



## AUSTRALIAN STROKE COALITION

### MEMBER ORGANISATION REPORTS APRIL 2011

#### Consumer representation

Consumers have been represented by Eleanor Horton and Paul Howells on the ASC. Paul recently resigned after securing full-time work and his time has been appreciated.

Eleanor is a long standing member of stroke support groups and the carer of a stroke survivor for the past eleven years. Over the past twelve months, Eleanor has been a consumer representative on the Queensland State Stroke Clinical Network and has attended the stroke forum. Eleanor intends to facilitate at the upcoming SmartStrokes Conference.

#### Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA)

The Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) is represented by Associate Professor Julie Bernhardt, Director, Director, AVERT Early Intervention Research Program, National Stroke Research Institute.

#### Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months

- Completed first acute stroke training course in Sydney, March 2010. Another now scheduled for Perth, WA early 2011.
- Completed an Acute Neurological Physiotherapy reference manual for new graduates and physiotherapists commencing work in the acute hospital environment. The manual includes a chapter on Stroke as one of the major disease groups treated by physiotherapists. The manual is awaiting publications
- Liaison with the World Confederation of Physical Therapists (WCPT) to form an international Neurological Physiotherapy Special Interest Group. Julie Bernhardt and Louise Ada have been on this working group and the new special interest group will be ratified at the next WCPT meeting in June 20-23 in Amsterdam.
- Publication of an Editorial in the Journal of physiotherapy (Australian) by Julie Bernhardt, Gert Kwakkel (Netherlands) and Lena van Koch (Sweden) as a result of a presentation of the APA conference in 2009 titled "Improving the quality of stroke care". The Editorial urges physiotherapists to engage in development and promotion of process of care indicators that reflect their practice (not just assessment).
- Promotion of Jacqui Ancliffe's Stroke Care Champion Award by the NSF and SSA in the Physiotherapy Monthly Bulletin 'In Motion'.

#### Current Stroke Related Activities

- Two focused symposia on stroke have also been developed for next WCPT meeting in the Netherlands with significant input from Australian Physiotherapists Cath Dean, Anne Moseley and Louise Ada.
- National professional development planned for 2011 includes: Preventing falls in people with neurological disorders (NSW); Brains, cognition and rehabilitation (SA); Clinical management of spasticity (WA); Management of acute stroke (WA).

### **Future Plans relating to Stroke**

- Ongoing development of evidence based professional development around stroke.
- Promoting physiotherapy researchers and research related to stroke at International meetings, including development and conduct of workshops in this field.

### **Other information relevant to the ASC**

A post congress (Stroke Society of Australasia (SSA) satellite meeting was held this year with an interdisciplinary group to discuss the development of a core set of outcome measures in stroke. The meeting was held at the NSRI and further discussions on this complex issue are planned. Susan Hillier suggested that this project may sit well under ASC however no decision was made about the best way forward at this point. This needs to be followed up.

### **Tasmanian Branch ASUN**

The Tasmanian stroke network is represented by Dr Helen Castley, Head of Stroke Services, Royal Hobart Hospital.

### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

- Scientific meeting bringing together members of stroke units across Tasmania to facilitate unified approach to referral and assessment of strokes to stroke units.
- Establishment of a rapid access TIA clinic.

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

- Development of protocols for acute assessment and management of acute stroke and TIA patients.
- Develop transfer protocols between secondary and tertiary centres.

### **Future Plans relating to Stroke**

- Closer linkage through Aged Care and Rehabilitation Clinical Network with rehabilitation and community providers to enable more seamless management of stroke survivors.

### **Council of Ambulance Authorities (CAA)**

The Council of Ambulance Authorities is represented by Dr Hugh Grantham, Executive Director, Clinical Services, South Australian Ambulance Service.

### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

- All ambulance services across Australia have agreed to respond to stroke as a high priority call.

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

- Several states are setting up stroke bypass systems. The rate is limited by the development time of the medical response system.
- South Australia is ready to begin and are currently negotiating with SA Health to get final approval.

### **Australian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM)**

The Australian College of Emergency Medicine is represented by Dr Anthony Cross, Chair of ACEM Scientific Committee.

### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

- ACEM endorsed the NICS care bundle. The more reasoned approach to thrombolysis and the increasing emphasis on the role of a Stroke Unit and Stroke Physicians has made it much less controversial. The bulk of the bundle and the stroke guidelines are straightforward reasonable clinical care.

