



Welcome to the second edition of the ATCA E-NEWS. The positive feedback we received about our first issue, especially regarding its relevance and easy to read format was very reassuring.

We hope you will continue to enjoy receiving the newsletters and that you will forward them onto your staff. We look forward to receiving your contributions, so come on and let us know what challenges, successes or issues you or your program have dealt with recently. You can send your contributions to atca@atca.com.au

In the last edition we asked for feedback on the Members Only section of the ATCA website and ideas on how we could make it more interactive. As we had no responses and the section has not been visited since its first weeks of operation, we have decided to do away with it and use emails and the E-NEWS as a means of communication with our members.

The ATCA 08 Conference presentations will be posted on the website from mid October and all the delegates will be advised by email.

ATCA Board Update

'Advancing the Therapeutic Community Approach' was the theme for the 2008 ATCA Conference held in Byron Bay and by all reports this is exactly what happened over the four days. As always the Annual Conference is an opportunity to share experiences, program developments, innovations in service delivery and simply to connect with others in the field. The intent this year was to create a sense of community during the conference, and originally the vision was to accommodate everyone at the Conference venue so that the opportunities for connection could be heightened. However, the record number of members attending forced us to accommodate people in two other spots. Thankfully this did not detract from the sense that everyone was renewing friendships, making new ones and sharing in the learning that took place. This year we had 150 attendees from all States and Territories and New Zealand. ATCA is consolidating its position as the peak for therapeutic communities in Australasia.

The financial assistance of the AER Foundation and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing allowed the organizing committee to design a program which was both stimulating and varied in content. We were lucky to have Dr George De Leon and Dr Nancy Jainchill from New York as guest speakers and grateful to those presenters from member agencies and community organizations who contributed papers addressing the themes of the Conference. At night the social program encouraged delegates to relax, enjoy good food and work off some energy on the dance floor.

The Annual General Meeting was guided by the new ATCA Constitution which saw a change in the Board

numbers and the loss of some existing Board members. Mary Alcorn retired from the Board, while Stuart Anderson, Carol Daws, Antigone Quince and I stepped down. Mary did not seek re-election, so with sadness and with appreciation for her significant contribution over many years we said 'au revoir'. Mary is known for her willingness to share her generosity, her experience and willingness to share resources and to give others a helping hand with program development, a quality which will be missed, but I am sure will not disappear.

Antigone Quince from Windana also made a significant contribution to the Board during her brief time on the Board, helping with the 2007 Conference in Melbourne and the development of the Awards protocols. Thank you Antigone.

The sad news following the AGM was the news that Lynne Magor-Blatch would have to step down as Chairperson of the Association mid term. Lynne has been a strong leader of the Association, overseeing the implementation of the strategic plan which now guides the work of the Association. She was also instrumental in negotiating and designing the TC Standards Project which will roll out in 2008-9. This is a watershed for ATCA, it will realize a long held dream of the Board and build on the work already completed in the Better Practice Project and the exposure last year to the Community of Communities Standards.

Following the election, Carol Daws, Stuart Anderson and I were returned as Board members and I was subsequently elected to the position of Chair and Stuart to Deputy Chair. Lynne was appointed as a Director by the Board in order to take advantage of her experience with the Standards Project and her research skills. Under the new Constitution the Board has the opportunity to appoint up to two Directors for special purposes.

Before moving on to other business I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the contribution of Janice Jones in organizing the conference. The amount of work required to prepare for such an event is huge, as I am sure many of you will appreciate. Janice's attention to detail and commitment to quality was a major contribution to the success of the conference.

The Standards Project is now under way, Jill Rundle, formerly employed by WANADA, has been selected to undertake the development of the standards together with a training resource that will assist TCs achieve and maintain the standards. A sub committee from the ATCA Board will work with Jill on this project. The time frame for completion is tight so expect to hear from Jill in the near future.

The next ATCA Conference will be held at this time of the year in the ACT, Canberra will be in full bloom and spring will be in the air, I look forward to seeing you all again at this time.

In the meantime we will keep you informed of the work the Association is doing on your behalf through the

ATCA E-NEWS. I encourage you to contribute to this newsletter so that we can continue to make it relevant and informative. Program updates, innovations and events are all newsworthy and a welcome addition to the tapestry.

Regards to all,
Barry Evans
Chairperson
ATCA

Secretariat Update

As Barry mentioned the ATCA 2008 Conference was a great success and we were completely overwhelmed by the numbers and the positive feedback we received. It made the many hours of work well worthwhile.

One of the features of the conference was the ATCA Awards presented to people and programs who have made a significant contribution the Therapeutic Community movement.

The winners were:

- Johnny Dow - Higher Ground NZ
- Kay Welsh - Odyssey House Victoria
- Meridy Calnin - Odyssey House Victoria
- Lynne Magor-Blatch - Karralika/ADFAC
- ADFAC's Karralika Karuna Program
- Higher Ground Rehabilitation Trust
- Palmerston Farm Vocational Program

Certificates for recognition of ten or more years of service to the TC movement were presented to:

- Pam McKenna -Palmerston
- Trevor Doig - Salvation Army
- Dawn Bainbridge - Karralika
- Susan Cordeiro - Odyssey House McGrath Fdn.
- Melissa Cranfield - Odyssey House McGrath Fdn.
- Shirley Wilson - Windana

Following the conference George De Leon agreed to provide training seminars while holidaying in Australia. Unfortunately due to his itinerary these were limited to three sessions which were held in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. While we were disappointed that other States and Territories missed out, the three sessions were very well attended and despite George losing his voice in Sydney, like the true performer he is, Canberra and Melbourne still benefited from his presentation, knowledge and wit in true De Leon style.

As a service to our members I have negotiated a competitive price with the Australian distributor of George's De Leon's *Red Book*, "The Therapeutic Community; Theory Model & Method". I was inundated with requests for the ten I ordered so I have extended the order and if you are interested in purchasing a copy at \$90 each including postage please email your request to me Janice@atca.com.au

In an effort to promote the Therapeutic Community model ATCA has decided to hold its Board meetings in

four different cities over the next twelve months. These meetings will be preceded by a community consultation/information session for people working in the AOD sector. Hopefully these sessions will improve the local knowledge of the benefits of the Therapeutic Community model and the TC programs available in their area. It will also give me and the Board members the opportunity to visit the various TCs in that city.

Our first interstate community consultation will be in Perth on Wednesday 3rd December. Details and location will be advised closer to the date.

TC News

The Commonwealth Government has committed \$22.9 million in funding through the Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) Grants Program, to enhance the capacity of the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) sector to respond to the rising demand for treatment for users of ATS.

Odyssey House McGrath Foundation has been successful in gaining funding to develop a treatment protocol for people who are adversely affected due to their use of ATS. The treatment protocol will be specific for use in the TC environment and other residential treatment settings.

The project is being undertaken through:

- The development of a literature review on current available treatment protocols, both here and overseas;
- Consultation with researchers and members of ATCA for their input; and
- The development of a final treatment protocol for people dependent on ATS in a TC environment.

Project Officer, Lynne Magor-Blatch, is keen to hear from ATCA members about any literature, current treatment programs and existing protocols which would be important to include in the literature review. Consultations at jurisdictional level will also commence in October. The purpose of these will be to gather input from members in relation to issues apparent in working with ATS users within the TC environment and the value of developing a TC-specific intervention.

Lynne can be contacted at

magor-blatch@grapevine.com.au

Helpful Links

The National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) is offering a free, online Worker Wellbeing Program for employees in the alcohol and other drugs (AOD) sector.

AOD Worker Wellbeing is available now from www.aodww.com.au.