



# Shiatsu Therapy Association of Australia Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT 2012



Shiatsu Therapy  
Association of Australia



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# NATIONAL COUNCIL 2012–2013

## Shiatsu Therapy Association of Australia Inc.

President	Susi Partridge
Vice president	Glenn Polley
Treasurer	Brett Bannon
Secretary	Sue Brownlee
Membership secretary	Glenn Polley
Queensland representative	Matthew Earsman
Tasmania representative	Brooke Allen
Ordinary member	Rose McGahey
Ordinary member	Steve Dewar
Ordinary member	Linda Rago

### Many heart-felt thanks to our other hard-working volunteers:

Cathy Cirakovic	<i>Pointers</i> editorial and advertising
Steve Dewar	IT development, maintenance and advice
Dorothy Douglas	Education and research
Dr Jennifer Hunter	Research/Government submission
Liam McConachie	Facebook
Anne McDermott	Natural Medicine Register, Industry Reference Group and Subject Matter Expert Group representative
George Viet	<i>Pointers</i> editorial
Annabel Warmington	<i>Tsubo</i> editor
Vivien Watmough	Natural Medicine Register representative

### Also a big thank-you to the many wonderful contributors to *Pointers* magazine in 2012:

Brooke Allen	Michael Licenblat
Clifford Andrews	Annica Makoto
Simon Blow	Rose McGahey
Louise Chan	Corinne Moesch
Verena Cunningham	Susi Partridge
Sandra Dexter	Glenn Polley
Michael Ellis	Sandi Rogers
Maria Gencarelli	Emma Strapps
Yong Kuo	Marc Webster
Noah Lee	Suzanne Yates

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## Susi Partridge



**W**elcome to our 2012 Annual Report. Preparing this publication offers the opportunity to reflect and celebrate our achievements over the past 12 months. We are often distracted by the work that is in front of us, and it is only when we look back that we can see how much has actually been achieved.

Setting our core values, mission and vision statements has supported the National Council to be more efficient in our discussions and effective in our decision-making process. We continue to run our meetings via Skype each month. This is cost-effective for all concerned as there is no travelling time or transport costs, and we spend only the allocated time in the meeting.

Our submission to support the efficacy and safety of shiatsu to the Department of Health and Ageing for their review of the natural health rebate scheme is posted on the STAA website for public viewing and we are confident of success. We are particularly grateful to Dr Jennifer Hunter for her assistance in this document.

The Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council is currently reviewing all health training packages and we have a strong contingent involved in this process to ensure that the core teachings of shiatsu are retained.

The Natural Medicine Register continues to evolve into an effective organisation that will represent all natural therapies equally to government and continue to educate the public sector to the value of better health.

Work continues to maintain our IT systems and allow for efficient administration within our budget.

Preparations are flowing smoothly for the 2014 conference on North Stradbroke Island. We are excited to be hosting a substantial party from Europe for this event and the project team are working with businesses on the island and the National Council to ensure the success of this event.

We finalised our Strategic Plan for the next three years. From this we will develop projects that can be allocated to small teams on finite timelines.

We are always open to your ideas and suggestions. This is evident in the new format for the 2013 conference, which will be run over two days. Lucy Osborn has done a fantastic job bringing everything together and I am excited to be attending.

In 2012 we trialled a different format for the AGM. We ran the meeting to a strict timeframe that allowed time for shiatsu swaps and a forum discussion. The shiatsu swaps were so successful that it was unanimously voted to

include them in the conference/AGM format from now on.

The AGM was efficient and afterwards all enjoyed a shared lunch.

After lunch we facilitated a discussion on education in shiatsu, starting with the questions: *What defines a mentor or supervisor?* and *What standards or level of experience should they have?* The discussion was open and honest, moving through a range of topics from having organised study groups to implementing a postgraduate research qualification. The outcomes of the discussion were that members would like to see STAA do two things in the short term.

