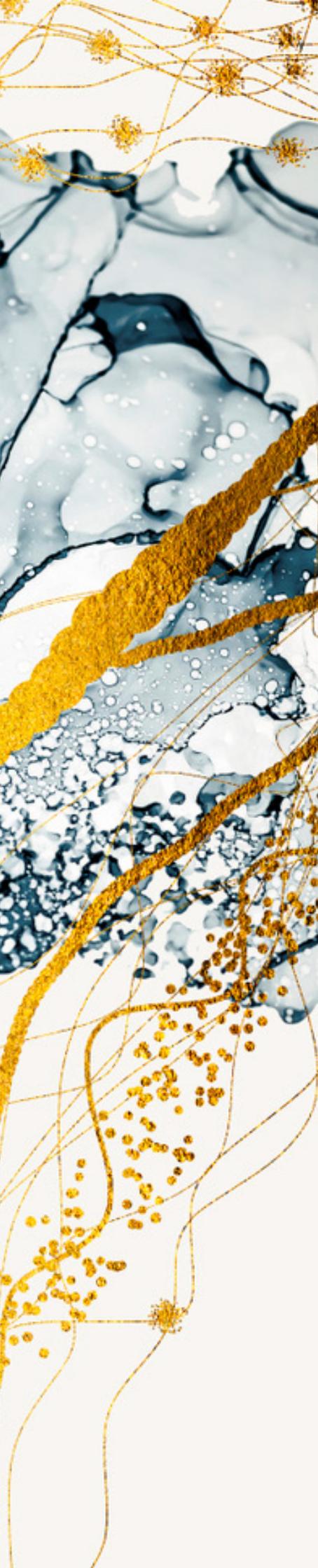


**Shiatsu Therapy Association of Australia Inc.**  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2019**





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## STAA Activities in 2019

### International research symposium, Brisbane

STAA's presence at the 14th International Congress on Complementary Medicine Research was an important milestone for shiatsu.

This international symposium brings together complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) clinicians and researchers. Emma Strapps gave a presentation on 'Practicing shiatsu in Australia: A workforce survey'.

The symposium provided a point of connection between the global complementary, natural and indigenous health context and shiatsu. Emma and I met and spoke with a number of researchers using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

### STAA conference, Burleigh Heads

The conference was a celebration of the expertise within our Australian and New Zealand shiatsu communities. The conference represented a broad spectrum of shiatsu styles and orientations. Presenters introduced us into their worlds and shared their observations, experiences and research work. It was a privilege and inspiration to hear about and catch a glimpse of shiatsu specialisations in action. See the conference reports on pages 19-22.

### STAA Mentoring Pilot Program

The pilot program is due for completion by 30 June 2020. A process for evaluation of it, with recommendations for any improvements will be carried out during July with a view to establishing the framework as an ongoing service to STAA members.

### Research publication

National Council began shiatsu research with Emma Strapps leading a first-ever shiatsu workforce survey. The study culminated in the publication of 'Practicing shiatsu in Australia: A workforce survey' in August 2019 in the journal *Advances in Integrative Medicine*. The article was written by Emma Strapps with Dr Jennifer Hunter, information analysis by Paul Spence, and reference and writing assistance by Dorothy Douglas.



PRESIDENT

**Dorothy Douglas**

This research is a valuable contribution to STAA's case to demonstrate the safety and efficacy of shiatsu and the place of shiatsu in Australian healthcare.

Further work – studying methods for researching shiatsu practices – is continuing.

### **Your Health Your Choice campaign**

STAA's Administration Officer has maintained STAA's part in this campaign.

### **Government review of natural therapies**

Teleconferences conducted by the Natural Therapies committee for the Department of Health were held on September 20, December 12, 2019 and January 31, 2020. All of these were attended by a range of stakeholders, including those who support the removal of shiatsu and 15 other therapies from health fund rebates.

Shiatsu is well represented on the advisory board by Dr Jennifer Hunter who is well acquainted with shiatsu research evidence and has been a strong supporter of shiatsu and adviser to National Council on research matters.

STAA submitted shiatsu research summaries to the Natural Therapies Review Committee for the current review. Several practitioner members contributed to the search for evidence in foreign languages. National Council recognises and thanks them for their work.

At the time of this report, the review was still in progress.

### **STAA Policies and Guidelines revision**

Secretary, Ann Hocking has worked with me to update the STAA Policies and Guidelines Handbook. This is in response to how technology has changed our lines of communication and procedures.

### **Conference preparations 2020**

Preparations for the 2020 conference began in August. Alex Caldwell offered to convene and put together a wonderful program of rich offerings from our community. Due to closures and physical distancing for minimising risk of transmission of the coronavirus, and the impossibility of accurately predicting how long these restrictions would be in place, National Council made the decision to cancel the original dates in May.

To sustain and support connection within the community plans were made to run online sessions. At the time of this report, one of these is scheduled for early in April. Community response to it will determine if more online sessions, drawing from presenters from the conference program, will take place over the next 12 months or to reschedule the conference.

### **Shiatsu diploma upgrade**

The cycle of review of training package qualifications for the shiatsu diploma is now commencing. Reviews normally span a two-year period.

Discussions in National Council and preliminary informal consultation with registered training organisations (RTOs) have raised issues about costly and complex compliance requirements, limitations of access to training, withdrawal of funding from courses, declining enrolments, a limited range of work outcomes, a lack of clear career progression pathways, and an uncertain identity within the health sector.

Anne McDermott has represented shiatsu on the Industry Reference Committee (IRC) for more than two decades and is now handing this role over. While trainers and RTOs are aware of it by working within the structure, most of Anne's work has taken place in the background and is not obvious to STAA members. Without it we would not have the defined standards of training and practice we rely on for clinical practices, health fund recognition and professional registration.

### **Practitioner qualification – currency with updated and new competencies**

National Council is in discussion about timing and process for a qualification currency update for members. Upgraded or new common competencies in HLT52215 include: diversity, professional collaborations, legal and ethical, and business and marketing.

