

Hello and welcome to another edition of *Speak Out*. I write this piece in the brief hiatus between the May meeting of National Council and in the midst of last minute preparations for 'Participation 2010', our National Conference. It's a perfect opportunity for me to reflect on the tremendous amount of important work being undertaken by our members. I hope you will take the time to thumb through this edition and read more about these many projects, large and small which are currently underway.



I hope many of you have been inspired and challenged, as I have, by the conference theme – 'Participation'. Congratulations to Cath Naismith, Dr Emma McLaughlin and the entire Conference Planning Committee on assembling a program that challenged us to really make a difference in the lives of our clients and consumers. It has served as the perfect bookend to remind me that all the activity we undertake as an Association really boils down to this - enabling our members to better make that difference and influencing government to help make it possible.

As an Association we are only as strong as our governing principles and structures. The Code of Ethics and the Competency Based Occupational Standards (CBOS) are foundation Association documents which guide our decision making and underpin all we do as speech pathologists. The Association recently undertook to review both pieces of work to ensure they continue to serve our profession well, long into the future. The revised Code of Ethics was launched at the conference and substantial additional work undertaken on CBOS. Look out for opportunities to participate in education regarding the Code of Ethics (2010) and in further focus groups to inform the review of CBOS.

We also welcomed a number of new councillors and farewelled some old friends at the AGM. Thank you to all these volunteers for their commitment to advance the work of the Association in their spare time.

Sadly, May saw us farewell Marie Atherton from her role as Senior Advisor Professional Issues to take up an exciting new role helping develop a speech pathology school in Vietnam. This column is far too short to adequately thank Marie for the enormous contribution she has made over the past 5 years in a role affectionately referred to by Council as "Wonder Woman". Whilst we will profile Marie's substantial achievements elsewhere I do want to pay tribute to her energy, drive and professionalism which has been critical to so much of the work the Association has undertaken in the last 5 years. You leave enormous shoes to fill Marie – all the very best in your pioneering new venture.

And there's so much more – but no more column space. So, until next time, happy reading.

Christine Stone
National President

Farewell Marie Atherton Senior Advisor Professional Issues - Ethics and Projects



At the end of May we will farewell Marie Atherton who is taking up a significant opportunity in developing the first Graduate Diploma in Speech Therapy in Vietnam. This position is with Australian Volunteers International, in partnership with the Medical University of Ho Chi Minh City and the Trinh Foundation of Australia.

Marie commenced the newly created role of Senior Advisor Professional Issues in 2005 at a time when the Association recognised a need to have an experienced speech pathologist coordinate and lead a range of professional matters. The role importantly included the management of our Ethics complaints processes, providing support and guidance to the Ethics Board.

As part of this role Marie provided professional advice to members and the public confronting ethical concerns, which in many instances would lead to identifying specific themes upon which education to members as a whole was developed. Over the time of Marie's 5 years with the Association, she led a number of changes to the Ethics procedures and very recently, in conjunction with the Ethics Board, prepared and finalised a revised Code of Ethics.

Marie's contribution also extended to wide ranging projects involving submission development, coordination of projects such as the Australian Standards for Texture Modified Foods and Fluids Terminology, steering of position paper reviews and development, and representation of the Association on a number of external bodies, such as the Australian Stroke Coalition and the AHPA Chronic Disease initiative, to name but a few. Marie's tremendous professional knowledge and expertise, along with her strong ability to guide and complete key projects will be a great loss to the Association. We do however wish her all the best for her work in Vietnam and congratulate her on taking on this challenging but no doubt very rewarding role.

Gail Mulcair
Chief Executive Officer