The first would be to gather a professional register of members detailing qualifications, areas of expertise, specialty skills, the sectors of the community they work in (aged care, children, clinic, mobile, schools, etc.) and years of experience. The second was to get a professional/student communication/swap day going, possibly in each state, aiming to mentor and build confidence for new practitioners and students. The days or sessions would offer an opportunity to discuss case studies and clinical practice. This has been taken to National Council and we are working towards these goals. The forum discussion was a great opportunity to connect with the members directly and hear their opinions and requests. We are planning another forum discussion following the 2013 AGM.

As I read through the reports from the rest of Council, I am reminded of the volume of work that has been completed. I am excited for the year ahead and truly humbled to be working with such a dedicated and enthusiastic group of professionals. Our presence in the Natural Medicine Register shows that even though we are a small organisation we can achieve great things with our passion, dedication and commitment to our craft.

Being on National Council is, for me personally, a rewarding experience. I learn much about myself, which has a positive impact on my practice, and it offers me a sense of working in collaboration with colleagues, which can sometimes reduce the sense of working in isolation.

My thanks go to all who work together to achieve this and to our membership base for your consistency and belief in shiatsu and what it can do. It is that faith and trust that holds us true to what we know and believe can be done.

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Glenn Polley

**M**y input into the activities of the National Council has been severely limited this year due to a number of intense personal issues within my family that have required my full attention. The support and understanding I received from the other members of the National Council and Sandra in the office in taking nearly four months 'off' has been received with much gratitude.

Subsequently, the effort put in by the rest of the Council has been immense in carrying the load with such dedication and good humour. For people volunteering their valuable time, the members of STAA can count themselves lucky to have people of such passion and commitment making the decisions required for STAA to operate.

As it often is with life, nothing lasts forever, and so my family's intense year was completed with a move to the fresh country air one hour out of Melbourne, and time is now available to return to my role within the National Council.

I have worked, with Sue Brownlee, on completing the ongoing task of our Strategic Plan. A lot of work went into forming the higher order elements; our vision, our mission, and the values which we aspire to operate by. These were presented to the members at the 2012 AGM in Melbourne and in the 2011 Annual Report.

What we started at the beginning of the last term and which we have now completed, is identifying five key goals, and under each of the five goals the actions or tasks we need to undertake to know that we are achieving the goal (see page 12). Although on the surface it can often seem a relatively straightforward task, a lot of conversation and opinions need to be shared and discussed to reach a point where all within the National Council are happy. So what you will see as part of the Annual Report is the summary of many hours of work.



Yet, as I feel happy with the point we have come to, the task of completing the Strategic Plan is not done. We now need to formulate the tasks into specific projects, to clearly define all the small steps that need to be done. From that place we can then enlist the power of our membership base to undertake the many small tasks that will feed up into this framework that we have developed for STAA. This framework represents a way in which we can work effectively and most efficiently given our limited time and resources to create our vision as a reality. So look out over the coming year for the completion of this process and the tasks we will require our members to help us with.

Finally, it has been a process that has, as I have said, taken a lot longer than envisaged. Nobody on the National Council is paid to do the job, we are all volunteers, and as such we need to squeeze the work into sometimes already busy schedules. It is all done for the love and passion of shiatsu and the desire to ensure its continual recognition. So I ask all members to understand that on the surface it may not appear much is being done, please know that what we are doing is building a solid foundation to ensure the long-term future of shiatsu and STAA as the umbrella body.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

### Sue Brownlee

Once again it has been a pleasure working with the STAA National Council on behalf of members and the shiatsu community generally.

In 2012 I filled the role of Treasurer from January to May, and then at the 2012 Annual General meeting, took on the position of Secretary. Work as Secretary largely involved drafting an Agenda and distributing to National Council members prior to our regular monthly meetings by Skype, and then taking notes during each meeting, drafting them as minutes, and circulating to members for information and action.

Other contributions to the work of the National Council included coordinating, with Sandra Dexter, the production of the 2011 Annual Report, and assisting Glenn Polley and others in the development processes associated with the STAA 2013–2016 Strategic Plan.

