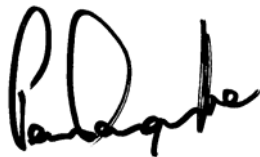


## Newsletter - March 2009

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2009! Preparations for the 2007 Annual Report are currently being progressed with a view to complete by end of this Financial Year. In the meantime, as an interim measure, key issues arising will be reported in future newsletters prior to final release of the 2007 Annual Report. The current three-year term (2006-2009) of appointed members on the Council is coming to a close and I wish to sincerely thank members for their invaluable support and significant contributions to Council and its ongoing activities during this term. Membership for the new 3-year term (2009-2012) will be sought as soon as possible and confirmation of membership will be provided. I have registered my interest in continuing in the Chairman's role in the new term.



A/Prof Peter Dargaville  
Chairperson  
Council of Obstetric & Paediatric Mortality & Morbidity

### COUNCIL NEWS

Current membership for 2006-2009 term in accordance with the Terms of Reference includes; A/Prof Peter Dargaville (Chair); Professor Allan Carmichael; Dr James Brodribb; Dr Geoff Shannon; Ms Ros Escott; Mr Peter Askey-Doran, Associate Professor Bipin Gupta, Mr Paul Mason; Dr David Strong & Mr Tony Sansom.

The Council website continues to archive newsletters, Annual Reports and other relevant resource information. The updated website address is as follows:

<http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/copmm>. Please note that *RHH Clinical Practice Guidelines and Protocols* can be accessed from the intranet link included in Council's website.

### CLINICAL MATTERS

- 1. Child Death Review Committee update** - The Commissioner for Children reported that COPMM representatives, Associate/Prof. Peter Dargaville (Chair), Prof. Allan Carmichael and Dr Chris Lawrence (Chair- Paediatric M&M Subcommittee) met with other key stakeholders (e.g., Coroner, DHHS) on 27 February 2009 to discuss the establishment of a Child Death Review Committee. At the meeting it was agreed that the coronial system and COPMM shared a closer association in Tasmania compared to other states and that a second tier review mechanism would be an important addition to current review processes. That is, there should be some mechanism to allow relevant representatives to meet and exchange information about the timing of reviews, information available and information required



regarding the death of a child. The level of information to be shared; the 'trigger' for the group being constituted on a death; and the types of death it would be constituted for (i.e., all deaths or subgroups of deaths) are all issues that need to be considered. It was suggested that membership of a Child Death Review Board would need to include representatives who share a broad skill set; gender mix and jurisdictional mix (including attending representatives) and that geographical representation would also need to be considered as well as ensuring that there would be the ability to seek expert advice when necessary. Appointment of members would be either by the Governor or the Minister.

2. **Support for Statewide Community Paediatrician Position-** funding for this position has been identified across three funding areas. The Position Description is currently being developed and the Position will be advertised in the near future. The Council agreed that the input of statewide Paediatricians should be included during the process of development of a Position description and that the DHHS should be requested to ensure its statewide circulation. It is anticipated that a Registrar will be appointed to the position of Fellow Community Paediatrician in Tasmania in July 2009.
3. **Electronic Perinatal Database-** An update from the Clinical Data Services Manager stated that a recommendation had been made to allocate part of the \$300,000 or some extra money to appoint a Project Officer dedicated to the completion of this very important project. The Project Officer will be appointed for a 6 month period (sometime in March 2009) and will be required to establish a Working Group and/or a Steering Committee, with representatives from all areas and sites with a vested interest in this project. The Project Officer position is currently in the process of being scoped and advertised. There has been a slight delay in the progress of this appointment due to a number of critical staff members being unavailable. Council agreed that it should maintain close links with developments and receive regular progress updates and ensure that the EPD is thoughtfully developed and implemented in line with statewide requirements. The appointed Project Officer will be invited to the next Council meeting scheduled to be held in May 2009. The Chair of COPMM has also expressed an interest in contributing to developments particularly in view of his clinical experience and understanding of relevant issues. Watch this space for future updates.
4. **Update on Australian Maternity Outcomes Surveillance System (AMOSS) –** 2008 was a landmark year for maternity research in Australia with the establishment of the *Australian Maternity Outcomes Surveillance System (AMOSS): Improving the Safety and Quality of Maternity Care in Australia*. The establishment of AMOSS has been funded by the National Health & Medical research Council (NH&MRC) and will be based at the Perinatal and Reproductive Epidemiology Research Unit (PRERU) at the University of NSW. AMOSS will be established as a national system to study a range of serious, but rare obstetric complications and disorders of pregnancy which are thought to contribute significantly to maternal morbidity in Australia. This System will undertake active surveillance and epidemiological research of selected obstetric conditions with the aim to improve the knowledge of rare obstetric disorders and their management in Australia, providing evidence-based data for; clinical guideline development, educational resources and ongoing national perinatal research. Once established, the system will be designed to facilitate research by those interested in maternal care.  
Tasmanian hospitals in conjunction with Victorian hospitals (public and private) have agreed to participate in the AMOSS with a nominated hospital person required to complete a monthly surveillance card to identify cases of interest. All six main providers of birthing services in Tasmania (i.e., RHH, HPH, Calvary Health, LGH,

Mersey Community and North West-Burnie) have confirmed their interest to participate in AMOSS. Data collection is expected to commence sometime in May 2009.