STAA is also discussing ways to formulate appropriate shiatsu research methods and protocols that can begin during the training period and carry over into qualified professional practice.

## **Shiatsu and STAA promotions – Facebook**

We extend our gratitude and appreciation to Linda Rago who has kept the STAA Facebook page live for several years, and has significantly built up STAA's following.

STAA Administration Officer, Sandra Dexter, is now managing it.

## **National Council succession planning**

National Council has been a stable group over several years. Having served for many years, some members are now ready to move on. This means their positions will become vacant and will need to be filled for STAA to continue. Other members have filled their positions for the maximum three-year period and are obliged to take up other positions. I expect to be one of these.

Many STAA members probably don't know a great deal about what the National Council is and how it functions. We are inviting interested STAA members to take part in discussion about these questions, and broader ones of what is needed for shiatsu and STAA now.

While we are in a time of intense external challenge, we can rely on foundations we already have, our goodwill and determination. This period can be a time for opening ourselves to fresh perspectives and growth. We can review plans and adapt to change.

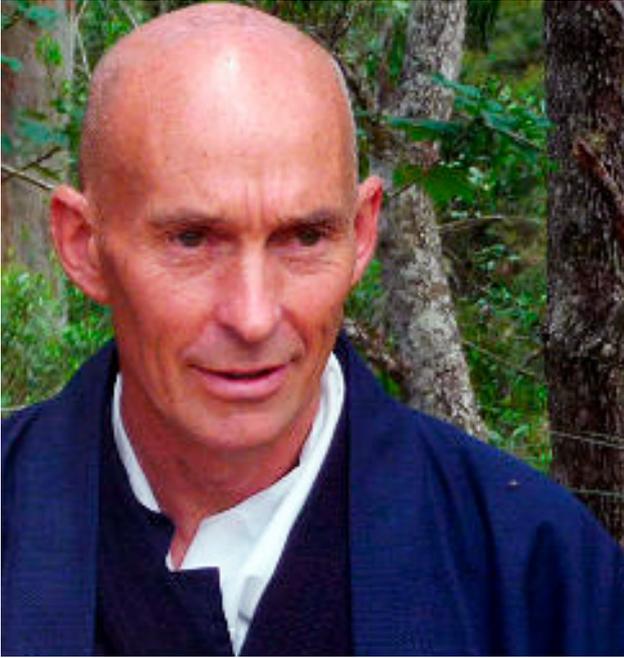
## **Impact of practices in recess due to COVID-19**

Mindful of writing this report in the atmosphere of the global corona virus pandemic, I have attempted to present a balanced perspective. While it has been very 'busy' year I have never lost sight of the essence of our community as a person-based experience. We have no way of predicting the long-term impact on practices, training organisations and the association. Conditions for practitioners have changed, while clients continue to value and rely on their shiatsu person even when unable to receive treatment. This misfit of needs points towards a 'life after coronavirus'. How this will look and feel is impossible to know now.

Earlier plans may now be out of context and perhaps even irrelevant. I am adopting a 'back to the drawing board' attitude, reviewing my values and simplifying my expectations. Sensible, really! I have felt challenged in how to keep an open

and steady mind. Increasingly evident is our need to draw together as a community. We can choose to work well from the natural strengths of our profound lineage, shared knowledge, goodwill and creative adaptability. We need to remain open to possibilities even when instinct would have us close in upon ourselves. The important values are to strengthen bonds of community and diversify how we connect and communicate. We are challenged to meet technology in new ways – not necessarily an easy matching but necessary and perhaps freeing!

The past year, and recent months in particular, have presented hard challenges with complexity. These have required consistent attention and strong responses. I am grateful to the many who have supported, advised, informed and when needed, helped me refocus in order to fulfil my role as president under these conditions. It is these relationships that are the most rewarding aspect of our wonderful organisation.



VICE-PRESIDENT

**Russell Makoto**

This past year on the STAA National Council has been one of highs and lows.

Beginning with a community bonding conference in Burleigh Heads, where I believe we came of age. The realisation that the talent and experience we have accumulated over the decades is deep, and the ability to support our shiatsu community from within is clear.

Through the year STAA continued to move several projects forward, including the mentoring pilot program, research collation and continuing to advocate for the shiatsu community in regard to the health fund rebate review.

There are also some new projects in the cooking pot, the gestation of which have been somewhat interrupted by COVID-19 developments.

The cancellation of the 2020 conference and subsequent restrictions on the shiatsu community have dealt a challenging hand to STAA.

A small association that has survived through the years on the back of countless hours selflessly volunteered by many. In each challenge there is opportunity, may we have the wisdom and clarity to grasp the opportunity in these unusual times.

*Okagesama*



## DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH

### Emma Strapps

This past 12 months have been particularly challenging for me, even before the COVID-19 shake-up! However I have continued in my role on National Council as Director of Research to see through several projects.

What a buzz it was to finally see the article, 'Practicing shiatsu in Australia: A workforce survey' published in *Advances in Integrative Medicine*. And what a proud occasion it was representing STAA in May 2019 at the 14th International Conference on Complementary Medicine Research (ICCMR) in Brisbane on this topic.

There were many great moments at the ICCMR – a highlight was meeting several esteemed Japanese Campo Professors who were very accepting, open and encouraging of our research. Shiatsu is generally under-represented in these settings so it was a significant moment for STAA to be present at the podium.

Another significant STAA project that I have steered during my time on Council were the recent submissions to government regarding the reinstatement of shiatsu on the private health fund rebate scheme. This has been a

huge learning curve and one that I have found surprisingly empowering and useful up to this day! I never in all my dreams imagined I would spend time engaging with government, academics and advisors about shiatsu, but each time the opportunity arose I drew strength from my practice and research, learning to find ways of articulating and arguing for shiatsu.

I believe we stand in a clearer position today because STAA remained connected in respectful dialogue with advisors and academics, and I remain hopeful that when they reconvene this current review process shiatsu stands in good stead for reinstatement because of our initiative to instigate academic research and to persist in our lobbying and strong submissions.

