



australian nursing federation

national news - july 2010

> Federal Office bearers

Lee Thomas, Federal Secretary and Yvonne Chaperon, Assistant Federal Secretary commenced their new leadership roles of the Federation on 1 July 2010 following the role of Federal Secretary becoming vacant, as Ged Kearney moved to her new position as President of the ACTU. Ged has been an outstanding leader during her time as Assistant Federal Secretary then Federal Secretary. Lee and Yvonne will continue to lead the Federation through some challenging and important phases industrially, professionally and of course politically.

> Take Home Pay Application Withdrawn

On 29 July 2010 the Take Home Pay application in respect to aged care nurses in New South Wales and Queensland was withdrawn. The decision to withdraw reflects the outcome of very positive campaign to increase the numbers of nurses covered by collective agreements and to obtain written commitments from employers that existing wages and conditions be retained. In addition, the \$26 national wage case adjustment of 1 July 2010 had a positive effect on the take home pay of many nurses.

> Pay Equity Paper

At the meeting of Federal Executive in February 2010, it was resolved that the Federal Office draft pay equity briefing paper be circulated to Branches for their input and comments. The paper will now proceed to the August 2010 meeting of the Federal Council where a decision will be made whether or not to proceed with an application, and if so, in what form.

> ACTU Industrial Officers Conference

ANF Federal Office is participating in the ACTU subcommittee to plan the next bi annual conference which is to be held in March 2011 in Melbourne. The theme of the conference will be a reflection on the application of the Fair Work Act 2009. A draft conference agenda will be available shortly.

> Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency

The ANF has been involved in the negotiation of an enterprise agreement affecting members employed by the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency. In-principle agreement was recently reached with management on an improved package of pay and conditions and staff will vote on the proposed agreement shortly.

> Medibank Health Services Division Enterprise Agreement

Negotiations for a new agreement covering nurses, allied health professionals and administrative staff are nearing completion with in-principle agreement reached on classifications, wages increases and other conditions. A revised draft agreement should be available within the next few weeks. The agreement will cover organisations previously known as Health Services Australia, Health Solutions and the Travel Doctor.

> Bargaining in Medical Centers

With the growth of practice nursing and recent support by the Australian government for primary care the federal Industrial Advisory Committee (IAC) has commenced an examination of the

mechanisms that may be available to improve the density of collective agreements between practice nurses and their employers. The process to date has entailed meetings of the IAC, the preparation of relevant research and initial contact with the professional practice nurses organisation, the Australian Practice Nurses Association.

> **Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) – Modern Award online tools**

The FWO has recently released on-line tools designed to assist employees and employers in the transition to the Modern Awards. There are four different tools: an award finder; pay check (directed at base rates of pay); payroll check (designed for payroll staff); and the pay rates calculator (which assumes users have a more than basic understanding of awards). The pay rates calculator includes base rates of pay, shift allowances and penalties subject to transitional arrangements under the modern awards.

> **Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) editorial committee meeting**

The SHPA have established an editorial committee to advise on the development of a new publication. This publication is an Australian Guide to Medicine Administration for patients with swallowing difficulties or enteral feeding tubes and will be an extremely useful resource for qualified health professionals responsible for medicines administration. The Federal Office was invited to be a member of the committee. The committee met via teleconference on 1 July 2010 to progress work on the content of the document which is due to be completed later in the year.

> **Productivity Commission meeting**

On 5 July representatives from the Federal Office met with Commissioner Woods and Associate Commissioner Sue Macri AM who are undertaking the Productivity Commission's *Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians*. The ANF is preparing a major submission to the Inquiry and appreciated the opportunity to have preliminary discussion with the Commissioners about the areas we would be addressing in that submission.

> **ACSQHC NIMC oversight committee meeting**

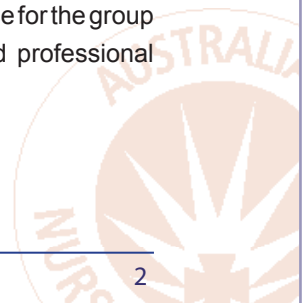
The Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) National Inpatient Medicines Chart (NIMC) oversight committee met in Adelaide on 9 July 2010. This national committee meet three times a year to discuss issues relating to implementation of the chart. Work is progressing on a draft NIMC incorporating a pre-printed Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) prophylaxis risk assessment and prescribing section. Expressions of interest from Australian hospitals willing to pilot the draft NIMC with VTE prophylaxis space have been sought. The Medication Management Plan has been made available for use in Australian hospitals. This form allows for the recording of a best possible medication history and the reconciling of medicines at admission.

> **APNA CliPPBoard Project Advisory Committee Meeting**

The Australian Practice Nurses Association held the second meeting of the Practice Nurse Collaborative Policy and Procedures Project Steering Committee on 12 July 2010. This project aims to provide an online web 2.0 platform, and innovative training and marketing strategies to enable and encourage practice nurses to contribute to and access best practice policies and procedures. Focus groups and an on-line survey have been conducted to inform the next phase of the project.

