



Presidents Report

Date: May 2019

Happy Easter (a bit belated, sorry) to all members – hoping that everyone had a safe and chocolatey time.

NDIS continues to be a challenging workspace for some members and services across the country. The issue of unit pricing and service viability and achieving optimal, client focused goals that address continence promotion in addition to product choice continues to be raised by your committee. Unfortunately, neither CoNSA nor CFA have been invited to be a part of any review processes at government level and requests for support from CoNSA via letter or email do not necessarily provide a favourable, (or at times, any) response.

In addition to the letters already on the website, requests have been made to ANMF National about the issue – the response has been that in fact the pricing is an issue for all specialist nurses and that ANMF encourage all members to continue to advocate for higher pricing and has also been presented to CoNNMO at the May meeting with a request for support – at the time of this report; a response is not known.

A CoNSA member in NSW has independently negotiated a higher rate for service. As this has been successful, I would encourage all members with concerns about payment rates to write to their LAC (local area co-ordinator), with a request for a higher payment rate, outlining the reasons why this is justified for your service. It is suggested that the letter could highlight the following points, drawing attention to your specialist skills:

- The skill level required for neurogenic continence assessment
- The complexity of neurogenic related incontinence
- That appropriate continence management facilitates the person's community participation
- The difference between a pad/product list and a continence assessment

A follow-up face to face meeting with your LAC may also be helpful to promote further discussion and negotiation.

Additionally, members are encouraged to raise awareness in their local communities – letters to MPs etc. The more voices that are heard in our communities the louder they become.

CoNSA members will again have the opportunity to attend a cocktail party, generously sponsored by IA and Tena following our AGM on Wednesday 13th November 2019. This again promises to be a fantastic event, so save date. Further details will be forthcoming closer to the date and your committee and industry hosts hope to see a large turnout of our membership there. We will also be investigating options for members to join the AGM via Zoom Collaborate if you are unable to attend in person.

CoNSA National, led by Anna Ferrier and Joanne Cocks, have submitted an abstract to again facilitate a pelvic floor examination workshop for CoNSA members at the NCOI in Melbourne, on

Wednesday 13th November (am). This will provide an opportunity for members to improve their pelvic/rectal examination skills, which is an essential component of a comprehensive continence assessment and within the scope of practice of all nurse continence specialists. The workshop will use live models for examination. Places will be limited, so register early for this practical, hands-on learning opportunity designed for, and run by, nurse continence specialists.

Dr Joan Ostaszkiwicz, Janie Thompson and Elizabeth Watt have published their paper entitled “A national project to develop and validate practice standards for Australian nurse continence specialists” in the latest edition of the Australian and New Zealand Continence Journal. Congratulations ladies and thank you for your hard work and dedication to our profession.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank Vicki Patten, who has agreed to step into the CoNSA president role for the next couple of months. It has been necessary for me to take leave from the president role in the short term for personal reasons. Vicki is the current vice-president and I appreciate her support to CoNSA.

Regards

Joanne Dean