My underlying passion for research has always been about translation. Having had the opportunity to speak within the contexts above has developed my articulation of shiatsu both in and outside my clinical practice. I believe that my shiatsu practice has grown because of this reaching outwards and expansion in my toolbox of skills acquired. Thus deepening the value and respect I have for my profession. Regardless of what side of the research debate you sit on, something I love to share with my clients for their own empowerment is 'You are your best body of evidence.' It never fails to induce a positive response!

I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience on National Council. I wish to acknowledge the incredible support from National Council members throughout my time on Council and to thank Administrator, Sandra Dexter and the entire National Council for everything they have taught me including patience, gratitude, humility, striving and skills acquisition during these past 5 years. However it is time for me to take a break and step down from this NC role. I will return when it's my time again and remain committed to being available for consultation as required on shiatsu research, government lobbying and education reviews.

In the meantime, I would encourage practitioners to consider nominating for National Council – you might not yet know what it is you have to offer but you will find it and you will find your own voice within it and have the satisfaction of knowing that your contribution will support and develop shiatsu for all. Take care.



## TREASURER

**Peter Caldwell**

STAA had an operating loss of \$9,199 for the year. This follows a loss of \$10,240 from the previous year.

Accordingly, the overall cash position has deteriorated significantly.

2019 membership was down 20% on the previous year, however a successful conference helped to reduce the effect of this decline.

A further reduction in membership numbers will increase the deterioration of STAA's cash position. This will be exacerbated by the need to account for any entitlements accrued by the Administrative Officer under a contract agreed in 2011. A new agreement has been negotiated, without the ongoing liability of accruing entitlements. The current liability is not reflected in the Balance Sheet below. This will be accounted for as at 1st January 2020.

Going forward, STAA is facing significant financial difficulties.

Andrew Scott made the following observation in his 2017 report delivered 2 years ago:

'It is my personal opinion that STAA members should reflect on what it is they want or need from their membership body going forward and what they are prepared to contribute towards that. The life cycle of the current organisational set-up will need to change over the next couple of years in accordance with the new environment that it finds itself in. It is not immediate and it is not disastrous but as always change is coming and along with it comes opportunity.'

I think current events have made this need for change 'immediate'. Without significant increases in revenue, or further cost reductions, STAA's viability is in doubt.

I hope that members are able to provide the support that will be necessary for STAA to continue.

I will not be available for re-election to this position at the AGM. I would like to thank all of National Council for their assistance and guidance in what has been an interesting and rewarding experience.

For full details please refer to the Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet reports.

# PROFIT AND LOSS

## Shiatsu Therapy Association of Australia Inc.

1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019

	31 Dec 19	31 Dec 18	31 Dec 17
<b>Income</b>			
Membership Income	\$37,216.32	\$46,987.90	\$51,975.80
Conference Income	\$14,071.00	\$1,010.00	\$27,545.50
Advertising Income	\$1,410.00	\$2,170.00	\$1,715.24
Brochures Income	\$70.00	\$175.00	\$70.00
Merchandise Income	\$513.00	\$110.00	\$3,652.00
Workshop/Misc Revenue	\$0.00	\$851.06	\$1,530.33
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$53,280.32</b>	<b>\$51,303.96</b>	<b>\$86,488.87</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$53,280.32</b>	<b>\$51,303.96</b>	<b>\$86,488.87</b>
<b>Plus Other Income</b>			
Dividends - unfranked	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,312.61
Interest received	\$54.72	\$146.08	\$219.56
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>\$54.72</b>	<b>\$146.08</b>	<b>\$2,532.17</b>
<b>Less Operating Expenses</b>			
Accountancy/Legal	\$590.30	\$1,861.90	\$1,360.80
Administration fees	\$31,976.88	\$32,165.47	\$35,102.69
Advertising and promotion	\$0.00	\$3,789.60	\$803.39
Bank Fees And Charges	\$817.77	\$424.89	\$379.74
Cleaning/rubbish removal	\$0.00	\$84.00	\$0.00
Conference/seminar costs	\$10,789.82	\$950.00	\$19,633.46
Donations	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$0.00
Electricity	\$143.00	\$385.00	\$572.00
General expenses	\$266.72	\$0.00	\$1,495.01
Gifts	\$0.00	\$203.05	\$120.00
Insurance	\$1,935.95	\$2,085.25	\$1,994.73
Internet	\$3,077.65	\$2,837.73	\$2,715.97
Telephone	\$1,896.74	\$1,843.30	\$2,060.90
Journal editing & lay-out	\$1,065.36	\$2,294.94	\$2,231.28
Journal printing	\$2,543.20	\$3,496.90	\$3,796.10
Printing & Stationery	\$0.00	\$549.50	\$2,526.80
Postage	\$1,645.38	\$1,502.60	\$1,655.98
Office/Sundry Expenses	\$250.00	\$737.54	\$630.00
Rent-Office/Storage	\$5,057.00	\$5,318.75	\$5,434.00
Research & development	\$0.00	\$660.00	\$0.00
Travel, accom & conference	\$479.00	\$0.00	\$1,242.95
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$62,534.77</b>	<b>\$61,690.42</b>	<b>\$83,755.80</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>-\$9,199.73</b>	<b>-\$10,240.38</b>	<b>\$5,265.24</b>

# BALANCE SHEET

## Shiatsu Therapy Association of Australia Inc.

As at 31 December 2019

	31 Dec 2019	31 Dec 2018	31 Dec 2017
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Bank</b>			
AUD PayPal	\$671.16	\$0.00	\$0.00
Community Solutions Cheque Ac	\$3,923.30	\$6,103.31	\$1,374.55
Mastercard Account	\$311.59	\$551.48	\$259.82
Westpac Business Cash Reserve	\$2,658.92	\$10,109.91	\$25,370.71
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>\$7,564.97</b>	<b>\$16,764.70</b>	<b>\$27,005.08</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$7,564.97</b>	<b>\$16,764.70</b>	<b>\$27,005.08</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$7,564.97</b>	<b>\$16,764.70</b>	<b>\$27,005.08</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Current Year Earnings	-\$9,199.73	-\$10,240.38	\$5,265.24
Retained profits	\$16,764.70	\$27,005.08	\$21,739.84
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$7,564.97</b>	<b>\$16,764.70</b>	<b>\$27,005.08</b>



## SECRETARY

### **Ann Hocking**

The past year on the National Council has certainly been hectic, to say the least. So much has been happening and with the latest COVID-19 pandemic, we have all had to think well outside of the box whilst being on our toes at the same time. It has been a time of transition and of strength and courage.

