



May Edition
2011

AASW Pathways



The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) recently announced a proposal called 'Pathways' that would, in a limited way, open up membership of the association to human service workers with qualifications other than the Bachelor of Social Work. Under the proposal, these workers would be offered an 'associate' membership and would not have the same rights as members with the social work qualification — they would be allowed to vote but would not be able participate in some democratic processes of the association, including being eligible for "elected positions"¹. This means that a worker with 20 years in the community sector, with a Bachelor and/or Masters degree in a human services-related discipline, is considered less qualified than a 21 year old graduate social worker who holds only a Bachelor of Social Work and has little life or work experience.

AIWCW is concerned about many of the explicit and implied messages that accompany the Pathways

proposal. The AASW have released several communications about the proposal on their website. I will aim, in this feature, to address the main concerns in these documents.

Social work qualification

The *Q&A on Pathways* (date unknown) on the AASW website, states:

"The proposal provides an opportunity for people who are genuinely committed to maintaining and improving practice standards to be part of a professional association of the whole human services sector. It means being able to develop their career along the path towards social work... The pathways proposal seeks to cement social work as the pinnacle qualification and profession within human services...the proposal on Pathways creates a level of associate membership for less qualified colleagues."

Our respective members practice their profession to deliver their services within the Social and Community Services sector. Just as there are many qualifications which ready people for working professionally with individuals, families, groups and communities, there are many associations that now cover professions within the community services sector. No one professional association is better than the other — we all have a place and purpose that is similar, and different, to the other. The AASW is simply one of the associations in Australia that provides an opportunity to its members for a sense of professional belonging and access to continuing professional education, support and a code

(continued page 8)

¹ Q&A on pathways, (undated), <http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/613>. Downloaded 14/12/10.

In this edition

4 Strategic planning

We now have a strategic plan for 2011–2013 with five focus areas for activities and four strategic priorities.

6 Rural work feature

We interview Tony Beuermann from NSW and discover how he came to work in a rural setting and find out some of the rewards of making the move to the country.

9 Education providers update

We've been busy improving our policies and procedures, and have conducted several audits of education providers.

12 MAP news

We provide an overview of the many activities that have been taking place behind the scenes at committee level.

Contents

A message from the National President

AASW Pathways	1
A message from the National President	2
Branch member profile	3
AGM notice	3
Adelaide National Executive Committee meeting	4
Census — Important notice	4
Strategic planning	4
Student member profile	5
You might be interested in...	5
Rural work feature	6
Jobs and grants online	6
Staff profile	7
Education providers update	7
Practice reflexions	9
How do we define a community worker?	9
National Office news	10
Branch news	10/11
Membership Assessment Panel news	12

It's been a busy time, with many changes taking place within your professional association. These changes have been happening fast but, behind the scenes, they've been the result of careful planning.



We needed to adapt quickly to ensure the survival of our association.

Despite the pace required at this time, we were mindful of the need to involve members in the process of coming up with a new name and identity. This is our association and we want to make sure it reflects the needs and vision of the majority of our members.

The process and outcomes

The rebranding process, which began after feedback from members, students, education providers and other stakeholders — as well as discussions at committee meetings — gave a clear indication that now was the right time to consider a new identity. The sector has changed in the last twenty years and we had an opportunity to create an identity that better captured the nature, environment and diversity within our sector.

We sent out a limited tender to agencies, inviting proposals for the rebranding project. Out of the proposals we received, Icon Inc was the clear choice, in terms of experience, expertise in branding and their proposed methods.

After discussions with National Office staff and committee members, Icon proposed two names to put out to members for consultation. The first poll received an overwhelming and significantly positive response, with over 140 respondents and 63% of members voting for 'Australian Community Workers Association'.

At the next consultation point, we presented the creative concepts for the proposed logo. Out of almost 130 votes, the clear favourite was the concept that is being developed as a new logo. It received 73% of the vote, with members commenting that the logo showed "strength, balance and wholeness", appeared to be "radiating new ideas" and was reminiscent of a "symbol of unity".

The colour palette is a bold move to help the association stand out from the crowd whilst reflecting the colours of the Australian landscape and the warm, nurturing and welcoming tones that match the values of our members.