### **Other information relevant to the ASC**

- There is still a wide range of opinions amongst Emergency Physicians about the correct interpretation of the literature on thrombolysis in stroke. However, given the fact that aggressive stroke units are responding rapidly to appropriate patients and involving themselves in the decision making it seems to have bypassed the need to ask Emergency Physicians to administer what they may see as a controversial and potentially risky therapy.

### **Queensland Statewide Stroke Network**

The Queensland Statewide Stroke Network is represented by Greg Cadigan, Principal Project Officer and Dr Kong Goh, Rehabilitation Physician, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

- Endorsement of the “Integrated Stroke Services for Queensland Framework” has now been endorsed by the Queensland Statewide Stroke Clinical Network, Executive Management Team EMT and District CEOs. Phase 2 has now commenced and when completed in 12 months, the plan will be to present it back to Integrated Policy & Planning Executive Committee (IPPEC) for endorsement as Queensland Health Policy.
- Clinical Practice Improvement Payment (CPIP) scheme is a clinical improvement strategy to encourage and financially reward individual facilities for safe and high quality care, (as per the number of stroke patients receiving *Dysphagia screening within 24hrs*). The concept of including an incentive component to improve the outcomes and efficiency of hospitals has now been extended until 2013 by the Resources Executive to a total of Eight Million (\$8M).

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

#### **Priority Area 1: Clinical Indicators (VLADs Working Group)**

The primary role of the Stroke VLAD working group is to provide expert opinion & evidence based advice regarding current and future indicators to be monitored using the variable Life Adjusted Display or other statistical monitoring methodology, this will ensure that the clinical indicators are:

- clinically significant
- clearly defined
- statistically reliable
- Responsive to change in progresses or clinical practice.

This will compliment the data currently collected by the network, and particularly the 3 new clinical indicators - this will also support the above mentioned CPIP scheme.

#### **Priority Area 2: Integrated Stroke Services for Queensland Framework: Phase 2**

With a successful Queensland Strategy now endorsed and highlighted through Health Planning & Infrastructure Division, phase 2 of the project has now commenced with a memo sent to all District CEO's seeking there support to:

- Obtain patient specific data pertaining to all stroke presentations in a facility for the financial year of 2009

- Complete a chart audit of between 20-30 charts per selected facility and analyze the acquired data in conjunction with that provided through the National audits. The outcome is to increase the capacity for Queensland Health to offer evidence based stroke unit care to Queenslanders with stroke at selected pilot sites.
- Develop strategies for stroke unit implementation
- Define the sub-acute beds required to provide evidence based care across the continuum to this patient group.
- Assist in maximizing utilization of subacute bed days in an activity based funding environment.

Presently the audits are intended for Metro North, Cairns and Hinterland and Darling Downs-West Moreton districts only, however data may be sought from other districts at a later date to further validate findings.

### **Priority Area 3: Development of a Thrombolysis pathway and review of current TIA pathway**

- Both these pathways continue to be developed with the revised TIA pathway nearing its revamp – it will then be taken to the Network for final endorsement. The statewide thrombolysis pathway is also progressing.

### **Priority Area 4: National Stroke Registry (AuSCR)**

- The QLD RBWH HREC met on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February and granted approval for all QLD hospitals listed in the application to now start moving forward with the AuSCR process and look at site specific applications.
- The next step for the network is to now identify what clinical indicators specific to Queensland should be collected as a sub-spine to the AuSCR data base.

### **Priority Area 5: Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes**

- The Queensland Rural Stroke Outreach Service has been granted project funding through the COAG Closing the Gap funding initiative to support the development of two Indigenous Stroke Units, one in the north of the state and one in the south.
- Phase 1 (*of a 3 year project*): will seek engagement regarding culturally appropriate pathways for evidence based care across the continuum with Phase 2 of the project around developing services which would include dedicated indigenous stroke unit beds as well as telehealth health & outreach support.
- Currently a reference group is being established and an EOI sent out for a Project Officer.

### **National Stroke Foundation**

The National Stroke Foundation is represented by Dr Erin Lalor, Chief Executive Officer and Chris Price, Divisional Director – Stroke Services.