> **MTAA Working Group Meeting**

The ANF Federal Professional Officers provided representation to a Working Group hosted and chaired by the Medical Technology Association of Australia in Sydney on 21 July, to discuss the promotion of therapeutic goods. The group, consisting of representatives from medical technology/pharmaceutical industry associations, healthcare professional bodies and consumers, has been called together at the request of the Federal government, following the recent release of their position paper on the *Promotion of Therapeutic Goods*. A central purpose for the group is to consider existing industry and professional



codes/standards relating to therapeutic goods and mechanisms for extending the codes to non-members of the industry associations; as well as possibilities of aligning with national registration of healthcare professionals codes/standards. The group will not now meet until after the Federal election in August.

> Joint Pandemic Influenza Meeting

At the meeting of the Joint ANF/RCNA Pandemic Influenza Working Group on 27 July 2010 the group noted that activity of the Pandemic H1N1 2009 virus has been at a low level in the northern hemisphere, although deaths are still occurring. Within Australia there have been 101 cases confirmed since the beginning of the year but no deaths. The group was pleased to note also that vaccinations with the Panvax preparation are continuing amongst the general public and health professionals, including nurses and midwives, although at a lower rate than is desirable to achieve the greatest protection for the community as a whole.

> National Oral Health Alliance

The Federal Office is participating in a newly reconstructed National Oral Health Alliance which has developed a joint statement on concerns relating to oral health and messages to present to the three major political parties in the lead up to the Federal election in August. This process is being co-ordinated by the Australian Council on Social Services (ACOSS) of which the ANF is a member organisation. The statement from the Alliance was officially launched on 29 July and is available on the ACOSS website: <http://www.acoss.org.au>

> ANF Victorian Branch Productivity Commission (PC) review of aged care forum

A representative from the ANF Federal Office Professional Team participated in the ANF Victorian Branch *Productivity Commission Review of Aged Care Nurses Forum* held on Friday 16 July. Nurses from a range of aged care settings heard from Richard Rosewarne and Janet Opie – the architects of the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) from Applied Aged Care

Solutions – about ways in which this funding tool could be adapted for use as a staffing and skills mix tool in aged care; and, Lee Thomas, who spoke on the gains for aged care from the 2010 Budget and how nurses can influence aged care reform through the study being undertaken by the Productivity Commission. The participants, who were primarily, aged care nurses, workshopped a range of issues pertinent to the aged care sector to provide information for the Victorian Branch response to the Productivity Commission's *Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians*.

> NSWNA Professional Day

ANF Federal Office representatives attended the NSWNA (ANF NSW Branch) Professional Day held on 23 July 2010 at Randwick in Sydney. Sessions included: an address by the Commonwealth Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer, Rosemary Bryant; a National Registration update by Professor Mary Chiarella, National Nursing and Midwifery Board Member; lessons from the harmonisation of occupational health and safety laws by Jarrod Moran, ACTU's Senior OHS and Worker's Compensation Officer; an overview of issues facing the Fijian nurses by Kuini Lutua, General Secretary of the Fiji Nurses Association; the role of RN's in disaster relief based on the Haiti experience by Deborah Burger, California Nurses Association; staffing and skill mix in aged care by Lee Thomas, ANF Federal Secretary; and the story of the Beaconsfield Mine rescue by Darren Flanagan.

> Productivity Commission

The ANF Federal Office is preparing a major submission to the Productivity Commission's *Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians*. The preparatory work has included extensive consultation with the Branches. The Commission's study fits perfectly with the ANF's national campaign in the aged care arena, *Because We Care*, and provides an excellent platform for raising issues from our membership, through a formal, government sanctioned process. The submission, due at the end of July, will be available on the ANF website: <http://www.anf.org.au> under "Submissions".



> **National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010**

The Federal Office submitted a response to the Senate Standing Committee in relation to the proposed National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010. This particular Bill provides for the establishment of the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care as a permanent, independent statutory authority. The document is available at: <http://www.anf.org.au> under "Submissions".

> **Continuing Professional Education / Development (CPE/CPD)**

Under the new national registration and accreditation scheme, there are new registration standards relating to continuing professional development (CPD). Nurses and midwives are required to participate in at least 20 hours of CPD per year. One hour of active learning is equal one hour of CPD. It is the nurse or midwife's responsibility to calculate how many hours of active learning have taken place.

The ANF's online Continuing Professional Education (CPE) program assists nurses and midwives in maintaining competence to practice

by providing quality CPE along with a professional portfolio to record evidence of CPE/CPD activities. This ensures ANF (including NSWNA and QNU) members have access to a compliant and simple to use tool in order to meet the registration standards.

Each CPE tutorial allocates users five points, equating to five hours for each tutorial completed. The completion of four CPE tutorials will allow users to attain the mandated 20 CPD points annually.

Visit www.anf.org.au/cpe or contact the Canberra Federal Office (on 02 6232 6533 or cpe@anf.org.au) for further information or assistance.

> **Branch Conferences**

Thank you to the Queensland Nurses Union, New South Wales Nurses Association Victorian Branch and the Tasmanian Branch for warmly welcoming Lee Thomas and Yvonne Chaperon to their recent annual delegate's conferences. All conferences were extremely successful with many great presentations and were very well attended.



LEE THOMAS
Federal Secretary



YVONNE CHAPERON
Assistant Federal Secretary

For more information about any of the above items contact your ANF state or territory Branch, the NSW Nurses Association (ANF NSW Branch) or the Queensland Nurses Union (ANF QLD Branch).