Concerns

Of course, not everyone agreed with the direction the rebranding project was taking and ten of the responses expressed concern over the proposed names. These objections were largely based on the removal of 'welfare' and 'institute' from the name, and the need to include 'professional' somewhere in the name.

After consultation with Icon Inc, the length of the name was identified as an important consideration for modernising the association. Comparison with other associations suggested a name with 3–4 words, with key language that describes the geographical location, the broad occupation type and the nature of the organisation (i.e. an 'association').

The word 'welfare' was removed to achieve a name that broadly represented the group of occupations that make up our members and to allow a name that matched convention. It was identified that the industry is moving toward

Branch member profile

Margaret O'Brien
Qld/NT Branch

When did you first become a member of AIWCW?

I became a member in 1991 in Queensland, and am still proud to be a member of the Queensland/Northern Territory branch.

What made you want to get involved with your branch?

I decided to join my professional body when I began teaching community welfare studies full time, in addition to my role as fieldwork educator. I believed then, and still believe now, that it is important for workers in the community services industry to belong to their professional association. I think it is especially important for teaching practitioners to be full members, for a myriad of reasons. The two most important reasons being the necessity to keep abreast of ongoing changes in both thought and practice, which is accessible to all, through membership and the opportunity to be involved in the development of policy, which helps bring about those changes that are beneficial to both practitioners and clients of community services alike.

What has been your proudest moment during your involvement with your branch?

My proudest moment within my Branch was when the Queensland/NT committee stepped in, at very short notice, to organise and run a very successful AIWCW conference on Bribie Island in 2005. This very dedicated group of AIWCW members showed just what could be done when people work collaboratively in harmony.

What would you say to a member considering joining in on branch activities?

I would say, 'If you are willing to share of your time, expertise, talents and your energy to grow and develop your knowledge and skills, apart from the professional rewards, the rewards for you personally, in terms of friendship, camaraderie, loyalties, support, mentoring, etc, that enrich your life, are boundless beyond measure.'

A message from the National President (continued)

using 'community' and 'worker' as the labels that apply to our occupational groups, and the association could have a role in leading pride and value in the professionalism of the sector by adopting clear language in our new name.

The word 'institute' was considered to be inappropriate in signifying the operations of the association — 'institute' is more often applied to educational and research organisations, not professional associations. The word 'association' had already been introduced in the 'strapline' slogan, *The association for community service professionals*. It was identified as the appropriate word for the new name.

The word 'professional' is an important element of our key messages. We know that building the reputation of our industry — having our workers recognised as professionals — is important to members and that is why we ensured that 'profession' was included in the new 'strapline' — *Your partner in professional practice*. We will also ensure that our communications and advocacy efforts include reinforcing messages regarding the professionalism of workers in our sector. These communications will be effective tools to promote the professionalism of our members.

The future

In developing a new name and identity for our professional association, we are looking to the future. We are entering a new phase in our history and are working on offering improved services to you, all at the same low cost of membership. A new name and identity are some of the first steps in that commitment to improvement. We welcome you to join us as we build the profile of the industry and add to the benefits you receive from your membership.

As we are changing an element of our constitution, we must go to members to vote for the name change as part of the constitutional change. If you were a financial member at 31 March, you would have received a notice for a special resolution meeting to be held in the National Office in Melbourne at 2.00pm on Sunday, 15 May. Each branch committee will send two delegates and I encourage as many members as possible to attend.

Colleen Blunt
National President

AGM notice

The Annual General Meeting of AIWCW will be held on Sunday, 11 September 2011 in Alice Springs. We will write to you requesting nominations for the National Executive Committee.

All members of AIWCW who were financial at 15 March 2011 are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Nominations close on 18 June 2011. Voting packs will be distributed between 1–7 July 2011. Nominee names and biographies will be added to the members' area of the website from 1 July 2011. Voting opens on 11 August and closes on 18 August 2011.

Adelaide National Executive Committee meeting

National Executive Committee members and staff from the National Office travelled to Adelaide recently to conduct an annual face-to-face National Executive Committee meeting and visit a number of South Australian education providers, councils and employer organisations.