### **Achievements related to stroke in 2010**

#### **Prevention & Awareness**

- Know Your Numbers (KYN) expanded to include 719 pharmacy pressure stations in 2010
- Seminar kit Vic Rural project distributes 63 kits to health professionals, where 54 seminars were delivered reaching over 700 people
- 14 volunteers were recruited and trained as strokesafe ambassadors in February 2010 and as of 30 September, 12 volunteers were still active

- As of 30 September 2010 a total of 60 strokesafe Community Education talks have been delivered nationally (45 in Vic using strokesafe ambassadors, 11 TAS and 4 WA). Fulfilment rate in Victoria is 75% due to availability of volunteer strokesafe ambassadors. We have reached 1176 people in Victoria to date and 407 people in Tasmania. New FAST interactive elements (signs of stroke website [www.signsofstroke.com.au](http://www.signsofstroke.com.au) and FAST iPhone application) was launched
- Successful launches in 3 states (VIC, TAS & WA)
- 3816 Stroke Week packs were distributed (↑65%)
- New partnerships developed with RSL, U3A and Bowls associations nationally (with continued partnership with Golf).

#### **Stroke Services**

- National Stroke Audit- Rehabilitation- 92 Public 15 Private Hospitals (96 in clinical)
- Release of new combined clinical guidelines and discipline specific concise guidelines for stroke management
- Over 15,000 downloads relating to the new guidelines since September 2010
- StrokeLink now expanded to 35 Hospitals across Queensland
- Completed review of stroke services framework.
- Stroke Indicator set now available through ACHS indicator program.

#### **Life After Stroke**

- Stroke Support Groups: Toolkit implemented, leadership development program planned for May, process in place to establish 2 new groups each in TAS and WA
- StrokeConnect: Rolling national implementation starting in NSW and QLD, EOI now out in both states. 399 members of StrokeConnect Online, site has had a refresh with new functionality and increased usability.
- Received funding from QLD government to run a multi site pilot of a locally run stroke specific self management program
- Comprehensive consumer resource: consultations with consumers and health professionals complete. Currently in design phase prior to pilot of the new resource

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

#### **Prevention and Awareness**

- A program of year-round social marketing activities is being planned to disseminate the FAST message, including new partnerships and corporate support for social marketing and digital media. The NSF is grateful to have received confirmation of a \$50,000 from the Gandel Trust to support this year's media and print campaign.
- The NSF is holding a pilot stroke prevention webinar at 1pm on 30 March 2011. This is a live, internet-based and interactive educational event presenting key facts about stroke through presentations by the relative of a stroke survivor and Prof. Simon Koblar. A recorded version of this event will be made available via the NSF website.
- NSF will shortly publish the findings of the 2010 Stroke Awareness Survey, a summary of public awareness on key stroke facts from a telephone-based survey of a nationally-representative sample of adults aged 40 years and over.
- Volunteer community stroke educators have been recruited and trained in Victoria and Western Australia, and will be available to deliver stroke prevention talks to community groups over the year.

### **Stroke Services**

- Commenced 3<sup>rd</sup> Audit of acute stroke services, currently 150 sites signed up.
- Developed on-line audit tool with improved flexibility.
- Concise guidelines for nursing being drafted.
- 3 audit workshops to run in April/May in Qld/NSW/Victoria
- Regional StrokeLink Forum being planned
- Continue to support hospital sites in Qld

### **Life After Stroke**

- StrokeConnect: Business case nearing completion, evaluation in development, to be undertaken early 2011
- Self Management: Developing a model for a "Train the Trainer"
- Comprehensive consumer information resource: undertaking a consultation process which is now near completion with the final consumer interviews to be undertaken.

### **Future Plans relating to Stroke**

#### **Prevention and Awareness**

- Early planning has commenced to conduct three further webinars during the Stroke Society of Australasia (SSA) conference as part of National Stroke Week. NSF is working with the conference organizers to hold one event on each of the conference themes of prevention, thrombolysis and recovery/stem-cell repair, to enable both health professionals and the general public to access the cutting-edge research being presented.
- A Community Education Forum on stroke prevention and life after stroke is scheduled for 26 May at the Kirribilli Club in North Sydney.
- Know your numbers annual week long campaign is being held 16th – 22nd May 2011 in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria in over 900 various community locations including pharmacy, community health services, rotary club events and YMCA branches. The annual campaign aims to check the blood pressure of over 60,000 people.
- Know your numbers Diabetes Enhancement Pilot Program will be implemented in 119 Queensland pharmacies from April – July 2011. A Know your numbers blood pressure check will be conducted in addition to the Australian Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool questionnaire and a non-fasting blood glucose test (in selected pilot pharmacies). The pilot program aims to check 10,000 people.

