

Mid-year report to members

DAVID COLLIER *CHIEF EXECUTIVE.*

Every year with renewal comes the question, “but what does the AIR do for me as a member?”

The most obvious answer is always the provision of professional indemnity insurance, which is a vital part of your professional membership. What I have discovered, over time, is that many members do not appreciate that the AIR Professional Indemnity Policy has a feature provided for ‘unlimited run off cover’. This is extremely important for those who work in this profession, since the risk that a claim against a member may emerge only many years later, perhaps even after you have stopped working or retired. The policy we hold with Guild Insurance will still cover you and offer protection for any later events, provided that you were a member at the time of the event. This is something to check when looking at other policies that are offered to members.

Members will also know by now that the COAG mandated National Registration for healthcare practitioners will apply to the diagnostic and radiation therapy world from 1st July 2012. Professional Indemnity insurance is a mandatory requirement with national registration and therefore those members who are not currently required to be registered, that is those who are working in New South Wales and South Australia, will need to ensure that they have the appropriate professional indemnity cover.

In addition to the professional indemnity aspect, is the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) side. CPD is also legislated to become mandatory under National Registration. All practitioners in Australia will be required to demonstrate CPD. In reviewing other health professions already part of National Registration, “CPD activities should be relevant to the area of professional practice and have clear learning aims and objectives that meet the individual’s requirements.” Although the Continuing Professional Development Registration Standard has not been released for Medical Radiations Practitioners as yet, the AIR has always had the foresight to take steps to



move the profession forwards and set the professional benchmark.

As per the article in the June *Spectrum*, the AIR CPD programme now requires practitioners to accrue and lodge 50 credits per year. The AIR recognises that the profession is progressing in leaps and bounds, technologically and also educationally. Gone are the days of practitioners resting on their laurels and not improving the quality and standard provision of care to the patients. The practitioner is now expected to perform at a higher level and achieve satisfaction in the knowledge that they have contributed to the knowledge base of their peers. The key to all of this is consistency in documenting the knowledge and significant learnings that have altered and improved practice. On this basis, our CPD programme is arguably the best and most functional available to meet this new government requirement.

The extent to which your professional body has extended its reach and participation throughout the profession is significant. Negotiations with the Department of Health and Ageing have resulted in some very attractive scholarships being offered to the Rural and Remote Medical Imaging Community. Currently 16

graduate practitioners and 13 postgraduate practitioners have been fortunate enough to be recipients of this scholarship, with many more to be offered over the next couple of years.

The AIR contributes significantly in a number of professional deliberations through the Commonwealth and locally; your elected members give up hours of their time to work for the best outcome for the profession. Every time that I hear someone say to me ‘what does the AIR do for me’, I think about these people who so readily give of their time and their knowledge to ensure that the profession is well represented and involved at the most direct level in what is happening across Australia.

Membership is not just about Professional Indemnity Insurance, journals, scholarships and CPD. It is more than this. It is about a belief that you can take opportunities to make a difference to your profession for the progression of your own career development, but most importantly it is about striving for excellence in the diagnosis and treatment of our patients.

Our Rural and Remote Practitioners Advisory Panel have worked tirelessly to bring forward for professional consideration a

number of initiatives – most recently the Discussion Paper on Limited Licence Remote X-ray Operator Radiography in Australia which is on our website for feedback. Then there is the Medical Imaging Advisory Panel 1 – MIAP 1 which has been working for some time on a range of initiatives centred on the education of radiographers and specialist recognition in various media and forms, such as DR/CR, CT and MRI. MIAP 2, representing mammography, ultrasound and related fields has been similarly occupied with review of a range of educational matters in their area of expertise and, for radiation therapy, the RTAP team is about to launch into further extension of education and development. All of this work builds better professional standards, and underpinning it are the two key teams, the PAEB and OQAP, who play such an important and demanding role in assessing and maintaining those professional standards of which members of the AIR can be so proud.