A number of exciting developments were announced at the meeting including:

- The strategic plan for the association
- New policies for education providers
- An overview of the proposed new identity for the association

Participants worked tirelessly over the weekend and we thank all attendees for their commitment, especially in discussing proposed constitution changes.



Census — Important notice

At the next Census in August 2011, the Australian Bureau of Statistics needs community workers to identify our occupational titles.

If you're an aged care worker or a disability support worker, write that under 'occupation'. If you are a settlement worker assisting migrant and refugee clients to settle into Australia, please define your occupational title. It has been easy in the past to simply write 'welfare' or 'community worker' as our occupation, but this leads to problems with identification for the purposes of statistical data collection both by the ABS and Skills Australia (which advises the Federal Government about skills shortages around Australia). Not having the data also makes it difficult for AIWCW to advocate on specific issues for the professionalism of specific occupational groups.

So, say what you do and be proud to say it.

Strategic planning

The strategic plan for 2011–2013 was presented to the National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting in Adelaide on 9 April 2011. The planning began at the last Annual General Meeting in September 2010 where we received feedback and a broad outline of directions from members present. A subsequent meeting of NEC and Membership Assessment Panel members in November refined the organisation's directions and strategic plans developed by branches were included. We identified five 'pillars' that will become the focus of activities over the period. These are:

- Consolidation
- Growth
- Identity
- Services
- Partnerships

The 'pillars' result in four strategic priorities for the period 2011–2013:

- Organisational sustainability
- Building a community of community workers
- Positively impacting education provision and learning
- Sector leadership

We will be concentrating on achieving the four strategic priorities informed by the five themes. We will release an outline of the strategic plan on our website by the end of May 2011.

Look for updates in the 'News' section of www.aiwcw.org.au.

Student member profile



Nisha Hajira Queensland

What attracted you to the community services industry?

The whole idea of having a holistic approach towards an individual when dealing with the people in the community attracted me to this industry initially. This made me want to explore the various aspects of working within the community. The fact that this field of study involves imparting knowledge to a great extent about the practical aspects of life, and dealing with real people and their problems, has made me very keen on pursuing a career in this field. I admire the potential this study gives us as community workers, to be able to help individuals to improve their quality of life and develop the hidden potential of each individual, group and community.

What surprised you most about your course?

It was really surprising to see how well the groups of students in this course from various cultural backgrounds were able to work with cooperation and utmost respect for each other. I really appreciate our teachers and all the students who took the effort to make this course as informative and enjoyable as possible.

What was the most rewarding experience during your placements?

The placements that I did have definitely given me a new direction in my life. The organisations that I have worked with have provided me with the experience more than I had expected to acquire. I have learned to have patience and tolerance when working within the community. Also, cooperation and coordination play a very important role in the work of a community worker. These placements have also helped me learn to have a holistic approach to client needs including social, emotional, psychological and practical support. Moreover, I have also developed the knowledge and skills that are required for specific client needs. Overall, these placements have been a learning curve for me, where I have grown as an individual and also acquired the skills and experience to be a successful community worker in the future.

What made you want to join the AIWCW?

AIWCW is an organisation that represents all the community workers and I wanted to be a part of this organisation because I intend to work as a community welfare worker in the future. So being a member of this organisation gives me an opportunity to meet the other workers from around Australia and share their knowledge and experience.

What would you like to do in your career?

I am very much interested in working as a part of case management in community services. I want to be a case coordinator. Also, I am interested in becoming a counsellor, because during my study I was very much fascinated by the concept of counselling skills.

You might be interested in...

We want to create a regular section in our newsletters to help members find out about innovations or opportunities in the sector.

If you've found something you think other members may be interested in, please write to us at members@aiwcw.org.au

Rural work feature

Tony Beuermann, New South Wales

Tell us how your work in the community services sector in a rural setting came about?

For many years I have had a strong interest in moving to a rural area, running a small hobby farm, and hopefully to continue working in some capacity. My wife and I are both originally from rural areas of Australia, but have lived and worked in Sydney for most of the past 30 years.