### 5. Perinatal Trends in 2007: At a Glance –

#### Babies

- The number of livebirths recorded on the Perinatal Data System in 2007 was **6314**, an increase of **170 (2.7%)** since 2006 (6 144).
- Males accounted for **51%** of births and females **49%**.
- There were **94** multiple births including **93** sets of twins.
- The proportion of low birth weight babies (less than 2 500 grams) in Tasmania was **7%**, compared to the national proportion of **6.4%** in 2006.
- **8%** of deliveries were preterm (less than 37 weeks gestation).

#### Mothers

- **72%** of mothers were public patients and **27%** were private patients.
- **45%** of mothers were aged over 30 years. **6.8%** of mothers were under the age of 20 years much higher than the national proportion of **4.3%** in 2006.
- **39%** of mothers had their first baby and **33%** had their second baby.
- **3.7%** of mothers were identified as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders.
- **68%** of mothers had an unassisted vaginal delivery and **3.5%** had an instrumental delivery.
- **29%** of mothers gave birth by caesarean section compared to **21%** in 1998.
- Of the caesarean section deliveries, **53%** were elective and **47%** were emergencies.
- **80%** of mothers were breastfeeding at discharge.
- **28%** of mothers reported smoking during pregnancy with the rate for teenage mothers being **55%**.

Classification	Total No. for 2007 (n=6 314)	Rate per 1 000
Perinatal Mortality	63	9.9
Stillbirths	44	7.0
Neonatal Mortality	19	3.0
Paediatric Mortality	25	tba

#### Smoking Comparison 2007 and 1982\*

Age	1982* (%)	Age	2006 (%)	2007 (%)
Overall	35.3		27.1	27.9
<20	55.2	<20	55.2	55.3
21-25	46.0	20-24	40.9	44.2
26-30	30.2	25-29	26.6	26.8
>30	21.2	>30	16.6	17.2
Public	Not reported		35.5	36.2
Private	Not reported		6.9	6.8

\* *Obstetric and neonatal Report – Tasmania 1982*



## SUBCOMMITTEES

### PAEDIATRIC Mortality & Morbidity

This subcommittee continues to meet bimonthly to review statewide paediatric deaths and progress actions as they arise. The first meeting for the year will be held later in March 2009. Dr Michelle Williams' has returned from extended Leave of Absence and the Committee has been grateful to Dr David Strong for his invaluable contribution to activities while covering Paediatric representation during Dr Williams' absence. Committee is still awaiting confirmation of a nominee from Director of Disability, Child, Youth and Family Services regarding the confirmation of the appointment of a Senior Child Protection Practice Consultant to the Committee. Dr Chris Lawrence continues to Chair this subcommittee. Review of 2008 cases will be completed as soon as possible and review and classification of 2009 cases will commence soon.

### PERINATAL Mortality & Morbidity

Review and classification of perinatal deaths (including stillbirths and neonatal deaths) for 2007 is near completion and will be integrated in the 2007 COPMM Annual Report in the near future. Recommendations will be formulated in view of reviewed cases and also included in Annual Report for 2007.

### MATERNAL Mortality & Morbidity

No maternal death cases have been reported in Tasmania since the case reviewed in 2006. At Council's recent meeting the issue of maternal morbidity was considered and it was agreed to discuss these issues at a meeting of this subcommittee to be scheduled as soon as possible. It was further agreed that significant maternal morbidity events (e.g., quality of care) should be reported in future Annual Reports despite collection of accurate data continuing to be problematic as reported previously by Professor Joe Correy.

### DATA MANAGEMENT

It has been agreed by Council that this subcommittee should be reactivated to provide an information reporting role where data items (as per additions to perinatal data collection form provided by COPMM) can be reviewed and formatting issues related to Annual Reports can be addressed. Draft Terms of Reference for an Information and Reporting Subcommittee were considered and accepted subject to minor refinement. It has further been agreed that membership for this subcommittee should include obstetric, paediatric midwifery Council member or nominees; nominees Clinical Data Services Unit, DHHS; and statistical/epidemiological nominee(s), Population Health, DHHS.

## MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

The 2006-2009 year term for Council members has concluded. Renewal of Council membership for 2009-2012 terms is currently being progressed. Current members will continue to represent respective organisations at future Council meetings while appointment process is completed before end of this Financial Year.



## MEETINGS FOR 2009

### Next Council Meetings:

- Thursday 21 May, 12.30-2.00pm, Meeting Room, Ground Flr, 34 Davey Street, Hobart
- Thursday 20 August, 12.30-2.00pm, Ground Flr, 34 Davey Street, Hobart
- Thursday 19 November, 12.30-2.00pm, Ground Flr, 34 Davey Street, Hobart

**Note:** *Subcommittee meetings will be advised.*

Secretariat Contact Details: Dr Jo Jordan; email: [jo.jordan@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:jo.jordan@dhhs.tas.gov.au)