The year has involved a variety of tasks for me, including assisting Alex Caldwell with the organisation of the (sadly now cancelled) 2020 conference. Any event requires a lot of time and effort to organise. Alex has done a beyond sensational job. Sandra Dexter has of course been her efficient and creative self, assisting with everything and anything needed for the conference. I will now be assisting with online presentations for STAA members.

I have spent many a long day with Dorothy Douglas bringing the Policy and Guidelines Handbook into the 21st century. A seemingly arduous task became both fun and efficient. We realised that we edited well together and tried some delicious homemade soups and teas during our breaks.

Along with Jack Marshall, I have been looking into grant applications to assist in future funding of shiatsu research work within Australia.

In my role as Secretary, I have participated in meetings, taken and distributed minutes and to do lists and prepared the agendas. I have enjoyed and been inspired throughout the year by the teamwork, determination and tenacity of the National Council under the leadership of Dorothy Douglas.

I look forward to contributing further to the National Council over the next year.



## ORDINARY MEMBER

### **Linda Rago**

Whilst STAA has been under duress for a few years with a lessening membership base, National Council (NC) has been powering through some major issues. Under the excellent leadership of President Dorothy Douglas, I feel the steerage of STAA is very organised and methodical.

The annual STAA conference on the Gold Coast in May 2019 gave voice and opportunity to some amazing practitioners (see the conference reports on pages 19-22 as published in *Pointers* Spring 2019 edition).

At the AGM, I stood down as Vice-President and Conference Organiser to spend time building a bush retreat on the Granite Belt. I'm glad I stayed as a contributing member of National Council to maintain input, support the leadership team by phone regularly and attend monthly meetings.

The incoming Vice-President Russell Makoto is a calming and thoughtful presence on NC. Incoming Conference Organiser Alex Caldwell offers a clear eye for detail and has been an invaluable contributor to NC in many ways.

I look forward to more years involved with STAA because this organisation has integrity. In a business world which often offers less than that, I'm glad I belong with this mob.



## INDUSTRY REFERENCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

**Anne McDermott**

### **Complementary Health Industry Reference Committee 2019**

This Industry Reference Committee (IRC) provides the industry engagement mechanism at the centre of training package product development (including the shiatsu diploma) for the complementary health sectors.

The committee comprises industry representatives with expertise from a cross-section of the sector, and its primary purpose is to provide advice to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) regarding the skill needs of the sector.

The IRC met in August 2019 and the following recommendations and strategies were discussed resulting in the release of the *Complementary Health Industry Reference Committee 2019 Industry Skills Forecast*, as well as a timeline for training package reviews for 2019-2021. Below is its executive summary:

#### **'The Executive Summary for the Complementary Health Industry Reference Committee 2019 Industry Skills Forecast**

Complementary Health covers a number of sectors involved in providing treatments, practices, products and services across the following disciplines:

- Aromatherapy
- Ayurveda
- Kinesiology
- Massage and Remedial Massage Therapy
- Reflexology
- Shiatsu
- Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Remedial Massage.

The job roles are various, and where national employment data is available, it shows that the workforce comprises approximately 19,900 massage therapists and 7,200 Complementary Health therapists. Employment growth forecasts are robust, and over the next five years the massage therapist workforce alone is expected to increase by 20%.

Over recent times treatment practices for massage therapists, as well as the wider Complementary Health professional workforce, have evolved significantly. Such change has resulted in evolving skill and competence

requirements for the workforce. The sector overall has been experiencing several challenges which are impacting workforce skill requirements and in summary include:

- Government policy/legislation
- An ageing workforce
- Skills shortages
- Employment status and earnings.

To address workforce skills issues, the Complementary Health IRC has identified qualifications which require further investigation and consultation within the sector. The areas covered by the qualifications are:

- Massage Therapy and Remedial Massage Therapy (two existing qualifications and one new qualification)
- Ingestive modalities (four new qualifications in Naturopathy, Western Herbal Medicine, Nutrition and Homeopathy).'

### **Proposed schedule of work**

Health Training Packages currently undergoing updates in 2019-2020:

- HLT52015 Diploma of Remedial Massage
- HLT42015 Certificate IV in Massage Therapy
- New Advanced Diploma of Remedial Massage
- New Ingestive Advanced Diplomas

Health Training Packages due to undergo updates in 2020-2021:

- **HLT52215 Diploma of Shiatsu and Oriental Therapies**
- HLT52315 Diploma of Clinical Aromatherapy
- HLT52115 Diploma of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Remedial Massage
- HLT52415 Diploma of Kinesiology
- HLT52615 Diploma of Ayurvedic Lifestyle Consultation
- HLT62615 Advanced Diploma of Ayurveda.

During 2020-2021 the IRC proposes to update HLT52215 Diploma of Shiatsu and Oriental Therapies and any associated skill sets and units of competency relating to Shiatsu and Oriental Therapy job roles.

### **Synopsis of the Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System by The Honourable Steven Joyce ('The Joyce Review')**

The Joyce Review, which was released on 2 April 2019, makes 71 separate recommendations around a six-point plan to overhaul the entire Australian Vocational Education & Training sector in order, in the words of the Report, to rebrand it into 'Skills Education' offering 'a modern, fast-paced skills acquisition alternative to institution-based learning'. He states that this is necessary in part because the VET sector has been 'losing the battle for hearts and minds' versus the university sector for many years.