#### **Stroke Services:**

- Develop a long term strategy for improving the uptake and delivery of evidenced based practice
- Explore improved reporting and feedback of data, including improved links between audit and AuSCR. .
- Increase publications; submit up to 4 abstracts and 3 journal articles from 2010 rehabilitation audit.
- Increase participation in 2011 acute services audit
- New position to assist with developing resources both hard copy and online for implementation of new guidelines
- Explore other methods to engage and support HPs to uptake evidenced based practice. Linking to improved resource development.

#### **Life After Stroke**

- Stroke Connect : Evaluate, develop national roll out plan for mid 2011 SC Online: Implement a recruitment and retention strategy, & develop second stage development plans

- Counselling: Evaluate the training program and complete final report Stroke Survivor Kit: Pilot, evaluate, distribute resource
- Stroke Support groups: Implement framework, distribute toolkit, develop and implement growth strategy

### **South Australian Stroke Clinical Network**

The South Australian Stroke Clinical Network is represented by Dr Andrew Lee, Regional Director of Stroke Medicine, Flinders Medical Centre, Repatriation General Hospital and Noarlunga Hospital and Dr Susan Hillier, Senior Lecturer - Biomechanics and Neuroscience, School of Health Sciences, University of South Australia.

### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

- The Network has developed a recommendation paper for a centralised TIA service in metropolitan South Australia that has been submitted to SA Health for consideration.
- The TIA work group provided a pathway for a centralised TIA service including a telephone triage system that was included in the TIA paper.
- The Rehabilitation work group has developed a stroke rehabilitation pathway with a decision support tool to determine the right environment for rehabilitation that also provides a place where the patient needs to tell their story once only. This is also with SA Health for consideration.
- The Acute work group developed a pre-hospital pathway and pathways for the first 48 hours of stroke care.
- The Network has worked with SA Ambulance to implement the pre-hospital notification protocol that is expected to begin in the next month. This will see patients eligible for thrombolysis transported directly to a metropolitan stroke unit hospital.

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

The Metropolitan Stroke Service Report is in its final stages and will support the pathways in relation to resources and infrastructure. The report provides advice to SA Health about the appropriate number of beds required for each stroke unit, the infrastructure to support the stroke unit and the workforce required to provide the service, for both acute and rehabilitation.

A country Stroke Service Report is in the early stages of development. This report will be similar to the Metropolitan Report, providing advice to SA Health about appropriate bed numbers, infrastructure and workforce for both acute and rehabilitation.

#### **Network Work Groups:**

The acute work group is now focusing on imaging pathways, multi-modal imaging initially followed by intra-arterial therapy.

A paediatric stroke pathway will be developed this year through a series of meetings.

A data work group will be convened in a few months to look at a statewide data set that will reduce the burden of collecting individual data for different areas. It will also provide an opportunity for quality improvement and monitoring of services.

### **Future Plans relating to Stroke**

A Stroke Network Forum will be held on Tuesday 5 April 2011. The forum will provide the opportunity for the wider Network members to see the outcomes from the last year and provide advice about future work.

### **Royal College of Nursing Australia (RCNA)**

The Royal College of Nursing Australia is represented by Sandra Lever, Rehabilitation Clinical Nurse Consultant at the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney.

### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

Royal College of Nursing, *Australia* (RCNA), as Australia's peak professional nursing organisation, has continued to maintain an interest in issues relating to stroke over the past 12 months, primarily from a national nursing perspective. This has been undertaken through:

- our ongoing representation on the Australia Stroke Coalition
- responding to policy developments relevant to stroke
- the provision of information on stroke related matters and activity to our broader membership.

As part of this commitment in the last 12 months, RCNA has actively liaised with member experts to provide a response from a professional nursing perspective to the National Stroke Foundation consultation on the draft *National Clinical Guidelines for Stroke Management 2010*. Additionally, whilst not specifically related to stroke, RCNA also provided feedback to the Department of Health and Ageing's review of the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI), which included comment on the effectiveness of the current assessment tools to reflect and respond to the impact of stroke and other catastrophic events in the context of aged care. Furthermore, RCNA expert members were encouraged to provide feedback to a draft of the Australian Stroke Specific Education Framework. RCNA's response was in support of the document that will assist in providing guidance and consistency in the provision of stroke education.