I also encouraged and assisted in developing the short format AGM that was trialled in 2012. Sadly, I broke my leg in early May 2012 and was unable to attend that meeting, though I am told time it was generally appreciated.

The other exciting project that emerged in 2012 was early discussion and planning for the 2014 STAA International Conference on North Stradbroke Island. I am delighted

and grateful to be contributing to the subcommittee that will bring an exciting group of international presenters to Australia for the support and development of shiatsu in Australia.

All members of the National Council and those who support the work of the Council are volunteers and they bring a range of skills that come together to make us a highly effective organisation that manages with very limited resources. I would like to acknowledge with thanks the fine work that Sandra Dexter, STAA Administration Officer, does on a part-time basis as the key contact for members and the fulcrum around which the daily work of STAA revolves.

I encourage those of you reading this Annual Report to consider engaging with the work of STAA in some way — all National Council members are quite friendly and easy to approach. It is both rewarding and fun, and I look forward to continuing my association with STAA in 2013.



## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

### Glenn Polley

In addition to my role as Vice President, I have also overseen the vacant role of Membership Secretary, which this year, due to my personal issues, has mainly consisted of a small amount of input into the operation of the CPE&D system as we 'land' after a process of simplifying and embedding the program into the minds and hopefully daily activities of all members.

With all the great work done behind the scenes by Steve Dewar on the Community Website in allowing members to log their activities directly now in place, it is maybe time to continue the refinement process to make CPE&D even clearer and easier for members to complete. With our mission to sustain membership, we need to make sure that what we have in place 'sustains' rather than 'drains'.

From that perspective, we need to be constantly seeking to take on feedback and to improve our systems to truly fulfil our aspirations as an organisation. I have had some informal discussions, which have highlighted the need to set up

simple and effective feedback mechanisms for members to ensure that what we do is what members actually want us to be doing.

All feedback is greatly valued because without it, we can only operate from what we, as individuals, believe is the best for members.

So feel free to contact either myself, or any of the other National Council members should you have anything you wish to share with us on any aspect of our activities.

The Membership Secretary role has evolved with the introduction of the CPE&D online system and hopefully with a new person in the position in 2013 then it will be time to start working on the tasks I have mentioned above to give members easy channels to feed into the workings of the National Council.

# IT GROUP REPORT

## Steve Dewar

### IT Group Report

2012 was the Chinese Year of the Water Dragon but for the STAA IT Group it was the Year of Continuing Professional Education and Development (CPE&D).

### Online CPE&D

The bulk of 2012 was spent programming and testing STAA's new CPE&D online system which is replacing our paper-based, once-yearly CPE&D recording system.

The CPE&D online system allows you to enter activities via the Community Website as you complete them and they are reviewed by our CPE&D Co-ordinator on a regular basis. The system generates an email when each CPE&D activity has been approved.

As the year progresses you can keep track of how many CPE&D points you have accumulated and how many are left to make up. There is no need to rush around at the end of the year trying to accumulate the required CPE&D points only to, possibly, have some of the activities rejected at renewal time in February, and then having to race around trying to find activities to make up the missing points. Another plus — the new system helps spread the approval workload on our CPE&D Co-ordinator throughout the year.

Members who attend STAA-organised events, such as the AGM and conference, will have those activities automatically recorded online, as was the case for members who attended our 2012 AGM in Melbourne.

It's never too soon to start working on CPE&D activities



for next year's renewal and entering them into the online system with the appropriate evidence. Come the

end of the year, you'll have your CPE&D requirements met and approved. And as long as your insurance and first aid are up-to-date, all you will have to do is complete your renewal form, pay your annual membership fee by 1st February and you're renewed for another year.

A special thanks to all those members who helped us test the CPE&D online system. We wouldn't have had the system up and running this year without your kind help.

### STAA documents online

More documents and forms are appearing on the Community Website. Here members can access National Council meeting minutes, projects, financials and procedures; committee documents and reports; STAA logos and user guides.

