

Newsletter - March 2008

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I am pleased to advise that the 2006 Annual Report is currently being progressed and will be completed as soon as possible following the release of 2006 data from the Clinical Data Services Unit. Once available the Report will be archived on Council's website address: <http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/agency/partnerships/comm.php>

On a personal note, I wish to advise that I will be stepping down as Chair of Council at the beginning of May 1, 2008 in order to take up the position of *Chief of Division of Intensive Care* and *Associate Professor of Paediatrics* at the Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. I wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank members of Council for their continued support and significant contributions to Council and its ongoing activities. I have enjoyed my appointment with the Council which I believe has achieved significant things in the past few years and I am sure that this good work will continue into the future. A replacement Chairperson will be appointed by the Health Minister in due course and I wish the new Chair every success in this position. I also wish to thank readers for their continued interest in and support of Council activities.



Dr Simon Parsons
Chairperson
Council of Obstetric & Paediatric Mortality & Morbidity

COUNCIL NEWS

Current membership in accordance with the Terms of Reference includes Dr Simon Parsons (Chair); Professor Allan Carmichael; Dr James Brodribb; Dr Geoff Shannon; Ms Ros Escott; Dr Peter Dargaville; Mr Peter Askey-Doran, Associate Professor Bipin Gupta, & Mr Paul Mason (Commissioner for Children, Tasmania); Mr Tony Sansom (DHHS representative). Dr Amanda Dennis has been invited by Council to attend as an Observer at future meetings or as a proxy RANZCOG member as required.

The Council website continues to archive newsletters, Annual Reports and other relevant resource information. The website address is: <http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/agency/partnerships/comm.php> Please note that *RHH Clinical Practice Guidelines and Protocols* can be accessed from the intranet link included in Council's website.



CLINICAL MATTERS

1. **Screening for Syndromes and Abnormalities-** a recent report of an unexpected death due to prolonged QT Syndrome has highlighted the need for clinicians within Tasmania to be reminded to screen for such syndromes or other abnormalities.
2. **Support for Statewide Community Paediatrician Position-** Council agreed to support the proposal to establish a statewide community paediatrician position in Tasmania who would have particular responsibilities in child protection issues.
3. **Proposed Revision of the Perinatal Data Collection Form-** Council supported the future need to redesign the Perinatal Data Collection Form (PDCF) to include collection of data regarding congenital abnormalities from the time of conception through to 1 year of age. It was agreed to write to the Health Minister recommending that the Perinatal Data Collection Form needed to be expanded at the time of the Form having online access in order to encapsulate a broader spectrum of information allowing the provision of a more uniform data collection process for Tasmania in line with national statistics. Council agreed to maintain a running list on future Council meeting Agenda's detailing other information to be included on the PDCF in the future.
4. **Establishment of Paediatric M&M Committees at the 3 teaching hospitals-** These Committees are continuing to be set up within each hospital where statutory immunity of relevant members on committees will be implemented. Council still awaits feedback from northern teaching hospitals regarding the stage of establishment of these committees. Once established, the Paediatric Mortality & Morbidity Committee will seek Annual Reports from respective Committees to assist in the review and classification of Paediatric Deaths within Tasmania.

SUBCOMMITTEES

PAEDIATRIC Mortality & Morbidity

Members welcomed the new Paediatric Representative, Dr Michelle Williams, onto the subcommittee. This subcommittee continues to meet bimonthly to review statewide paediatric deaths and progress actions as they arise. 2006 cases have been reviewed and classified. 2007 review of cases have been nearly completed. 2008 cases are currently being reviewed. It was noted that there would be a number of members taking extended Leave during 2008. The Chair would be resigning from this Committee in June 2008; the new and current Paediatric representative would be taking 7 months Leave starting June 2008; & the Forensic Pathologist representative would be taking 3 months sabbatical Leave commencing August 2008.



PERINATAL Mortality & Morbidity

Members welcomed Dr Amanda Dennis onto this subcommittee. Review and classification of perinatal deaths (including stillbirths and neonatal deaths) for 2006 is being progressed and will be incorporated into the Annual Report 2006 once finalised. Recommendations will be formulated in view of cases reviewed.

MATERNAL Mortality & Morbidity

Members welcomed Dr Amanda Dennis onto this subcommittee. The maternal death case reported in north-west Tasmania in 2006 which has already been reviewed by this committee and a summary and recommendations submitted will be included in the 2006 Annual Report.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

As noted previously, the current Chairperson for Council, Dr Simon Parsons, will be resigning from this position effective May 1, 2008. A new Chairperson will need to be appointed by the Health Minister in due course. A new Council representative will also be sought for the *Tasmanian Branch of the Paediatric Health Division of the Royal Australian College of Physicians*. Dr Amanda Dennis has been welcomed by Council as an Observer at future meetings or as a proxy RANZCOG representative as required. It has been advised that the Vice Chancellor of UTAS was currently in the process of finalising confirmation for the appointment of Associate Professor Bipin Gupta as representative of the University of Tasmania on Council. The current term for Council members is for a 3 year period (2006-2009). Renewal of Council membership will be progressed early in 2009.

MEETINGS FOR 2008

Next Council Meetings:

- Thursday 22 May, 12.30-2.00pm, DSU Meeting Room
- Thursday 21 August, 12.30-2.00pm, DSU Meeting Room
- Thursday 20 November, 12.30-2.00pm, DSU Meeting Room

Note: Subcommittee meetings will be advised.

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