This idea became a reality about three and a half years ago when, after about 10 years of looking at properties in various parts of NSW and Tasmania, we purchased our 3.5 hectare property near Oberon, in the Central Tablelands of NSW. I retired from part-time work in Sydney in October 2009 and moved full-time to Oberon in December of the same year.

As well as running my property, I am involved in volunteer work with several organisations. These are Evans Community Options Neighbour Aid Program, and the Care Service operated by Oberon Council and the local Area Health Service. Evans Community Options is based at Bathurst, a rural city with a population of about 40,000, 45 km from Oberon, and provides services to Bathurst and other nearby communities.

My volunteer activities currently include my position as Publicity Officer for the NSW/ACT Branch of AIWCW, which involves frequent travel to Sydney and other areas of NSW, and sometimes to Melbourne.

How does the work you do in a rural setting differ from that in the city?

There is a significant difference between the two settings. Community work in rural areas generally involves travelling greater distances, but paradoxically, perhaps, less time on the road because of low traffic density and easier parking. Personally, I find working in a rural area much less stressful than in a major city.

My own experience suggests that the typical client group in the major cities includes a much larger proportion of people of non-English speaking background than a client group in a regional area.

What attracts you to providing services to communities outside of the city?

The opportunity of combining useful and satisfying work with a pleasant and relaxing personal lifestyle.

What has been the most rewarding thing about your work?

The very agreeable mix of meaningful work, meeting new people, and a satisfying personal lifestyle.

What would you say to other workers considering a move to a rural location?

While acknowledging that a rural lifestyle would not suit everybody, I would certainly recommend the change, after a period of research. A few visits to the area of interest to check the amenities available, work opportunities and housing would be of great help in making the decision.

Jobs and grants online

We want to add services to our website that will help you find what you need as a worker or student in the industry. We've added a 'Members' area' to our website where we'll add extra services available only to members of AIWCW.

As part of this members' area, we want to add employment opportunities and grant information applicable to the community services sector.

If you're an employer and you have a current vacancy in the sector or you're from an agency that is offering grants to organisations in the sector, we'd like to hear from you.

For more information about how to get in contact, visit the 'Resources' page at www.aiwcw.org.au.

Staff profile

Jane Hughes

Assessment Officer (Membership and Qualifications)



What made you want to work at the AIWCW?

Before I started working for AIWCW, I had heard of it and was interested in what it was trying to do for its members. Prior to coming to Australia, I started the process of becoming a member. When I saw the job advertisement, I thought it was a perfect time for me to contribute in offering quality professional services to members and making a difference within the organisation. Working with AIWCW allows me to utilise my experience in community services, gained in various locations such as Kenya, Tanzania and Vanuatu. This experience has developed my skills in dealing with people from different cultures and backgrounds. Working with AIWCW also provides me with the opportunity to use these skills.

What is something not many people know about you?

I speak six languages.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I love volunteering, assisting disadvantaged communities and interacting with different people from different backgrounds. Australia provides me with the perfect match so that I can continue using my skills in assisting disadvantaged communities, particularly migrants who find it difficult to integrate into Australian society due to different cultures and structures. I also get to meet people from a variety of backgrounds, as I was doing in Vanuatu and Kenya.

Imagine you're describing to someone the AIWCW you want to work for. What is it like a year from now?

I would like AIWCW to be the leading organisation in providing services to people involved in the community services sector, where the ethics of the association promotes a positive, professional and friendly customer environment, encourages new membership and strengthens relationships with all stakeholders. This and a well-directed marketing strategy would create awareness of the association in the industry. During this time, I would also like to see an organisational culture that encourages personnel development within the team context, well-established operational procedures, ethical dealing with customers, encouragement for initiatives and lateral thinking.

Education providers update

As a sector involving professional direct service provision to vulnerable individuals, families, groups and communities, we believe it is essential that the community services sector has a robust system in place to monitor the standards of courses. AIWCW, as the professional association for the sector, has always played an important role in promoting and monitoring the standards of courses.