### Online renewals

A new Online Renewal System has been written and was on track to be used for the 2013 renewals but delays in the approval of online credit card payments has meant it will have to wait until the 2014 renewals.

# ORDINARY MEMBER'S REPORT

## Rose McGahey

**A**s an Ordinary Member of STAA I had fun with this role as I got to engage in projects of interest without the responsibility of an office bearer.

One of those projects was gathering information on the history of STAA. This came about through contact from a long-time STAA member, Shirley Murray, who was passionate about having the history of STAA recorded. I could not think of a better way of honouring our history and the people who contributed over the years, no matter how big or small, than summing up the large amount of marvellous information that had accumulated. With the help of STAA Administration Officer, Sandra, we had this information out in time for STAA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012.



I found that being an Ordinary Member:

- you can focus on one project
- you do not feel like a hundred things have to be done at once
- you can follow up on suggestions from members.

I would encourage any member to put their hand up and become an Ordinary Member. Your suggestions and expertise would be very much appreciated.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

## Brett Bannon



I wish to begin my report with a big thanks to Sue Brownlee for her support and guidance in the Treasurer's role and for all her past work and competence in the role, allowing me an easy transition. Also a big thanks to Sandra Dexter for her patience and ongoing devotion to STAA, her work is very much appreciated. Sandra is the liquid nails that holds the STAA home together!

My work throughout the year has involved co-signing online payments, reviewing and approval of claims for reimbursement, assessing and looking over STAA's finances, as well as searching for any savings that could be made or excessive costs that could be reduced.

Figures for STAA's financial reporting year for January to December 2012 are attached. Income to note from this period includes:

- In the 12 months to December 2012 STAA received an income to the total of \$54,349.54. Memberships were our largest income source of \$50,079.50, an increase of \$5,994.50 from 2011.
- An amount of \$865.04 has been raised from our offset interest account, this is an increase of \$183.27 from 2011.
- Advertising in *Pointers* was down by \$235.
- As there was no conference in 2012, we did not reap our usual small profit from this event.
- A saving of \$461.34 was made with a change of business/public liability insurance provider while still maintaining adequate cover for STAA and its staff, along with public liability requirements.

Major expenditures for STAA in this period were:

- Salary costs of \$29,213.65
- Office running costs including stationery and telephone of \$3,557.92
- Rent and storage of \$3,640.00
- Our investment into the Natural Medicine Register process of \$3,228.33
- Journal printing costs of \$3,404.90

Our total income for the year to December 2012 was \$54,349.54 with a total expenditure of \$49,495.90, leaving a surplus of \$4,853.64.

I believe it is good governance to have a surplus of around \$12,000 in the STAA account at all times as our income is limited and generally is received in the first three months of the year during membership renewal time. On average the cost to run STAA and its office is approximately \$4,100 per month. The above recommended surplus in my opinion would give STAA a buffer should there be any unforeseen circumstances.

I would like to thank the STAA Council members and I can be reached on 0407 365 474 if any members need any further clarification on the year's finances.