The six main points of the report are as follows:

- Strengthen quality assurance
- Speed up qualification development
- Simplify funding and skills matching
- Improve careers information
- Clarify secondary school pathways, and
- Provide greater access for disadvantaged Australians

### **For further reading**

[Complementary Health, Industry Reference Committee, Industry Skills Forecast 2019](#)

[Complementary Health Industry Reference Committee website](#)

[Strengthening Skills, Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education & Training System, The Honourable Steven Joyce](#)



ORDINARY MEMBER

## Alex Caldwell

### Reflections of my time on STAA National Council

Coming to the end of my time on National Council, I recognise how rich the experience has been.

Strong connections were made with other council members, interesting issues addressed and the opportunity to express my view has developed my confidence to come forward.

Of the many projects I have participated in, convening STAA Conference 2020 is standout. It took a lot of time: every minute a pleasure. Bringing it together, working with input from Sandra, Linda, Ann and Dorothy, connecting with the presenters, the caterers, the IT person... and more...

As you are aware, it had to be cancelled in its planned form; but I am heartened that the work and the preparations of the presenters will convert into another opportunity as plans forge ahead to offer them online.

I extend my respect to the members of the National Council and my goodwill and best wishes to those who join the new council.

And to you all, I send my love.



ORDINARY MEMBER

## Vivien Watmough

I have continued to support the executive officers at National Council meetings and contribute to the functions the team undertake.

Whilst in the UK in June 2019, I held meetings with Cliff Andrews and persuaded Cliff to be the Key Note Speaker at our 2021 STAA National Conference. Obviously with COVID-19 and the uncertainty currently around travel restrictions this may change.

As usual it is a great honour to work with such a committed group of members who work tirelessly for the benefit of STAA members without financial reward, especially during this challenging time.

# AGM 2019 Minutes

**Saturday 25 May 2019, 11.30am**

22-28 Rudd Street, Burleigh Heads

## **1. Welcome from President**

Welcome to all. I have a lot to say so pick up your cups of tea and make yourselves comfortable.

I have a lot to say because a great deal has been happening. This meeting is an opportunity for us to hear each other's voices, discuss and ask questions. This can take place after the election of the National Council in the time for 'any other business'.

We are sharply aware of changes in our social and political environments and the impacts of these on our profession. Within the health system our place, agency and expression have been challenged. The recent government announcement of a review of the previous research review demonstrates the situation is evolving and remains unresolved. Within our community, core questions continue about how to best communicate our self-perceived, and slightly researched, value within the Australian healthcare system. Our once certain professional and political identifiers have become elusive. An invitation is before us to become empowered and engaged in new ways. We are called to consider new decisions for strategic change and identify purposeful and efficient development objectives. We are called to promote our 'value' message and practical outcomes of thriving shiatsu practitioners and practices. At the heart of our association's evolution, political action and professional development are equally important. They are two legs supporting and mobilising the one body.

As a community, we must approach these questions in spirits of acceptance, open enquiry and honest self-reflection. We must trust each other, our activity and strength, and grasp hold of the solidity that cohesion gives so we can revise our culture and determine our future. Our collective task is to empower and engage within the social and political worlds we co-inhabit. We must express our messages about shiatsu in relatable language.

A shared responsibility to fulfil the remit of our association, outlined in the Strategic Plan objectives that reflect these priorities, has become freshly compelling. I aim to support discussion of these questions over the course of the weekend. Our sense of professional standing within the health industry is being called forth and we can foster its growth. In the course of this, our identity and purpose can adjust and deepen.

Over the past two years STAA members have been aware of and variously involved in political lobbying activities. The other leg, professional development, has also grown with the launch of the Mentoring Pilot Program. Now, the aim is for those two legs to dance a co-ordinated tango, an intertwining of professional development with political voice. One important step for this co-ordination is research. Research supports professional development, can be used to influence policy and provides resources for political leverage.

Without research shiatsu will not acquire the recognition and integration this association aspires to. Our current priority is to identify and articulate what practitioners are specifically doing in their encounters with clients. We must choose research methods that are congruent with the principles of the practice, format this information rigorously and translate results into useable data. I believe shiatsu must do this and is able to.

However, when attending the International Congress for Complementary Medicine Research, in Brisbane earlier this month, I discovered some of the challenges, which exactly match our current situation, of bridging historic divisions between research and clinical practice, creating exchange between researchers and clinicians and supporting clinicians wishing to become researchers. The themes of the conference, Pathways and Partnerships articulated these. I am assured our preferred method will be possible.

I was encouraged by the respectful and inclusive attitudes and openness demonstrated by academic researchers towards these questions. In spite of challenges, or perhaps because of them, I see a role for shiatsu researchers to distinctively and meaningfully contribute to leadership of healthcare policy development. I feel a reasonable cause to maintain an aspiration to implement shiatsu research. It will require commitment to the process, resources, diligence and efficient action but I believe it is possible. Thus, we can advance and contextualise the scholarly tradition underpinning the theory we love and base our practices on, while representing realities of the work shiatsu practitioners are doing daily and weekly.

There will be additional time in the Sunday evening session, *Insight - Bringing Shiatsu to the Community*, for community discussion.

I wish to acknowledge the work of the National Council in supporting and contributing to every project undertaken in the last 12 months. This work only becomes visible at the tail end of hours of input and building. What is seen as evidence is just the tip of what happens beneath. We have attempted to communicate regularly with members so most people will have an idea of the range of activities undertaken in support of members' needs.

When I pause to connect with the situation I am in, rather than live it, I am always moved by the beauty of the community and support. All relationships bring their own particular elements, each of them I can value and celebrate. So, when I talk about one relationship it is by no means exclusive of all others. It does, however, bear its special characteristics.

I wish to acknowledge the work of Linda Rago. She was president before me and served in that role for three years. She then transitioned to vice president and has served in that role for the last two years. Without Linda's awareness, skill, passion, empathy and support I would be half the president I have been. Linda planted seeds during her presidency that have been nurtured into concrete outcomes. Her unflinching support and encouragement, flowing out of her intuitions for STAA, have meant I have experienced the reflection I needed to move beyond my natural personal resistances to take action on

behalf of all STAA members. We would not otherwise be seeing projects taking life now.