We have been working to improve our processes to ensure we are completing all our course approval tasks in a timely and efficient manner, and strengthening our relationships with contacts at registered training organisations and universities. Previously, course approvals were conducted by volunteers in the organisation. We acknowledge the commitment and effort exerted over decades by these volunteers in establishing a strong base to build on.

We now have staff in the National Office dedicated to assessing applications for course approval. Our staff have completed audits of several courses that uncovered serious issues, particularly in inadequate field placements and insufficient class times. These educational providers have committed to improving their courses as a result of our team's efforts and their performance in implementing remedies will be monitored.

Effective policies enforced under rigorous and robust processes is the best way to ensure good learning outcomes for students in our sector. Students are the future practitioners in our members' industry and we're committed to helping improve the educational experience for them and ultimately the quality of services they provide to vulnerable people.

(from cover) of ethics. Many of us offer the same things and our members are just as “committed to maintaining and improving practice standards” as members of the AASW.

AIWCW is an association that already represents all professionals working within human services organisations in a community context. We do not believe that all workers in the sector are on, or want to be on, a path towards social work and nor should they be. A Bachelor of Social Work is not the pinnacle or peak of educational qualification despite assertions that this is the case.

The strength of our sector is the diversity of its workforce, its career pathways and opportunities for generalist or specialist work. Our profession’s diversity is based on our members’ experience, organisational settings, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age and, of course, qualifications. To channel students toward one qualification creates the possibility of ‘group think’ over time which will not, in the long term, be able to deal with the complexities of issues confronting the individuals, families, groups and communities with whom we work. Our members’ clients benefit from a range of approaches from professionals with various backgrounds and experience. We consider the professional provision of services to be of prime importance, not the qualification. As part of our strategic plan, AIWCW aims to rebuild the identity and restore pride in workers in our sector.

No access

Pathways into and through the Profession on the AASW website, states that there are a “range of other human service workers in the health and community services sectors that do not have access to strong national and local supports.” The *Q&A on Pathways*, states that the proposal “also provides an opportunity for representation of the thousands of human services workers who currently have no access to a professional body that can lobby on their behalf on matters such as standards and workforce issues.”

Since 1969, AIWCW has supported workers and the improvement of community services education in the Social and Community Services industry. While we concede that AIWCW’s role in the sector has diminished over the years due to previous resource limitations, a new committee in 2010 approved the expansion of the National Office and since that time, re-invigorated branches, a new strategic and operational plan and benefits to members have assured a stronger role in supporting professionals at a practical and advocacy level. Building on the critical and skillful contributions of volunteers across Australia, we now have staff in member services, marketing, assessments and management that will lead to a more relevant, responsive and stronger association. Over time, and with members’ support, we will offer greater benefits, advocate more rigorously, create partnerships, contribute to policy, develop more programs and assure a higher quality of Community Services education.

Code of Ethics/Courses

Pathways into and through the Profession, argues that “there would be increased accountability of the human services workforce of the Australian community because a wider cross section would be adhering to the requirements of the Code of Ethics of the AASW and educational institutions would have increased accreditation requirements.”

AIWCW members, over its 42 year history, have always been bound by a rigorous, professional Code of Ethics. Our members declare their commitment to abiding by our Code of Ethics when they apply as a member. AIWCW was instrumental in designing the first welfare course in Australia and, since then, has set and promoted standards in VET and Higher Education provision for the sector. We now have an assessment team and an enhanced ability to improve the accountability of education providers teaching community services related courses.

Proposals to Government

The *Q&A on Pathways*, states that:

“the current AASW proposals to Government on registration will be strengthened if more people working in our sectors are part of a single professional association. The current situation of having people from a range of disciplines (or without qualifications) and covered by different professional associations (and some not covered at all) makes it harder for Governments to apply our proposals on registration.”

Government seeks the advice of many stakeholders in setting policy. While we agree that the current situation makes it more difficult to lobby Government, we do not believe that the number of professional associations is the cause. We assert that a lack of cooperation between professional associations on issues that have broad relevance to all workers in the community services sector is affecting our ability to collectively initiate change. As we have developed strong and mutually beneficial relationships with a number of professional associations across Australia, we welcome more collaboration with the AASW on issues of mutual concern and benefit to members.