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

RCNA activities include ongoing monitoring of local, state and national issues relevant to stroke, monitoring opportunities to promote any nursing and/or nurse-led service delivery and innovations in relation to stroke, continued support for RCNA member representation on the Australian Stroke Coalition and openness to providing 3LP educational material and courses related to stroke as opportunity arises.

### **Future Plans relating to Stroke**

RCNA plans to continue our ongoing commitment to facilitate collegial activity and promote stroke related discourse within the profession as opportunity arises. RCNA also plans to continue to provide discussion forums for members to access and potentially utilise for dialogue around stroke related issues and is positioned to respond should the membership seek the development of a specialist discussion group to expand stroke related activity within the membership

### **Stroke Society of Australasia**

The Stroke Society of Australasia is represented by Professor Amanda Thrift, Head, Epidemiology and Prevention Unit at Monash University, Dr Mark Parsons, Senior Staff Neurologist, John Hunter Hospital and Dr Erin Godecke, Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Speech Pathology at the School of Psychology and Social Sciences Edith Cowan University.



### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

We had a very successful annual scientific meeting of the SSA in Melbourne on September 1-3. The programme included a wide range of topics related to Stroke in Indigenous and Disadvantaged Populations, the Australian Telestroke Experience, Nutritional Depletion, Small Vessel Disease, Palliative Care, Neurointervention, and Rehabilitation. The meeting was the largest standalone meeting that the SSA has ever had, and was largely due to the sterling efforts of A/Prof Julie Bernhardt, the conference convenor.

We provided five travel awards for nurses and allied health professionals to attend the annual scientific meeting of the Stroke Society of Australasia in Melbourne in September 2010. Nurses and allied health professionals from South Australia, New South Wales, country Victoria, and Western School of Psychology and Social Sciences Edith Cowan University We made a significant financial contribution to developing a Stroke Register in Australia (AuSCR).

We awarded an overseas travelling fellowship to Associate Professor Simon Koblar to travel to the UK to undertake some research in stroke.

In partnership with the Department of Human Services we developed a stroke eLearning tool that is located at [www.estroke.com.au](http://www.estroke.com.au). The initial evaluation of the web site suggests that clinicians and researchers have found it valuable.

We developed a travel fund so that nursing and allied health SSA members can apply for financial support to attend other stroke-related local, national and international conferences. The next of these rounds closes on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2011.

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

We have helped develop a document to request a Medicare item for administering thrombolysis. This proposal has been submitted and is currently being reviewed.

We have been undertaking a scoping exercise to help develop a National Stroke Research Network.

We have a sensational programme organised for the SSA Annual Scientific Meeting to be held in Adelaide from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September. The theme for this 22<sup>nd</sup> SSA-ASM is: **'Challenges in the New Millennium: Prevention, Thrombolysis & Repair!'** To join us we have an impressive line up of Keynote Speakers who include Werner Hacke (Germany), Argye Hillis (USA), Stefano Pluchino (UK), and James Mick (USA). The SSA-ASM 2011 will build around these themes and speakers to cross all disciplines and interests. There will also be three satellite sessions: Tuesday afternoon 13th September on 'Comprehensive Stroke Care for All' that will target Nursing, Allied Health and Rehabilitation; Tuesday afternoon 13th September on 'Stroke Advocacy – getting the message across!' and Saturday 17th September on 'TIA Stroke Prevention for Primary Practice'. We are currently accepting abstracts. Please go to [http://www.strokesociety.com.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=140&Itemid=162](http://www.strokesociety.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=140&Itemid=162)

### **Future Plans relating to Stroke**

We have committed to financially supporting ongoing stroke initiatives and projects in 2011.

There is a proposal to add to the eStroke web education tool that has been developed in partnership with the Department of Human Services. Negotiations about potential collaborations with other groups wanting to develop other tools are ongoing.

## **Stroke Services NSW [(SSNSW) (NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation – ACI)]**

Stroke Services NSW is represented by Mark Longworth, Manager Statewide Stroke Services

NSW, Agency for Clinical Innovation and Pip Galland, Stroke Liaison Officer, Westmead Hospital and Co-chair of SSNSW.