The role of Vice President is essential to that of the president. I hope I have conveyed something of the interdependence of it. Both people become greater than the sum of their parts, especially when for the purposes of a shared larger vision. Linda's unwavering support has helped make my role deeply satisfying and I wish to acknowledge her contribution.

However, don't be daunted by these high words. Every working relationship becomes a space in which gifting can simply and naturally emerge. Linda is stepping aside as vice president and I am inviting nominations for people to take up the role. The description of it is in the AGM package. Seriously, a vice president is very important. I do need a person to remind me of things, bounce ideas around with and make sure I don't forget important details. Not really a difficult job!

There are important things for the future of STAA we can consider today. The two most important of these are:

1. Succession planning and inductions to the National Council. This ensures continuity of functions and projects without things getting lost and wasted. I am in my third and final year of presidency. Ideally, I would like to work with a 'president elect' over a 6-8 month period so they can learn about the role and form their own agenda for it.
2. Conference planning 2020 and 2021 - it takes a year to plan and organise a conference. Linda has created outstanding conferences for STAA since 2014. It is time for her to hand on this project. Our annual conference is important for gathering the widespread community, connecting and reflecting and renewing our sense of purpose as an association. With exciting growth in STAA, organising a conference can significantly strengthen our profession and develop relationships and collaborations with other organisations. An organiser would, of course, not be doing the job on their own!

Now let us proceed with the 2019 AGM!

## 2. Attendance

### Present

*Members:* Mei-Ling Bow, Catherine Caven, Elyse Deidun, Fiona Dick, Jenny Dorrington, Dorothy Douglas, Lucy Gibbon, Jo Hafey, Ann Hocking, Helen Jackson, Yong Kuo, Akhalita Makoto, Russell Makoto, Con Margaritis, Jack Marshall, Lisa Masters, Anne McDermott, Danielle McKerrell, Rachel Myers, Julie Phillips, Linda Rago, Amanda Rotondo, Marjorie Scott, Emma Strapps, Vivien Watmough, Evelin Woelk,

*Non-members:* Val Cooksley (SPAANZ), Autumn Falk (SPAANZ), Trish Horgan, Gay Maley, Alison Redgove (UK)

### Apologies

Peter Caldwell, Karen Hickey, Matthew Sincok

### Proxies

Alex Caldwell on behalf of Peter Caldwell

## 3. Previous Minutes and Business Arising

Moved that the Minutes of the 2018 STAA AGM be accepted as a true and accurate record.

*Moved* - Linda Rago

*Seconded* - Anne McDermott

*Carried*

### Business arising from 2018 minutes

None

## 4. 2018 Annual Report

2018 Annual Report tabled. Moved that the Annual Report be accepted.

*Moved* - Linda Rago

*Seconded* - Anne McDermott

*Carried*

## 5. Election of Office Bearers

All members of the 2018/19 National Council stood down and all positions were declared vacant. Dorothy Douglas was the returning officer. The following nominations were received for National Council 2019/20:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
Dorothy Douglas	President	Linda Rago	Vivien Watmough
Russell Makoto	Vice President	Ann Hocking	Marjorie Scott
Peter Caldwell	Treasurer	Ann Hocking	Dorothy Douglas
Ann Hocking	Secretary	Alex Caldwell	Dorothy Douglas
Emma Strapps	Director of Research	Vivien Watmough	Marjorie Scott
Vivien Watmough	Ordinary member	Linda Rago	Ann Hocking
Alex Caldwell	Ordinary member	Ann Hocking	Dorothy Douglas
Anne McDermott	Ordinary member	Alex Caldwell	Ann Hocking
Jack Marshall	Ordinary member	Vivien Watmough	Jo Hafey

All nominations were accepted and carried.

## 6. Any Other Business

Yong Kuo suggested leaving out the CPE points for STAA members as he felt it was an impediment for others to join. His suggestion was that this might increase both our network and membership.

Trish Hogan commented that she felt the CPE points brought professionalism to the group.

Vivien Watmough felt the same and added that the CPE points professionalise our profession. The CPE points are offered for everyone to engage in learning a wide range of activities. CPE gained a lot from making the effort to do it. If they were dropped, Vivien felt that this would diminish the professionalism of shiatsu.

Emma Strapps agreed with Vivien. She also pointed out that there were Associate member and Registered practitioner options to join STAA, the former not requiring CPE for membership.

Lucy Gibbon mentioned that perhaps points could be carried over from year to year. She also mentioned that a change could be made to the way CPE points were presented on the website to make it clearer.

Anne McDermott commented that the STAA guidelines on the website needed to be clearer.

Jack Marshall liked the idea of carryover points, e.g. one year of intensive training which lasted for a 2-year period.

Jo Hafey commented that the current system is excellent in her opinion, and suggested perhaps for visual people a flow chart on the website might assist in showing how to obtain CPE points.

Dorothy Douglas commented that the direct linking point is the mentoring program. All activities on the mentoring program are able to obtain points for CPE. Mentoring is bringing awareness of own needs, and finetuning your own voice, identity etc. What do I need to do to be the practitioner I wish to be now?

## 7. Meeting Close

The 2019 AGM was declared closed at 12.32 pm.

# Professional relevance in 2019 and beyond...

by Anne McDermott

Attending an annual conference is often the highlight of a professional calendar year and this year's STAA 2019 Annual Conference held at Burleigh Heads was certainly no exception. As well as being an efficiently well-run event, the calibre of the presenters was exemplary. The well-used saying that 'you can't teach an old dog new tricks' certainly did not apply at this conference.

The event was jammed packed with well-researched and well-presented material across a range of health domains and demonstrated a clear trend in the direction that many of our successful practitioners are taking.

It was inspiring as well as exciting to be exposed to those practitioners who have extended their professional boundaries deep into the healthcare sector, finding professional relevance across a

diverse range of healthcare areas including aged care, mental health, oncology and paediatrics.