Consultation with AIWCW

The AASW have stated that their consultations strategy for the Pathways proposal includes AIWCW. AIWCW National President, Colleen Blunt, and I were advised at a meeting with AASW in December 2010 that consultation broader than AASW had not yet occurred in relation to the Pathways proposal and that AIWCW would be consulted in early–mid 2011. We will advise of any requests for consultation by the AASW via this newsletter.

Conclusion

Our members’ concern about the assertions made in the Pathways proposal alerted us to the slower progress we made in the

continued next page

sector in recent years due to our previous lack of resources and infrastructure. This is no longer the case for AIWCW and our members will receive the benefits of this improved expenditure.

Our members are professionals and deserve to be recognised as such. Social and Community Work is a complex profession requiring a diversity of expertise, and diversity in the sector is healthy and must not be lost as a result of misguided elitism. All professional associations within the community services sector should be working together to increase the skills and professionalism of workers so that they may, due to their diverse skill sets, be better able to meet their clients' needs. The issues confronting ongoing professionalism for workers within our industry are bigger than us as two professional associations — in fact, they are bigger than the ten or so professional associations within our industry across Australia. We should not be arguing amongst ourselves about whose qualification is better — the fact is, there are some poorly practicing 'qualified' social workers who should never be let loose on an unsuspecting public, just as there are some poorly practicing community workers, counsellors, psychologists, doctors and lawyers whose damage to vulnerable people is comparable to that inflicted by fully qualified but poorly practicing social workers.

However, AIWCW is the only association that allows all professionals with community services related diplomas or above qualifications an opportunity to control their own destiny — to influence the community services sector by exercising the democratic rights that experience, skills and qualifications entitle them to in our professional association. AIWCW also offers Affiliate status to workers within the sector who have no formal community services qualifications but considerable experience, and people with experience and certificate level qualifications. We do this based on our respect for diversity in expertise, education and methods of learning, not elitism.

Lynda Ford
Chief Executive Officer

How do we define a community worker?

"The level of understanding among the wider community of the sector's role and contribution is poor and deserves attention."
Productivity Commission Overview
January 2010, p.XXIII.

Too much diversity in the term and definition used to refer to the group of occupations that make up our sector hurts the understanding of what our members do and, ultimately, their value to society. If we are to move forward, we need a broad definition under the term 'community worker' that encapsulates all workers in the field, one that brings us together, and allows for specialisations within that group. Doctors make up many specialisations — paediatrics, orthopaedics, psychiatry — but are grouped together under a definition that shows their common link — they practice the profession of medicine. We need a definition that shows our common link.

We have some information on our website but we'd like to start a discussion about how we define a community worker. We've started a topic in our online forums in the new members' area of our website. To access the members' area, click on the 'Members Log In' link in the top right of our website. A new menu option will appear at the far right of the menu bar called 'Members menu'. We'll add a few definitions that have been provided by branch chairs and Professor Susan Kenny to get the discussion started.

Practice Reflexions

The latest issue of Practice Reflexions, AIWCW's free professional journal published online with Monash University, was released in December 2010. The issue contains a number of reflections on practice, a refereed article and a review of a book by Raj Patel that demystifies economics, global finance and politics, and can help community service workers in a number of ways.

The editors of Practice Reflexions would like to hear from practitioners who would like to write about their work and student analyses of their learning in field education placements for the next issue. Write to the editors and include a brief summary of an article you have in mind, or some ideas that you would like some help with to shape up into an article.

practice.reflexions@arts.monash.edu.au

The editors would also like to profile a highly effective agency in each issue, and refereed and non-refereed articles, book reviews, photographs, poems or short stories that capture the essence of the Vision Statement. The statement can be read on the home page of Practice Reflexions.

To view the December issue of Practice Reflexions, visit the 'Resources' section of **www.aiwcw.org.au**.

Branch news

VIC/SA/Tas

Vic/SA/Tas branch committee members and Victorian members met in February 2011 at the National Office to discuss the strategic plan. It was agreed to meet again to complete the exercise.