Role: To develop a coordinated approach to stroke services across NSW, sharing available resources and promoting expertise.

### Achievements:

- From 2003 to 2010 35 stroke services (acute stroke units & stroke services) have commenced in NSW public hospitals.
- The stroke services have been audited (5,100 audits completed 2003-2010) in terms of patient outcomes. A report titled “Stroke Outcomes identified from the Development and Implementation of Stroke Services in New South Wales-2003-2010” was tabled with Professor D Picone-Director General NSW Health in February 2011.
- The evaluation of the current rural stroke services has been completed in consultation with the NSRI. The report to NSW Health Statewide Services Development Branch will be completed in May–June 2011. Further audits (baseline/post implementation) will be undertaken in Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Lismore and Tweed during 2011/2012. The network continues to encourage NSW stroke services to participate in the NSF national audit process
- During 2010 the network facilitated 7 rural education workshops. The audience for the workshops were allied health, ambulance and nursing from rural inpatient, OPD and community settings. Each of the workshops were followed by an educational evening for general practitioners and hospital emergency department/ inpatient medical staff
- Members of SSNSW form the committee for SMART STROKES conference. The August 2010 conference was held in Terrigal NSW and attracted 270 clinicians and \$13000 was awarded in scholarships through the SMART STROKES scholarship fund
- Attached are 3 NMHRC funded research projects that are being undertaken by clinicians from SSNSW

### Current priorities:

- A 2 year project titled the Statewide Stroke Thrombolysis Project commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2011. The project is a collaboration between NSW Health, Ambulance Service NSW (ASNSW) and SSNSW. The committee is responsible for providing strategic advice on state-wide opportunities for improving the way Stroke Thrombolysis services are provided within NSW. The key focus is on improving the acute stroke patient journey
- SSNSW clinicians attend the NSW Health Clinical Redesign Rehabilitation working party. The working party is addressing issues relating to early assessment for rehabilitation and included in the terms of reference is the need consider systems to address egress block for stroke patients requiring rehabilitation

- SSNSW, in collaboration with the Neurosurgery Network of ACI, is developing a business plan (with pilot in Northern NSW) for the development of services for Interventional Stroke Therapies (IST) to treat ischaemic stroke
- SSNSW is participating in development of the Australian Stroke Clinical Registry.
- SSNSW, in consultation with the ACI Communications and Consumer manager is working with NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service, ASNSW, National Stroke Foundation and clinicians to pursue the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Carers Framework: Strategies to Meet the Needs of Carers NSW Health guidelines
- Collaboration has been undertaken with the Cardiac and Endocrine networks of ACI to undertake 3 DICAST (**D**iabetes, **C**ardiac & **S**troke) educational meetings in rural NSW. The format uses a challenging patient journey that flows through the 2 day workshop program plus the patient journey is utilised at the “Speed Dating with Specialists” evening educational meeting for GPs. The meetings are supported by sanofi-aventis
- The SMART STROKES conference in 2011 is being held on the Gold Coast, Queensland (Qld) 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> August. The conference being conjointly funded between the Qld Statewide Stroke Clinical Network and SSNSW. A record 92 abstracts were received for the conference. With support from QLD Health and SMART STROKES \$37000 scholarships will be allocated through the combined scholarship fund
- Planning has commenced for the combined SMART STROKES/SSA ASM to be held in Sydney 29-31/8/2012. This combined meeting was last held in 2008 and 560 delegates attended

## **Occupational Therapy Australia**

Occupational Therapy Australia is represented by Dr Louise Gustaffson, Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Division of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, The University of Queensland

### **Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months**

- Occupational Therapy Australia has been involved in a project managed by Allied Health Professions Australia - AHPA - to develop an information brochure, website and other materials targeted at GPs and other health professionals to raise awareness of the role of occupational therapy (and other allied health professionals) in the management of chronic disease. This is currently being piloted and is expected to go live soon.

