# **President’s Report: ANZAHPE AGM 2021**

*Ben Canny – ANZAHPE President*

**I would like to acknowledge the First Nations owners of the lands that we meet; pay my respect to their elders, past, present and emerging; acknowledge their stewardship of the land, sky and sea, as well as their contribution to the knowledge of the health of people and the environment, and, finally, acknowledge that sovereignty of these lands has not been ceded.**

This year’s ANZAHPE Festival was held with the overarching theme of “*Moving Forward in Ambiguity*”, but when first proposed I think we were hopeful that by now we would be relieved of some of that ambiguity. But, with lockdowns presenting sporadically over much of Australia, travel bubbles bursting, and many people under significant stress and hardship due to the effects of the pandemic, much uncertainty remains. That being said, a reflection on ANZAHPE’s activities over the last twelve months would suggest that ANZAHPE has continued to grow and support the needs of our most constituents, you, the members.

I have had the privilege of serving the Association as president for approximately eight months, and I wish to acknowledge the tremendous platform provided by the immediate past President, Chinthaka Balasooriya, which as smoothed my tenure. Chinthaka took the difficult decision to stand down as President, due to a range of personal considerations, and I would like to thank him for the courage and generosity of that decision. I am very pleased that Chinthaka has continued on as a member of the Committee of Management, where his counsel is an invaluable assistance to us all and the Association.

So, what have we achieved?

ANZAHPE CoM took the decision at the beginning of the pandemic that this was a time for engagement and generosity for our membership, and I think events of the last year or so have endorsed that position. We were in the extremely fortunate position of a strong membership, both in terms of numbers and commitment, and a robust financial position. From this perspective, a number of very important initiatives have emerged.

Perhaps the most evident of these has been the ANZAHPE online, our professional development initiative, led by Joy Rudland. Enhancing our PD had been an ambition of ANZAHPE for a while, but the onset of the pandemic and rapidly developing expertise with reliable online platforms proved to be the tipping point. I think this has been a really important “new” activity, and an important complement to the professional development that we used to routinely access via the conference

The Fellowship committee has also made significant advances, with the number of Fellows and Associate Fellows increasing. Of significance, the committee has recently launched the Mentorship Program, which we hope will be an additional vehicle for the professional development of our members. While it is hoped this program will result in more people thinking about the value of the Fellowship program, the real goal of the exercise is to increase the activity and engagement of our membership in Health Professions Education and Research. I would particularly like to thank Julie Ash and her committee for this innovation.

The ANZAHPE research grant scheme was maintained despite the current financial setting, as evidence of the ongoing commitment to the development of our memberships. Five successful grants received a total of around $25,000, and an announcement of the successful grants will be made elsewhere. Thanks to all who submitted, and those who generously gave of their time to assess and rank applications, particularly our secretary, Megan Anakin, who led this process.

Margo Brewer has further developed the IPE knowledge repository, and, as a reminder, this can be accessed at: <https://nexusipe.org/informing/resource-center/anzahpe>. ANZAHPE has a unique position with respect to IPE, given our deliberative interprofessional nature, and we should always take advantage of our ability to leverage that position.

We have furthered our links with AMEE and IAMSE, through their generosity to join us at the Festival. Both workshops were well attended and well received, and I think that this development augurs well for future international activities. The wonderful irony of the pandemic and being stuck within the confines of our nations, is that it is now much easier to engage international partners, and do some meaningful work with them!!

FoHPE (*Focus on Health Professions Education*) has gone Open Access and developing under the editorship of Karen Scott, supported by her executive of Jodie Copley and Andy Wearn, as well as other members of the editorial board. We see Open Access as an opportunity to enhance the standing of the journal, and important step towards indexing. FoHPE is the Association journal, and I therefore encourage all members to get behind it, through submission and reviewing, and help develop it further. CoM has recently affirmed its support for FoHPE, as we see it as an essential element of ANZAHPE which, if developed appropriately, will only enhance our standing.

Finally, ANZAHPE has held its first fully online conference/Festival. Thank you all for attending and registering, and for the support of our industry partners. In addition, and importantly, this would not have been a success with all who submitted abstracts, all who reviewed them, and those that chaired sessions. The Festival returned a modest surplus for the Association, and we look forward to receiving the evaluation outcomes, so we can continue to organise fit-for-purpose opportunities for the development of members.

The Association is not without challenges. These are straitened times for many, and, as stated previously, we were fortunate to be in sound financial position at the beginning of the pandemic, which has allowed us to adopt a supportive approach while maintaining appropriate prudence. Current indications are that we are steadily moving towards a balanced financial position into the future, while enhancing services and experiences for members. The recent interest in the CoM elections suggests that we are also in a sound position organisationally. I trust that the Association can continue to be of relevance to Health Professions in Australia.

Next year, 2022, is the fiftieth anniversary of ANZAME/ANZAHPE. We need to celebrate. At this stage we don’t know whether that will be via a face-to-face conference, or some other means is, at this stage, unknown. Irrespective, it is highly likely that a commemorative publication will be organised, and some of the ANZAHPE “old farts” have started to think about how to do that. Fifty years is a significant achievement, and ANZAHPE will be reaching out to the membership to join us in recognising that.

It would be remiss of me not to recognise the tremendous support that I have received during my tenure as President. Much of this has come from the CoM, and all deserve thanks and gratitude. We are indeed fortunate to have such a wonderful group of people who are prepared contribute to our success. Over the last year CoM has consisted of: Di Eley (Vice-President), Jo Tai (Treasurer), Megan Anakin (Secretary), Koshila Kumar (Membership Secretary), Jo Bishop, Anna Vnuk, Margo Brewer, Chinthaka Balasooriya, Carole Steketee and Avril Lee. Avril will not be continuing as a member of CoM, and I would like to particularly thank her for her contributions, most especially in providing a diversity in our perspectives. Carole served an extraordinary seventh year on CoM, and her sage advice provided much stability as we navigated somewhat unchartered waters.

Jill Romeo is a fantastic Executive Officer for the Association, and without her there would be no ANZAHPE or FoHPE – thank you Jill!!

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve you as President. It’s been fun, and I think we’ve achieved a few things.

Ben Canny

ANZAHPE President 2020-2021