Roz Hanraty tendered her resignation as Secretary/Treasurer (but thankfully continues on as a Vic/SA/Tas Branch Committee Member). As a temporary measure, Leonie Poynter agreed to fulfill a Treasurer role and to mentor a new incumbent as soon as possible. Nida Khan took on the role of Secretary. Nasir Haider and Jesu Jacob remain active members and, by AGM time, it is anticipated that new members will join the Vic Branch Committee.

Viability of the Vic/SA/Tas branch remains a grave concern. Teleconferencing may help encourage other members to participate in meetings. Ringing up members to see how we can better engage them may help. Also finding out why members have dropped their membership. A ring around may be warranted.

Lynda Ford, CEO, presented an overview of the National Office and agency developments in the February meeting. Sean Wilson, Membership and Marketing Officer, also provided some interesting statistics about membership in Vic/SA/Tas.

At the next meeting, strategies to increase membership will be discussed as well as the final draft of the Branch Brochure which is to be disseminated this year via relevant TAFES and colleges. Other things to be considered will be a training event for members in Melbourne during 2011 linked to a Vic/SA/Tas Branch meeting. Clare (current Chair) offered to do a training session on working with trauma or something around cross-cultural work. No details have been finalised. Members were encouraged to participate in meetings via the new AIWCW website. Lynda Ford also spoke on the phone to some members to support the Vic/SA/Tas branch in its efforts to consolidate.

Clare Lincoln
Chair

Branch news

WA

The WA Branch met for two activities.

A Community Development Workshop on the 23rd October 2010

Dr Jan Richardson from Victoria spoke about the Community Development techniques she and her late husband, Stan Davey, used in the far North of WA to help Aboriginal people return to their country and set up and manage services to sustain their communities.

Lynda Ford, Chief Executive Officer of the AIWCW, presented the new directions for the AIWCW and presided over the WA Launch of the AIWCW website.

Other features of the meeting included:

The W.A. Book Launch of *Working for Welfare: A History of the Australian Institute of Welfare and Community Workers*.

Information about the Australian Institute of Welfare & Community Workers.

Networking. 21 people attended the workshop — 9 members, 1 trainer and 8 students from the College of Innovation Gosnells. 2 guests.

Christmas lunch 8th December 2010 was attended by 10 members

Held at Woodbridge on the banks of the Swan River in Guildford, adjacent to the beautiful heritage building Woodbridge House, which was built in 1885.

Diane Porter
Chair

National Office news

New staff

A number of new staff have joined the National Office. We now have a dedicated team covering all areas of operations including assessments, membership, marketing and management. Our staff are here to help you get the best out of your membership.

For more information and to see our updated organisational chart, visit the 'Structure and operation' page in the About Us tab in the menu at www.aiwcw.org.au.

Office location

We have moved to new premises at Level 5, 105 Queen Street, Melbourne. Our contact details are the same.

For details of how to contact us, please see the back page of this newsletter.

Membership renewals

We apologise for the delay in sending out membership renewal forms. We encountered delays due to the addition of new technology in our processes. Please be assured that future processes will be faster and more responsive as we continue to improve the application of technology in our systems.

Branch news

NSW/ACT

The meeting held on 19 February at the Hotel Gosford was attended by 7 members. A warm welcome was extended to Eric Trezise whom we had not seen for some time.

We were also pleased to welcome our CEO, Lynda Ford, from the National Office in Melbourne who gave us a comprehensive talk covering the changes which have taken place over the last six months in AIWCW.

1. The cut off point for the overseas student application fees to AIWCW was announced last November, to take effect on 1 July this year.
2. A change of venue for the National office.
3. New members of staff and their responsibilities were mentioned.
4. Changes to insurance cover, membership renewal forms, and a proposed change of name were just some of the items mentioned.

The CEO was thanked for her attendance.

Our Publicity Officer, Tony Beuermann, demonstrated a Power Point presentation, using the newly purchased projector, which will be used to advertise AIWCW to interested groups of students and those who need to be aware of what the organisation does and what it represents.

A copy of *Working for Welfare* was presented to Eric Trezise who attended the meeting and is a long standing member of AIWCW. These books are available for purchase by contacting Wendy Raine on (02) 4955 8430.