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

- Occupational Therapy Australia distributed the draft clinical guidelines for stroke management amongst the membership for comment and feedback
- Occupational Therapy Australia is participating in an alliance of allied health and the medical profession (specifically the Royal Australian College of Physicians – Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine) to develop a National Rehabilitation Strategy. The first draft of this strategy was presented to the Commonwealth Department of Health and

Ageing in March and received a favourable response. Work is to continue on this strategy

- Occupational Therapists in each state and territory are involved (in varying degrees) in local special interest groups and communities of practice in relation to neurology, aged care and rehabilitation
- At present, continuing professional development activities in relation to stroke are coordinated and prepared by members within our state and territory member associations. Restructuring will facilitate greater access by more members to more CPD.

#### **Future Plans relating to Stroke**

- As indicated above, Occupational Therapists in each state and territory are currently involved (in variable degrees) in local special interest groups and communities of practice in relation to neurology, aged care and rehabilitation. Upon completion of the restructure, Occupational Therapy Australia will provide a communication infrastructure that will allow members to converse and interact with each other across the country.

### **Speech Pathology Australia 2011**

Speech Pathology Australia is represented by Christina Wilson, Senior Advisor Professional Issues.

#### **Activities related to stroke over the past 12 months**

Speech Pathology Australia provided representation and extensive input into the development of the ASSIST Tool for Screening of Dysphagia associated with stroke. This project was run through the Victorian Department of Health. The screening tool has not formally been released yet and is still currently being trialled at 10 sites. After feedback from the pilot sites, the Department is hoping to release the full package after Easter.

Speech Pathology developed an “Election Platform” document for lobbying purposes prior to the Federal election in 2010. Speech Pathology Australia used the document to promote dialogue and seek commitment from the political parties to address the needs of Australian with speech, language and communication impairment and swallowing difficulties. The document contained several fast facts about stroke.

- ✓ Twenty-five percent (25%) of people who suffer a stroke have aphasia (acquired speech and language difficulties)
- ✓ More than 85,000 Australians are living with aphasia, a chronic communication disability, following stroke.

The Association provided a response to a project conducted by Queensland Health on an ICU Benchmarking and Service Delivery Model for Allied Health. SPA commented on the need for speech pathologists to deal with patients in ICU with tracheostomy and swallowing problems (some of this population are diagnosed with stroke).

Speech Pathology Australia participated in a one day meeting recently in Sydney as part of a National Rehabilitation Alliance, organised by the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine.

In 2010, Speech Pathology Australia responded to the request for revision of the Standards of the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine.

At a state-based level, speech pathologists continue to participate in special interest groups and professional development activities related to stroke. Some examples are listed below:

- ✓ The 2011 National Tour by Associate Professor Leanne Togher, PhD, presented “Recent advances in aphasia rehabilitation” in ACT, NSW, SA, Qld, Tas, and Vic Branches.
- ✓ “Beyond undergraduate dysphagia: the oesophagus, respiration and active treatment of the nil by mouth patient” by Dr Julie Cichero, NSW
- ✓ “Assessment and treatment of acquired and developmental disorders of reading and spelling” by Professor Lyndsey Nickels, NSW
- ✓ “Diagnosis and Treatment of Acquired Apraxia of Speech: Where are we up to?” by Associate Professor Kirrie J Ballard, QLD
- ✓ “Righting Reading and Writing: Psycholinguistic Approaches to Acquired Dyslexia and Dysgraphia” by Elizabeth Cardell, PhD, QLD
- ✓ “Neurology Update” by Professor Bruce Murdoch QLD
- ✓ “Dysarthria Management” by Professor Deborah Theodoros QLD
- ✓ ‘Aphasia workshop: Recent Advances in Aphasia Intervention’ by Dr Jacinta Douglas, VIC
- ✓ “Cognitive neuropsychological approaches to aphasia therapy: Beyond single words and into non-verbal domains” by Dr Miranda Rose, VIC
- ✓ “Social Approaches to Aphasia: An Update” by Professor Beth Armstrong, WA
- ✓ “The Forgotten Hemisphere? Updating Right Practices” by Dr Elizabeth Cardell, WA
- ✓ “Peeling Back the Layers: Treating Sentence Level Deficits in Aphasia” by Dr Anne Whitworth, WA

Speech Pathology Australia is currently revising and updating the Clinical Guideline for Dysphagia. An Expression of Interest will be in the April “speak out” for a project officer to review the Clinical Guideline: Modified Barium Swallow.