Somewhat overshadowing all of this has been the work of the APAP and the associated Inter Professional Advisory Team which has

now met three times to discuss Advanced Practice and where this may be recognised and accredited. There will be significant implications to career development for practitioners as a result of the strategic initiatives identified through these forums. These are just some of the activities of the AIR's professional panels.

Better identification of the make-up of the profession will enable the panels to achieve more to provide better long-term outcomes. Later this year the AIR will conduct a second profession wide survey. Our previous study has been invaluable in redirecting a number of activities and more importantly allowing us to discuss with confidence the real state of the profession in Australia. In this year's study we would like not only to ask our key questions but also to ask members to participate in a replication study on EQ (emotional Intelligence) which would enable benchmarking internationally. We hope that as many members as possible try to complete the on-line survey when it comes out.

Applications are invited for position of Project Officer for the Australian Institute of Radiography

An exciting opportunity has arisen for an experienced Project Officer to develop an accelerated postgraduate course in mammography that will help increase the availability and supply of qualified mammographers eligible to work within BreastScreen Australia.

The Project Objectives are

- To help increase the recruitment of mammographers within BreastScreen Australia by providing eligible students with access to quality, accredited and recognised tertiary education.
- To help ensure BreastScreen Australia has a quality workforce supply in order to meet demand for breast screening services into the future.
- To increase the supply and recruitment of qualified professionals to work in the field of medical imaging and radiation sciences more broadly, by providing a course in mammography that may enable graduates to pursue further qualifications if they so choose.
- To ensure that any course developed is of the required standard to ensure that the standards of practice for mammography are optimised.

By increasing the pool of suitably qualified mammographers, to help ensure that BreastScreen Australia continues to provide high quality, timely breast screening services to eligible women.

This is a part time which will offer the right candidate an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Medical Radiation Professions in Australia. The successful candidate will be part of a progressive team working within the peak body to provide quality programmes for practitioners developing clinical knowledge and skills.

Position Description

The roles and responsibilities of the Project Officer include, but are not limited to the following:

Assist the Professional Accreditation and Education Board of the Australian Institute of Radiography in defining:

- Entry level qualifications and clinical experience required for the programme;
- Practice standards for provisional and practitioner accreditation levels (using existing Competency Based Standards for issuance of Certificate of Clinical Proficiency in Mammography (CCPM) as a basis); and
- Course development guidelines for educational providers, including requirements for appropriate clinical training and facilities.

Identify and liaise with all relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to:

- BreastScreen Australia, including the Department of Health and Ageing;
- Other breast imaging providers;
- Medical Imaging Advisory Panel 2 (MIAP 2);
- External advisors;
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency;
- Educational providers; and
- Course accreditors.

Identify all legal and professional requirements relevant to the proposal;

- Benchmarking against international comparators;
- Assist educational providers in course development; and in collaboration with secretariat staff;
- Facilitating stakeholder meetings;
- Production of meeting agenda and minutes; and
- Production of draft documents.

Desirable Qualifications

The project officer will be required to have the following skills and attributes:

- Industry understanding of breast imaging;
- Previous clinical practice in breast imaging;
- Understanding of the role of MIAP 2, and with specific reference to CCPM and Advanced Breast Imaging Certificate awards and processes;
- Understanding of professional accreditation processes in health care;
- Previous experience in development of practice standards for healthcare delivery;
- Understanding of the regulatory environment relevant to breast imaging; and
- Ability to communicate effectively with interdisciplinary teams including educational providers, clinical staff, regulatory bodies, industry representatives and students.

For further information or to apply please contact David Collier David. Collier@air.asn.au or to apply;

Applications close on 3rd August 2011 and should be addressed to: Mr David Collier – Chief Executive – Confidential Application Australian Institute of Radiography P.O. Box 16234 Collins Street West, Vic 8007 Or by e-mail (word documents only please) to David.Collier@air.asn.au