# Income and Expenditure

## January – December 2012

INCOME	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Total 2012
Advertising	60.00			1,200.00		60.00	180.00	60.00	930.00	610.00			\$3,100.00
Brochures	70.00				70.00				70.00	70.00			\$280.00
Interest	41.72	42.60	90.37	97.99	89.95	89.89	97.12	89.68	61.84	65.54	53.09	45.25	\$865.04
Membership	12,190.00	17,694.00	9,437.50	2,264.00	1,613.00	1,089.00	1,005.00	637.00	456.00	764.00	363.00	2,567.00	\$50,079.50
Merchandise			25.00										\$25.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$12,361.72</b>	<b>\$17,736.60</b>	<b>\$9,552.87</b>	<b>\$3,561.99</b>	<b>\$1,772.95</b>	<b>\$1,238.89</b>	<b>\$1,282.12</b>	<b>\$786.68</b>	<b>\$1,517.84</b>	<b>\$1,509.54</b>	<b>\$416.09</b>	<b>\$2,612.25</b>	<b>\$54,349.54</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>													
Accountant fee													\$-
AGM					495.00	210.00							\$705.00
Annual Return						42.80							\$42.80
Bank Charges	1.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	0.75	33.75	34.50	33.50	33.50	33.75	1.00	0.75	\$175.75
Brochures						418.00							\$418.00
Catering													\$-
Electricity	40.00	40.00	50.00	40.00	50.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	50.00	40.00	50.00	40.00	\$520.00
Gifts													\$-
NMTRB Fee								1,500.00		246.10			\$1,746.10
NMTRB Meetings	130.00	238.73	382.60	150.00	154.90	66.00	180.00				180.00		\$1,482.23
Insurance									1,137.42	-357.61			\$779.81
Internet	288.99	29.99	29.99	86.99	29.99	73.99	29.99	29.99	29.99	29.99	29.99	288.99	\$978.88
Journal Printing			1,679.70						1,679.70	45.50			\$3,404.90
M'ship Certs													\$-
Merchandise					165.00								\$165.00
Merchant Fees	33.00	39.60	79.27	34.85	33.00						33.00	33.00	\$285.72
Office Equip										115.50	143.00		\$258.50
Petty Cash					185.55			187.95					\$373.50
Postage		405.90	226.75			82.40		297.29	120.00			168.30	\$1,300.64
Rent - Storage	80.00	80.00	100.00	80.00	100.00	80.00	80.00	80.00	100.00	80.00	100.00	80.00	\$1,040.00
Rent - Office	200.00	200.00	250.00	200.00	250.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	250.00	200.00	250.00	200.00	\$2,600.00
Resources													\$-
Room Hire									447.50				\$447.50
Salary	2,039.80	3,001.42	2,608.03	2,462.33	2,148.53	2,615.29	2,083.51	2,418.62	3,337.96	2,053.63	2,248.50	2,196.03	\$29,213.65
Software													\$-
Staff Training													\$-
Stationery	98.25	272.92	337.35	384.39		34.25	88.02		210.00	115.00	28.45	200.45	\$1,769.08
Telephone	131.88	117.52	180.31	154.82	185.92	172.04	158.70	129.35	136.47	151.11	130.26	140.46	\$1,788.84
Travel - Other													\$-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,043.67</b>	<b>\$4,426.83</b>	<b>\$5,924.75</b>	<b>\$3,594.38</b>	<b>\$3,798.64</b>	<b>\$4,068.52</b>	<b>\$2,894.72</b>	<b>\$4,916.70</b>	<b>\$7,532.54</b>	<b>\$2,752.97</b>	<b>\$3,194.20</b>	<b>\$3,347.98</b>	<b>\$49,495.90</b>
<b>NET</b>	<b>\$9,318.05</b>	<b>\$13,309.77</b>	<b>\$3,628.12</b>	<b>-\$32.39</b>	<b>-\$2,025.69</b>	<b>-\$2,829.63</b>	<b>-\$1,612.60</b>	<b>-\$4,130.02</b>	<b>-\$6,014.70</b>	<b>-\$1,243.43</b>	<b>-\$2,778.11</b>	<b>-\$735.73</b>	<b>\$4,853.64</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>6,151.02</b>	<b>9,331.11</b>	<b>\$3,879.10</b>	<b>\$2,540.95</b>	<b>-\$1,739.52</b>	<b>-\$6,887.22</b>	<b>-\$2,835.66</b>	<b>-\$3,143.49</b>	<b>-\$3,390.78</b>	<b>-3,670.58</b>	<b>-\$1,712.53</b>	<b>-\$2,799.93</b>	<b>-\$4,277.53</b>
<b>Bank account balance</b>	<b>\$26,209.43</b>	<b>\$39,519.20</b>	<b>\$43,147.32</b>	<b>\$43,114.93</b>	<b>\$41,089.24</b>	<b>\$38,259.61</b>	<b>\$36,647.01</b>	<b>\$32,516.99</b>	<b>\$26,502.29</b>	<b>\$25,258.86</b>	<b>\$22,480.75</b>	<b>\$21,745.02</b>	<b>\$21,745.02</b>

## QUEENSLAND REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

### Matthew Earsman

2012 was a year of great transformation, although for many on a more subtle level than expected (thankfully!) Nevertheless, as in our shiatsu practice, what we see on the surface level is only the tip of the iceberg, while deep change happens within. STAA has been evolving too during this time, mostly behind the scenes, and formalising some exciting plans to go forward into 2013 and beyond.

