fellowships were hosted by Middlemore Hospital, Auckland, with attendees from Samoa and the Solomon Islands. Evaluation and feedback from Fellowships has revealed a highly successful program in developing leadership, initiative and 'take home ideas' for improved practices for the recipients' local hospitals. Local fundraising efforts for the Brian Spurrett Foundation in early 2009 have resulted in a boost of A\$10,000, which is a pleasing result.

The College is currently reviewing opportunities for Year 5 and Year 6 RANZCOG Trainees to undertake experience in the Pacific, with a view to developing a Pacific Training Module to be incorporated into the College's training program. Currently, a number of placements occur on an ad hoc basis, with links between RANZCOG, UPNG and FSM. There is much enthusiasm for formalisation of a Pacific Training Module and it is hoped that the benefits of this initiative for the Pacific training institutes, the participating Trainees who will become the future O and G workforce in Australia and New Zealand, and the development of further networks will be enhanced.

Further potential collaborations and partnerships to deliver targeted programs to address sexual and reproductive health issues in the Pacific are being explored by the Asia Pacific Committee in 2009-2010.

Dr Roy Watson
Chair, Asia Pacific Committee

Carmel Walker
Coordinator, Asia Pacific Committee



STANDING FIGURE (MONIQUE) c. 1960s Stone Lithograph.
RANZCOG Research Foundation.