The clear take-home message from this conference was 'bring your skills to the marketplace and the market will utilise them'.

Presenters indicated that opportunities were there for the taking. To introduce their shiatsu skills into otherwise uncharted waters, they used professional networks, good communication and persistence. These presenters are working with individuals and teams of health professionals in areas traditionally limited by Western medicine informed interventions. With initiatives such as the NDIS, Victims of Crime and others, assessment of the client profile has shifted health management practices dramatically, to better establish a client-centred approach to care.

*Enter the shiatsu practitioner...*

Well-trained across the professional spectrum and offering comprehensive person-centred treatment strategies, shiatsu practitioners are clearly well-received by clients and their contributions to successful client outcomes are increasingly recognised by associated health practitioners.

Working together for the client: it makes a lot of sense for all involved but especially for the client. In response to current data within the health sector showing ever increasing rates of mental health issues and chronic disease such as diabetes, the need for practitioners who can offer strategies that address lifestyle changes, physical wellness, nutritional management and emotional regulation is growing fast.

The need exists and we are well placed to continue to meet it.



# Interesting, authentic, remarkable

by Linda Rago, Conference Organiser

This year's conference theme was *Empower and Engage with Shiatsu*, and that's what we set out to do.

The speakers were all STAA members, and our keynote speaker was Val Cooksley, who really started shiatsu education in New Zealand.

Feedback affirms that it was an outstanding conference, and I think that's because each of the sessions were led by impassioned people, and each had useful principles demonstrated that relate to our practices and to our lives. It was professional, interesting, and breathtakingly authentic. Everyone was touched by a different session.

Val Cooksley did two sessions: the first was an experiential session on 'Dementia and Alzheimer's', and the second was 'Shiatsu for Gut Problems', where we learnt to release the pylorus and the ileocecal valves. Really helpful skills to have when you treat gut problems. People from all over New Zealand with gut problems go to Val Cooksley to be treated in that manner, and she shared those skills with us.

Jo Hafey was the perfect presenter to start the program. She was enthused, clear, energetic and she coupled physical practices with the four Ds: desire, dedication, determination and discipline.

Alex Caldwell's session on 'Trauma Informed Shiatsu' was extraordinary. Alex put many hours of work into the words, the audiovisual and the practical demonstration of skills. She talked about care, connection and the rights of the client. Her sensitivity is high level.

Catherine Caven presented on 'Shiatsu Wellness ~ Oncology & Integrative Health'. She has helped create an inspiring set of circumstances for people who are going through cancer in the Ballarat district. Her work with other practitioners, from the Western medicine model and integrative complementary medicine practitioners, was beautiful. Inclusive, not exclusive. They all refer to each other and the patient benefits. People were deeply touched by her audiovisual presentation.

You could feel that shiatsu can hold its own in any company. We know who we are. It was demonstrated again and again at the conference, and as the conference went on we got stronger and stronger as a group.

President, Dorothy Douglas, glued the whole thing together with her words of support, her patience, her

craft with words, and she kept bringing us back to the principles of STAA. What we stand for, where we are going, both in our promotions and in our ethics, in our professionalism, in our lobbying.

Julie Phillips' session, 'Harmonising Food trends with the Wisdom of Macrobiotics', followed on from Val Cooksley's 'Shiatsu for Gut Problems'. It was great the way that moved, because Julie asked everyone in the group their questions on diets and client recommendations. All the questions were put up on a whiteboard and she went through and answered them. It was really simple and effective.

Russell Makoto did two guided shiatsu sessions, so you got an hour's treatment and your partner was encouraged to simply relax, touch, feel. Not analyse, not diagnose, just let the body of patient direct treatment. I found that liberating, supportive and helpful. It was so nice to be in the instinct and the parasympathetic nervous system as a practitioner.

The panel session, 'Bringing Shiatsu to the Community,' with Anne McDermott, Con Margaritis and Dorothy Douglas was fantastic. Everybody spoke, everyone put in their 10 cents worth. There was lots of laughter and lots of knowledge exchanged. We were all just there to help each other.

Jack Marshall was extraordinary leading Meridian Stretches each morning. Stomach/Spleen/Gall Bladder in the body, strengthening, moving qi and bringing us right back to Five Elements, as did Val Cooksley. Again and again back to the traditions and the founding fathers of shiatsu.

Meditation with Marjorie Scott was beautiful. Simple, instructive and Marjorie held the space for everyone to transition from the program to going to bed.

One of the funniest things I have ever encountered in any conference occurred at the 2019 conference. Every morning we chanted the Hannya Shingyo or Heart Sutra — a Japanese chant. It's point is very simple. It gets your diaphragm warm and elastic, and if you sense the vibration within you as you create the sound, it can bring you towards the inside of yourself, so you start the day at home and at centre.

I led the chant. I did not have the traditional miyogi — a

Japanese wooden instrument that is a stylised fish — so I went around the venue looking for something that I could bang with a stick. The best sound I could get was a teaspoon on a box of tea, because it was woody sounding. I chose of box of green tea, stuck a 'I love shiatsu' sticker on it, and used that as my miyogi.

On the third morning I got down to prepare, and realised that the place we'd been doing it in was no longer suitable. So I moved us into the room by the front door and I opened up the doors of frosted glass. We faced east and the sun was coming up.

As we began, I realised that I'd started without my glasses, and I'm straining to read the words on the laminated page which was reflecting as the sun came up. As we got into the end of the first round, the sewerage pumping man arrives and pulls his truck up right outside the doors.

'Just won't be a moment lady.'

He leaves his truck running as he goes to speak to someone, comes back, opens up the pipes and starts draining the sewerage into the truck. As the smell got worse and worse and stronger and stronger, my eyesight started to diminish. Because when the energy goes strongly to one of your senses it has to come from somewhere and usually you notice a depletion in one of the others.

So I am making the words up to the best of my knowledge as I go along. I'm making mistakes, I'm getting it wrong. The box of tea falls over, the sewerage man lifts the pipe to finish, people are holding sarongs to their mouths nearly gagging, but none of us moved.