Apart from some personal changes and upheaval in my own life, (thanks 2012!) I have been involved in some of the processes happening at STAA. These include:

- Assisting in setting up STAA's social media profile and Facebook page
- Speaking with other professional shiatsu organisations internationally
- Investigating scientific research that has been done on shiatsu to assist with our continued lobbying of health funds for greater coverage and rebates for your clients.
- Contributing to ongoing STAA work like the Scope of Practice documents that help us define what shiatsu is, support practitioners and the community, and spread the word about this unique and transformative style.

An area I am passionate about for the coming years is spreading the knowledge of shiatsu beyond our current

base. STAA is planning to develop resources to help us represent shiatsu in the media and to the community. I would like to invite you to send your writings, photos, videos, marketing materials or anything you are willing to share with the community. This will help us build and develop this resource to make it easier for all of us to share the inexplicable joy that is this wonderful practice we share.

Apart from factual information and data, I am also very interested in hearing about your ways of talking about the experience and practice of shiatsu! We all know that such a deep experience is possible from this work, that it can be hard to define or even describe. A description of the physical act of shiatsu massage is only a tiny fraction of what is really taking place. So many people know the word 'shiatsu' but so few really understand what it is. My vision is that every Australian will personally come to know the depth and beauty of this sacred art. My heart's desire is that you too will feel invited to contribute in a way that uplifts both the giver and the receiver.

May you be a perfect channel for ki in 2013.

[matt@earsman.com](mailto:matt@earsman.com)

## TASMANIA REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

### Brooke Allen

It's been a great year for shiatsu in Hobart. We have had Cranio Sacral Workshops with local shiatsu practitioner Geraldine Doyle with more to follow this year. Peter Masters came to visit from Sydney presenting a session on Hogushi Self-Healing Massage. A shiatsu stretch workshop was presented by Melbourne's Glenn Polley, who is due to return in 2013. Shiatsu retreats were hosted by local practitioner Lilly Harris, and Master Liu De Ming gave qigong seminars. We are small but we have lots of stuff cooking away with more events building each year. It's an organic process.

I have been back in Hobart for two years now and I see a real advantage in a smaller town. Everything runs on word-of-mouth which makes promoting shiatsu easier.

I have found in my clinic that once people experience shiatsu, they talk and it's a flow-on effect with new clients coming to experience a session.

2013 is shaping up to be a great year in Tasmania.



# 2014 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

## Linda Rago

Preparations for this conference began in 2012. This five-day event will be held on North Stradbroke Island, Queensland beginning Wednesday 28 May 2014 and finishing Sunday 1 June 2014. The 2014 AGM will be part of that conference.

In November 2012 I travelled to Europe and delivered a letter of invitation to the founder of Meiso Shiatsu, Master Yuji Yahiro, to present his research at our 2014 International Conference. Master Yahiro is known for his sincerity, stability and wisdom.

Two other international shiatsu instructors and researchers have been invited: Maurizio Fabbri and Nella Nucifora, both are students of Master Yahiro and have been teaching and heading schools of shiatsu for 20 years.

World-renowned Buddhist nun, the Venerable Robina Courtin has also accepted STAA's invitation to teach at our 2014 International Conference. Venerable Robina is an exciting and forthright teacher who helps people unpack their thinking and generate an attitude of compassion and peace.

Sponsorship and grant support (through the Redlands City Council and Sibelco) is currently under review. As the theme of the conference will be 'TRUTH, POSSIBILITY, CHANGE', please consider this an opportunity to sustain your passion for shiatsu and enrich your life.