Monthly teleconference meetings are to be continued in the coming months.

Wendy Raine
Hon Treasurer



Branch news

QLD/NT

Wellskills 2011

Please circle Saturday, 6 August in your diary, as this is when our Wellskills 2011 will be held followed by the Annual General Meeting of the QLD/NT Branch. We are in the process of confirming the venue and, once this is confirmed, we will e-mail members to let them know where the Wellskills will be held.

This year we have set a goal for us to have a Wellskills in Emerald — we have tentatively set the date for Saturday, 22 October. Once again, we will confirm venue and all other details at our next meeting. The time for this meeting will be e-mailed to members, and any member wishing to join us via teleconferencing, can e-mail Alla — joalla@tpg.com.au.

The committee welcomes members wishing to join us via the teleconference.

Other news

The branch agreed to donate \$1,000 to the Community Centres and Family Support Network Association Queensland (CCFSNAQ) towards Flood Relief.

Christine van Didden, one of our committee members, has stepped down from her role as Branch Treasurer to become National Treasurer and, in doing so, Kerry Russell, has stepped up to the task as Branch Treasurer. Well done to you both.

Congratulations to Denise Bolland, a committee member who has been accepted into the Ph.D. Programme at Griffith University, and will sit on the Human Services and Social Work (Logan) and also the College of Art (Southbank). Her research will be within the homeless field.

Other dates for committee meetings are Friday, 27 May, 6.30pm; Friday, 15 July, 6.30pm. Saturday, 6 August will be our Wellskills and Annual General Meeting of the Qld/NT Branch.

On Sunday, 11 December, our yearly Christmas Luncheon will be held. Date, times and venue will be confirmed later in the year.

Airwaves our local newsletter is published quarterly and anyone wishing to receive a copy of this newsletter can e-mail Heather Binns, Editor:

heather.ccrep@optusnet.com.au

Congratulations if you are born in the Year of the Rabbit!

Rabbit people are wise, articulate, talented, virtuous, and have excellent taste. What can I say?

Alla Craigie
Secretary

Membership Assessment Panel Education Committee News

At the end of 2010 it was recommended by the Membership Assessment Panel (MAP) to the National Executive Committee that we become known as the Education Committee. Until the AGM and the proposed changes to the constitution, it will be known as the Membership Assessment Panel, Education Committee.

The last two months have been intense and challenging as we have reviewed the packaging of qualifications, policies and procedures for course approvals and fieldwork placements, liaised with numerous organisations and visited key stakeholders in the Vocation and Education Sector.

Assessment Officers have conducted audits with education providers in the VET sector, as well as assisted training organisations in meeting the AIWCW policies for gaining course approvals.

On Thursday, 17 February, CEO, Lynda Ford, Assessment Coordinator, David Sharma and I met with Managers and Teachers at TAFE NSW at Meadowbank, Sydney. This was a most productive meeting and I look forward to working with them in the future. The following day we met with the CEO of ACOSS, National Disability Services and the CEO and policy staff of the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council. Prior to this Lynda has had meetings with officers of various Commonwealth Departments and regulatory bodies to establish good rapport and communication.

As a committee we are aware of our mandate to promote education and training and to ensure that members have opportunities to enhance their skills. With this in mind, we are developing new Continuing Professional Education opportunities including the establishment of partnerships with organisations with expertise in particular areas.

As the Chair of the Education Committee, I thank all AIWCW staff and the committee members for their efforts and commitment in this review. The task is enormous and challenging but we will work through it. Thank you.

Claudia Cunningham
Chair
Education Committee



Level 5, 105 Queen Street
Melbourne, Victoria, 3000, Australia

Contact us

Mail PO Box 42
Flinders Lane VIC 8009

Phone (03) 9654 8287

Fax (03) 9654 1081

Email info@aiwcw.org.au



We want your feedback

We're making changes to our newsletter to make it more relevant to you. Newsletters will be released four times a year and are designed to help you keep informed with important updates about your professional association, and news about your industry and peers.

We'd like to hear what you want in your national newsletter.

Email suggestions to members@aiwcw.org.au