

PRESIDENT'S PIECE



The celebration of Recreational Therapy Week had some great traction on social media, with several organisations outwardly recognising the vital role of Recreational/ Diversional Therapists within aged care, health, and rehabilitation. It was so heartening

to see our profession being celebrated and shared across various platforms, increasing our visibility. Thank you to NSW Health, Southern Cross Care, and Royal Rehabilitation, along with many of our members for promoting our profession online.

We had some very successful town hall sessions attended by members and non-members, where all were provided with an update on the current goals and projects that ARTA are working towards for 2024. Thank you to those who attended, and please keep an eye out for further town halls across the year.

We are excited to announce that this year's Australian Recreational Therapy Conference 'Choice, Connection, Community' will be virtual. It will run across Thursday 26th and Friday 27th September 2024. Although our 2023 conference was a great success, with fantastic keynotes and presenters, getting numbers across the line for face-to-face engagement, and the costs associated with physical conferences were considered when deciding how to deliver our professional development this year. As much as we want our members and the Diversional and Recreational community to come together, we needed to choose how we could best provide professional development, which also fell within the capacity of affordability for the association.

Professional development continues to be a difficult thing to navigate within all industries, hence our decision this year, to provide a virtual conference to enable greater reach across the nation, but with the possibility of further engagement with attendees and presenters from across the globe. A call for abstracts will be



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available online soon. We look forward to receiving submissions for our National Conference.

ARTA board members continue to engage in external advocacy roles on the National Aged Care Alliance, providing feedback on the draft standards and the quality-of-life indicators. We are aiming to explore increased connections with Western Sydney University, and we are happy to report that WSU has been provided with full accreditation with ARTA and is recognised as a quality provider of education.

We are always looking for members to engage and support our board members through communities of practice or in working groups for industry feedback. If you have any interests in the various portfolio's or communities of practice, please reach out to the office to ask questions to register your interest.

In March, the office will soon begin work on membership renewals over the coming months, please ensure that you have updated your details on MemNet or contact the office if you can't access our online portal.

We aim to have submitted our application for AHPA by the time you read this newsletter, which is very exciting in the move forward of our profession. We will keep you updated on this, and thank you to Charlise for all your work on this huge task. We are still looking for additional members to form part of the self-regulation committee, which is made up of degree, diploma and cert 4 membership. If you are interested or want to know more again, please reach out to the office.

Thank you all for your patience as we continue to navigate the ever changing environments where our members work. Thank you to all the board for their continued work, and the office for everything they all do.

Until April,

Renée Smith
ARTA President

Please see below for updated actions over the past month from the Board.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Goal: To have AHPA application completed by end of March.

Update: We have moved onto the next step and will be collating supplementary evidence. This will be submitted at end of month/early March with payment.

Action: Looking for ARTA council members - contact office for more information.

EDUCATION

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT:

2024 conference will be virtual.

Date: Thursday 26th and Friday 27th September 2024.

Theme: Choice, Connection, Community.

MEMBER ACTION: Please contact the enquiries@recreationaltherapy.au if you are interested in joining the Conference Committee/for more information.

 **LIVE**  **LOVE**  **LAUGH**

Seniors Happy Life

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Seniors Happy Life is a unique magazine style resource and among its aims, is to bring pleasure and enjoyment to those in aged care facilities. It helps overcome boredom, loneliness, low morale etc.

Seniors Happy Life is printed in LARGE PRINT and features no ads and no news or issues, just entertaining reading including inspiring stories, nostalgia, trivia, puzzles, jokes and more.

Please check out our website to see a full issue sample and to consider if people in your care would enjoy it. Residents in other facilities across Australia love it!

PICTURED: 93 year old Mona enjoying Seniors Happy Life

MEMBER ACTION NEEDED!

If you have had your role changed, or hours decreased, we urge you to write to Minister Wells, AND the Commission. It is critical that the Commission and Minister Wells hears what is happening in industry. We need strength in numbers and help from our members to achieve this.

Time is running out to comment on the [Consultation on the new Aged Care Act](#) (due 8th March) and 3 new staffing Quality indicators including lifestyle services. We will be finalising a submission to the Commission and Department around what ARTA sees the Lifestyle quality indicators are needing to be inclusive of. You can read the submission make comment through the [Consultation for the QI Program](#).

CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Action: NACA and aged care standards meetings were attended. The content in aged care standards were generic. We are keeping an eye on how this progresses and what impacts there will be on our members.

Continuing Goals: Engage with government and industry to ensure our profession is well placed in focus areas such as wellbeing, quality of life and reablement.

Continuing Goals: Connect with our members, especially the Aged Care Community of Practice, to co-create a suite of resources and to put forward ARTA's vision of best practice in terms of policy and procedure related to our practice. These resources will then be available for all of our members.

Continuing Goals: Support increased membership through supporting facility level membership.

MARKETING

- **Action:** A couple of avenues are being explored to complete marketing videos. This is still in the exploration stage as we try and find a viable and cost effective option(s).
- **Action:** RT Week in February - thank you all members who shared via socials and celebrated at their workplace RT Week. ARTA has reposted some of these on their Facebook page.
- **Action:** Exploration of shifting to RT month aligning with international counterparts. This is ongoing and we will keep members updated on its progress.

GOVERNANCE & PROFESSIONAL SCOPE

- **Action:** Reviewing private practice requirements and expectations in compensable schemes.
- **Action:** Town Halls have been completed and we will be reviewing the results and working through issues broached. Please note these are open to non members as well. Spread the word and encourage your RT contacts to attend Town Halls.

DISABILITY

- **Action:** Keep an eye out on your upcoming Link magazine issue for article on RT and Autism written by our member, Hussen.



ARTA are incredibly grateful for the amazing range of sponsors at the 2023 conference. You will be hearing more from these sponsors throughout the year.

Our sponsors were:

- Carolyn from Box and Dice
- Meadhbh from Freedom Solution
- Aged Care Music Resources



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- Wheelchair modifications
- Mobility Aid adaptations
- Sports & Recreation Adaptations
- Personal Care
- Daily Living Aids
- Customised and modified bikes and trikes



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Our sponsors were:

Jacqueline Quirke from Southern Cross Care Living

Shane from Neurons VR.



Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) is seeking highly motivated Recreation & Engagement staff.

ROLES AVAILABLE:

Diversional Therapist: Turramurra & South Coogee


Lifestyle Coordinator: Cootamundra & Moama

Lifestyle Officers: Greystanes, South Coogee, Turramurra, Bateau Bay, Cootamundra, Moama & Young

SCC (NSW & ACT) has a long history of providing exceptional care that empowers older people to live life to the full. Our 'Care and Engagement Model' ensures all our programs and activities are resident-focused and resident-driven, from special interest groups, virtual quizzes, animal assisted therapy, and intergenerational activities to technology base- programs, social groups and creative pursuits.

Why is SCC (NSW & ACT) a leader in Engagement and Purposeful Living?

- * Diversional Therapy Advisors provide mentoring and support to each of our homes, and this is supported by the Engagement & Purposeful Living Manager.
- * Access to quality resources and innovative programs
- * Allocated monthly budget that enables the creation of high-quality engagement opportunities.
- * Regular professional development opportunities through an internal education series.
- * Opportunities to network with other SCC (NSW & ACT) Recreation and Engagement teams members.



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