Now, I move forward as 2014 Conference Co-ordinator, supported by a great committee including STAA President Susi Partridge, Secretary Sue Brownlee and Website Developer Steve Dewar. Many thanks to Steve Dewar for all his work on the website.

All STAA members who feel they could contribute and be helpful (wherever you live) please make yourself known. LET'S GO!

Contact Linda Rago via Facebook: STAA International conference 2014 or the website at <http://2014.staa.org.au>.



# ORDINARY MEMBER'S REPORT

## Linda Rago

A lot of work was done in 2012 that will help STAA represent its members well into the future. Several mighty documents were written and edited. The two large documents I contributed to were:

- **Scope of Practice**  
This document is an explanation and outline of styles of shiatsu practised in Australia and the code of ethics that applies to all.
- **STAA's submission to the National Health Review, Department of Health & Ageing on the clinical efficacy, cost effectiveness and safety of shiatsu therapy in Australia**  
This review will influence our capacity to offer health insurance rebates.



# EVOLUTION OF THE NATURAL MEDICINE REGISTER

## Vivien Watmough

In 2006, Dorothy Douglas then president of STAA, attended a seminar organised by the Australian Traditional Medicine Society (ATMS) to stimulate interest in forming an umbrella organisation to represent natural medicine and therapies to government. ATMS had been advocating this during the 1990s without success. There was increasing recognition that as a profession we needed to come together to be heard as a single voice in a more regulatory environment as government increasingly needed to control this billion dollar industry and the medical profession has sought to limit our ability to practise. As practitioners we wanted to be accepted into the health system and work collaboratively within the medical model for the benefit of clients.

The process has not been without its challenges, but in 2008 ATMS invited interested associations to meet to work towards forming an umbrella organisation. These meetings have continued on a quarterly basis. The initial meetings were large and often chaotic, and egos and patience were sorely tested. Larger organisations had to work with small associations if the register was to be equally representative for all.

It was agreed that a co-regulatory model would be most suitable and any organisation that did not want to participate was allowed to step back from the process. In 2011 fourteen associations agreed to move forward to form a not-for-profit company.

STAA has been represented throughout this process by Anne McDermott and myself and is one of the smallest associations involved. STAA has shown a level of commitment and foresight matched only by much larger associations. The continuity of representation by STAA and other participating associations has been of enormous benefit. There have been several name changes through this process from the Inter Association Regulatory Forum to the Natural Medicine and Therapies Regulation Board to the Natural Medicine Regulation Board that ASIC turned down to the Natural Medicine Register (NMR), which is the registered name. NMR now has a logo, and website at [www.nmr.org.au](http://www.nmr.org.au).

Two years ago a steering committee was formed which meets fortnightly on Skype which I attend. We have written the constitution, organised lawyers and spoken with key stakeholders in government. We are currently taking submissions for a tender to represent NMR to government, and looking at the standards that will be required for association members to be listed on the register. The health training package will be used as the basis for educational standards. We have agreed on a fair and equitable funding model for participating associations

that reflects the size of associations. The work of the steering committee is ratified at the quarterly meetings, the location of which is rotated around the country to ensure travel commitments are fair for all.

At the last quarterly meeting in February 2013, the fourteen associations committed to forming the Natural Medicine Register, a constitution was approved and the Natural Medicine Register is now a legal reality. We have elected four temporary board members so the company could be formed and during this year there will be elections for up to eight board members nominated by participating associations. In the constitution there is provision for an additional three independent board members including an independent chair.

STAA will need to consider nominating someone to be put forward in the ballot. The nominee, if successful, will have legal responsibilities under the Corporations Act. There will be a requirement that all elected board members will have undertaken training in governance or similar qualification at their own expense. This will ensure that board members operate to the highest standards in an environment that is under scrutiny. It is hoped that the register of suitably qualified practitioners will be available on the website in 2014.