We all kept chanting.

I realised then and there that STAA will not be moved and that we, as a membership and a National Council, are going to see this profession through this difficult political period. We will turn it into a positive and we will create energy from it, so that young shiatsu practitioners coming forward have support, have tradition, and have great inspiration to be drawn along from.

When you chant you create a vibration deep in the centre of yourself, you encounter yourself without distraction. Because the Hannya Sutra is about non-attachment — all the senses do not count for anything when you're at the centre of yourself. They are nothing. Empty mind. For the first time in my life I experienced that because of the strong stimulation. I began to laugh, so the laughter came through the chant and with that added to the vibration, so the sound slipped into my gear and my gear was loose, because I started laughing on the inside. What I found at the centre of myself were two words: resilience and cheer.



## Feedback & Highlights

*'Some great information from the presenters – relevant to my daily working life.'*

*'The beautiful people and the inspiring workshops'*

*'Loved the collaborative sharing of conference presenters with our community – sharing their wisdom and areas of passionate focus. Best highlight – loved learning the valve exercise.'*

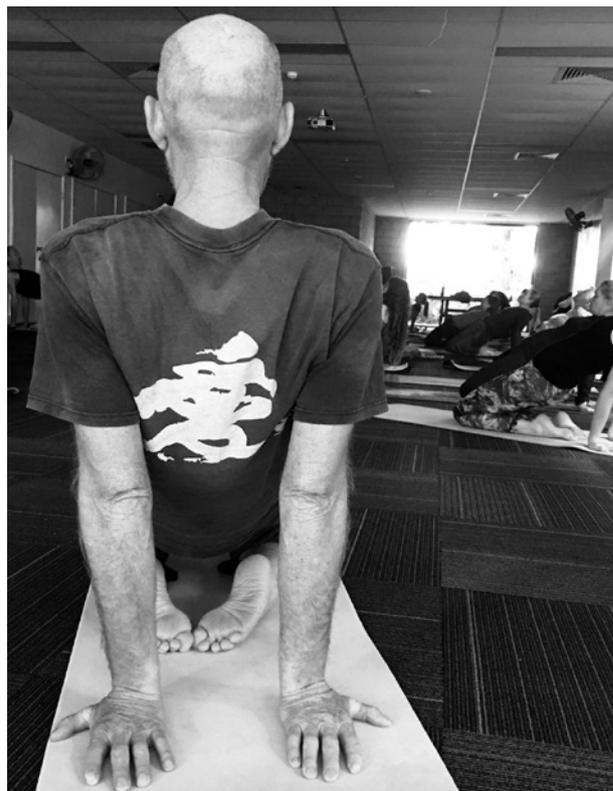
*'To feel part and connect on a deep level with a very professional, capable and human shiatsu community'*

*'Presenters' preparation and effort was extraordinary, their generosity in sharing their ways and the inspirational nature of the presenters meant I have left the conference with more energy than when I arrived.'*

*'The oncology and trauma presentations were apart from confirming and adding to my own experiences with this client group, incredibly inspiring and empowering.'*

*'The breadth of content was wide, all were relevant. Russell's guided shiatsu was a standout experience.'*

*'The call to empowerment. That we know shiatsu is valuable and our community skilled. It's really time to step up and stand strongly for it in these perilous times. Confidence in what we can achieve.'*



The male energy at the conference was really good. Jack Marshall, Con Margaritis, Yong Kuo, and Russell Makoto were like the four pillars, almost like a Buddhist text, they were a strong team of men. Yong Kuo led the Cleaning Practice on the Sunday, which I think would have been a highlight for some people. He got totally involved. He was a strong character at the conference. It's wonderful to have strong men participating right at the centre of our conference.

The only thing about the conference that wasn't top-notch was the food, but there was a lot of tension in the kitchen. It helped the program in a way, because people chose to meet the food for exactly what it was, demonstrate resilience, tolerance, patience and care for themselves, and eat the food with the right attitude and the right kind of breathing rhythm.

It became testimonial to character of STAA members. No one complained. We all knew what it was, and it was just fine, but we were all glad to get home to warm soup and green veggies that were cooked ever so nicely!

It was a remarkable experience.

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2017–2020

## Our Vision

Shiatsu is a recognised element of an integrated healthcare system.

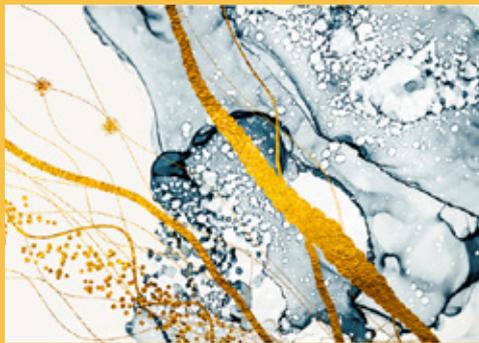
## Our Mission

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

## Our Values

To nurture, respect, collaborate and act with integrity.

GOAL	STRATEGY
1. Develop and sustain our membership	Seek member feedback regularly and proactively Lobby private health funds to provide rebates for shiatsu Deliver outstanding workshops and an annual conference Establish and facilitate a mentoring program Create peer supervision opportunities
2. Communicate proactively and effectively with members, registered training organisations and the public	Maintain an effective and interactive website Maintain a bank of media resources Publish a biannual journal – <i>Pointers</i> Circulate a regular e-newsletter – <i>Tsubo</i> Maintain a commitment to relevant annual forums for members and registered training organisations
3. Consolidate the discipline of shiatsu through education, research and development	Sustain a commitment to postgraduate research Manage continuous improvement through Continuing Professional Education (CPE) program Establish and maintain a Register of Teachers and of Mentors/ Supervisors Contribute to policy development within the healthcare system
4. Partner with people, organisations and community	Seek opportunities to collaborate locally, nationally and internationally Source funding for research
5. Sustain an effective, sustainable and supportive organisation	Retain accountable, supported and satisfied staff Continually develop and maintain quality IT systems Respond to membership needs



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