### **Victorian Stroke Clinical Network (VSCN)**

The Victorian Stroke Clinical Network (VSCN) is represented by Sonia Denisenko, Manager, Victorian Stroke Clinical Network and Professor Chris Bladin, Director of Neuroscience and Head of Acute Stroke Unit, Department of Neurosciences, Box Hill Hospital.

## Achievements related to stroke over the past 12 months

- **Implementation:**

- 10 sites have been funded for to host stroke network facilitators. Funding concludes at most sites in June 2011. Some sites have received short term extensions of this.

- **Public Awareness Campaign:** The Victorian Stroke Clinical Network has funded the National Stroke Foundation FAST campaign for 4 years for \$200,000. The 5<sup>th</sup> year of funding in 2011 is for \$300,000

- **Workforce training and education:**

- Scholarship program**

- nursing/allied health conference scholarships: 20 granted in 2008, 13 in 2009,
- 60 in 2010. (30 of these were for the SSA conference in Melbourne)
- post graduate scholarships: 13 awarded in 2009 and 2010. 2011 post grad program now released
- Total scholarship expenditure of 3 years = \$199,879.

- Online Medical Education tool:**

- An innovative online medical education tool has been developed with a current focus on emergency and acute care. The initial target audience is junior medical staff, GPs and experienced nursing staff. The resource aims to improve knowledge and confidence in diagnosis and management of acute stroke patients.
- [www.estroke.com.au](http://www.estroke.com.au)
- Launched Sept 1, 2010, average LOS: 30 min- 1 hour, since pilot average 1,200 unique visitors per month

- Seminars and Events 2010**

- **“Stroke Seminar”**. Feb 26th, 215 attendees. Partners with the Australian Neuroscience Nurses Association
- **“Acute Stroke Forum”**\*\* August 31st, 135 attendees. pre conference workshop to the Stroke Society of Australasia Conference. Partnership with Stroke Society of Australasia and National Stroke Foundation, This event showcased the 2010 National Stroke Foundation Clinical Guidelines.
- **“Optimising longer term outcomes for Stroke”**\*\* –November 12. 180 attendees, Partners with the Australian Association of Gerontology and National Stroke Foundation

\*\* Both events now available to be viewed on the NSF website

### **VSCN “Road Shows” 2011**

- Echuca: 25 March – 50 participants
  - Latrobe Regional: March 29 – 85 participants
  - Albury Wodonga: March 30 – 90 participants
  - Geelong May 5th
  - Ballarat May 13
  - Melbourne Metropolitan event: 9 & 10 June
  -
- **Dysphagia screening project:** has identified and endorsed a tool, and developed a training package which will be available in 2010. Currently being piloted at 10 sites
  - **Telemedicine:** Partners in the Victorian Stroke Telemedicine Project - \$1.2 Million initiative commencing in Bendigo 2010 for implementation of telemedicine for thrombolysis. Currently in pilot phase
  - **Sub-acute services:** audit completed examining CRAFT data & LOS, rehabilitation qualitative survey: reports to be released ASAP. 2 Systematic Literature Reviews commissioned – due for submission for publication in May 2011
    - Selection for rehabilitation following stroke
    - Interdisciplinary care practices in sub acute stroke settings
  - **Improving TIA management:** Partners with the ED Clinical Network in the improving TIA management in ED project – Completed March 2011. TIA education package for ED nurses completed in collaboration with CENA (College of Emergency Nurses Australia)
  - **Improving care across the continuum:** The “Enhancing Stroke Care” initiative has funded 11 projects totalling \$324,000 at health services across the state to pilot new and innovative models of stroke care. All projects due for completion in June 2011. For further information see
  - <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalnetworks/strokegrants.htm>

### **Current Stroke Related Activities**

- Project funding for “Enhancing Stroke Care” projects across Victoria for completion July 2011
- Launch the Victorian Dysphagia Screening tool – June 2011
- Transfer ownership e-stroke medical education e-learning package: July 2011

- Implementation of the Victorian Stroke Telemedicine project at Bendigo and across the Loddon Mallee region.
- Funding the NSF FAST Campaign for 2011
- Development of a “Sexuality post stroke” training course for subacute clinicians

**Future Plans relating to Stroke**

Future of the network is being reviewed as formal funding concludes this financial year.  
Facilitator positions have been funded until July 2011  
Evaluation of Clinical Network still to be confirmed.

**Other information relevant to the ASC**

Education initiatives – in particular the online medical education tool has national implications.