### Benefits of NMR

- **Listed on a national register**  
Listed on a national register with other appropriately qualified practitioners who have agreed to NMR policies and procedures. Only associations signed up to the NMR can list their practitioners on the register.
- **Strength in numbers**  
As part of an umbrella group with potentially 30,000 members, NMR will have greater clout when lobbying health funds and government.
- **Increasing the awareness of shiatsu**  
Shiatsu as a modality will gain visibility and prominence as a mainstream modality by having practitioners listed on NMR's register.
- **Greater recognition of STAA**  
STAA as a small organisation will gain greater recognition as one of the founding associations of NMR.

# HEALTH TRAINING PACKAGE REPORT

## Anne McDermott

Industry Reference Group and Subject Matter Expert Group representative

In conjunction with Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council, and as part of the National Health Training Package Industry Reference Group (IRG), STAA is participating in the review of the health training package for the Diploma of Shiatsu and Oriental Therapies. In December 2010 the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) agreed to a new design model for the training packages that sets out how new products will look and work.

This streamlining process is an opportunity to review and update the content of our training package while ensuring the content is easier to interpret. Streamlining also allows for strengthening the requirements for assessment, a key factor in the strategy to improve training quality across the community services and health sector.

The Subject Matter Expert Group (SMEG) working on this review comprises of five STAA members from a range of our teaching institutions across Australia.

They provide a range of specific subject matter advice and technical expertise in the area of shiatsu education and training.

Estimated timelines for industry feedback and completion of the project are:

- First draft May/June 2013
- Second draft September/October 2013
- 2014 final Draft and endorsement



Anne McDermott and Vivien Watmough at the 2012 AGM



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2013–2016

**Our vision** Shiatsu is a recognised element of an integrated healthcare system.

**Our mission** To sustain a professional network that promotes shiatsu within the Australian community.

**Our values** Nurture, Respect, Collaboration and Integrity.

Goal	Strategy
<b>Develop and sustain our membership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek member feedback regularly and proactively</li> <li>Lobby private health funds to provide rebates for shiatsu</li> <li>Deliver an outstanding annual conference</li> <li>Establish and facilitate a mentoring program</li> <li>Create peer supervision opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Communicate proactively and effectively with members, registered training organisations and the public</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain an effective and interactive website</li> <li>Develop and maintain a bank of media resources</li> <li>Publish a biannual journal – <i>Pointers</i></li> <li>Circulate a regular e-newsletter – <i>Tsubo</i></li> <li>Develop relevant annual forums for members and registered training organisations</li> </ul>
<b>Consolidate the discipline of shiatsu through education, research and development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a postgraduate research qualification</li> <li>Identify and drive research projects</li> <li>Review and continue to develop a Continuing Professional Education and Development (CPE&amp;D) program</li> <li>Establish and maintain a Register of Teachers and Mentors/Supervisors</li> <li>Contribute to policy development where relevant</li> </ul>
<b>Partner with people, organisations and community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to collaborate locally, nationally and internationally</li> <li>Initiate and contribute to partnerships to meet organisational and community needs</li> </ul>
<b>Resource an effective, sustainable and supportive organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain accountable, supported and satisfied staff</li> <li>Seek alternative sources of income</li> <li>Continue to develop and maintain quality IT systems</li> </ul>

# SHIATSU THERAPY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.



## VISION STATEMENT

Shiatsu is a recognised element of an integrated healthcare system.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To sustain a professional network that promotes shiatsu within the Australian community.

## VALUES

### *Nurture*

We are passionate about shiatsu.

We recognise our strengths.

We support and nourish each other.

We celebrate our successes and achievements.

### *Respect*

We value, trust and draw upon each other's skills and experience.

We value the time that members put into the organisation.

### *Collaboration*

We preserve a safe environment for all to speak openly and honestly.

We embrace the diverse opinions of the shiatsu community.

We value working with other complementary health bodies.

### *Integrity*

We value the independence of STAA.

We embody our values.

We respond to the needs of our members and the wider community.



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