

# Professional Development and Conference Review Report

He manga wai koia kia kore e whitikia.  
It is a big river indeed that cannot be crossed.

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## Introduction

The traditional Maori proverb we have chosen reflects the large compass of work these two reviews involve. The proverb voices our confidence that the Association can embrace and flourish from it.

Because we were tasked with reviewing two areas of the Association, we have split our report and recommendations into two sections for ease of reference. In the first part, we outline our findings and recommendations for the future of Conferences; in the second we outline these for Professional Development. We comment below on overlaps between the two areas where these influence each other.

Just below are the terms of reference we were asked to respond to. Originally, these were separate areas but the Council agreed it made sense to consider them together. They haven't been formally combined in Council documents so they are given here as originally presented. Only the dates have been adjusted to reflect changing time frames for reporting.

There was discussion in the review team about whether formal or direct consultation with Waka Oranga as a Treaty partner was required. We appreciate the drain on resources that direct consultation involves for Waka Oranga, and ask whether WO Council members feel this concern has been addressed.

### *Project name: Conference and conference management*

**Purpose:** Critically review purpose and frequency of annual conferences

**Discussion:** Critically review purpose of conferences: clinical, bicultural and Association business; consider annual/biennial conferences; burden and cost for regions; remuneration/payments for local organizers

### *Project name: Professional Development*

**Purpose:** Critically review how to provide education and training opportunities within NZAP

**Discussion:** Set framework for professional development aims: committee, personnel, training or workshop strategies

### **Timeframe**

Convene in September 2016. Progress reports to Council:

**Report:** July 2017 meeting. **Final report:** October 2017 meeting

# Conference and Conference Management Review

## Background

- In preparing this review, we issued extensive invitations through regional branches, at the Nelson conference, via Inform and Connect for feedback. Details of the feedback we received follow, but we want to express our appreciation for the number, depth and thoughtfulness of the responses we received. These clearly identified both clear themes and alternative preferences in a number of areas for what members wished for in conferences.
- The recommendations which follow this feedback reflect the clearly diverging wishes within the Association.
- We are particularly mindful of contrasting views: for a conference that expresses bicultural values alongside a very strong wish for clinical material; a division between holding an annual or a biennial conference; the pressures on local organizers of sustaining a full conference; the need for continuity not only of an annual AGM but also important traditions within the Association that need to be consistently sustained; and a need to provide a regular space that is welcoming for our rapidly changing membership. Summarised, we were aware in discussion of the alternating needs for continuity and change: continuity that offer a continuing secure base for our diverse membership alongside the necessary pressures for change. The recommendations which follow are designed to accommodate these sometimes divergent wishes as far as possible.

## Key Recommendations

### 1. A six-year trial of biennial conferences.

One year would continue as now, with a conference organized by a region. The alternate year would offer a major professional development workshop widely publicised and available to professionals well beyond the Association. The workshop would also incorporate a day strategically placed (to ensure maximum attendance) during the workshop dedicated to NZAP matters: the AGM, Forum, interest groups and other aspects that are key to the life of the Association.

**Comment:** A six-year trial allows for three cycles with an assessment by the Council in its final year as to whether this is then continued, modified or abandoned in the light of experience.

### 2. A small Conference Committee responsible to the Council.

This Committee's primary purpose would be to simplify and streamline conference management practices and to sustain traditions and practices associated with annual conferences. We have given examples of these in an appendix. Its key tasks, which would constitute its MOU with the Council, would be:

- a. To create a template for timelines, rituals, responsibilities, etc
- b. Responsibility for professional workshops oversight: theme, keynotes, procedures, budgets, and regular reports to the Council.
- c. Maintaining conference 'packages' (conference software, procedures, documents)
- d. Responsibility for hiring and liaison with professional workshop organizers.
- e. Liaising with regional branches in alternate years.

- f. Collating a report/feedback about Conference organisation/experience with regional conference organisers.

### **3. Start date.**

If this proposal is accepted, we suggest the Conference Committee and the biennial trial is set up following the July Council meeting. This would give sufficient time to plan a major Professional Development workshop in 2019, after the Dunedin 2018 conference. The biennial trial could be expected to run from 2018-2023, with a review in 2023.

### **4. Conference timing.**

Feedback raised issues around timing and placement of the conference; for instance members expressed difficulty in taking time off so soon after the Christmas break. Reflecting this, we recommend branches plan for a later date for conferences, preferably in the second half of the year. It was also suggested conferences could be held during the week, but we were concerned about the impact on private practitioners' earning and do not support this idea.

### **5. Employment of professional conference/workshop organizers.** This was a frequent suggestion in feedback we received and reflects the increasing burden, in particular, on small regions. We also noted that professional organizers have been a success where they have been used.

- a. As now, the use of professional organizers would be at the discretion of regional branches; branch organizers will need to consult the Conference Committee early in their conference planning.
- b. A professional organizer is essential for major professional workshops. This may be the same person who also organises conferences. We note the great burden on Barbara Bassett and her team in the two major workshops she ran. This is not sustainable on a continuing voluntary basis. Professional charges will need to be recovered from conference or workshop fees.

### **6. Publishing this report.**

If these recommendations are broadly accepted, we would strongly recommend the Council make this Conference report public. It is in line with the Council Planning Day agreement to be transparent and relational and would acknowledge the wide feedback we have received.

## **Appendix: Conference Traditions and Practices**

There are important annual Association 'rituals'. We identified two aspects:

### **1) Formal annual practices:**

- a) The AGM: Liaison to ensure management and protocols are maintained.
- b) Members' feedback emphasised the inclusion of bicultural practices – eg the Powhiri and Poroporoaki alongside other areas that are part of the Association's life.
- c) The role of Forum, which may benefit by being extended beyond its current hour, and other areas such as special interest groups.
- d) A new space created for Branch convenors to meet.

### **2) Clear welcoming and acknowledging procedures** when we meet annually. These were emphasised in feedback we received, including:

- First time attendees introduced by name and allocated a mentor for conference period.
- A brief eulogy for any full member who has died.
- Acknowledge retiring members.
- Membership certificates and graduate ceremonies presented regionally but read out at each year's conference or workshop.

We are aware that all these processes can and should be documented, but we emphasise an active relational approach to handing on information. This is in order to keep our protocol and traditions alive. It offers considerable benefits, especially to integrating the large increase of members via Registration unfamiliar with our traditions.

# Professional Development Recommendations

## Introduction

- In preparing this review, we canvassed NZAP members, consulted individuals and read available documentation. We also drew on the team's considerable individual experience in creating and running a wide range of professional development initiatives.
- We have read with care Barbara Bassett's detailed report on running major NZAP-sponsored events.
- We have also taken careful account of the recommendations offered by the former Supervision and Professional Development Committee.
- We have combined all of these within the brief we were asked to follow for this review.

## Statement

It is our view, based on discussions throughout NZAP, that Professional Development is a key part of the Association's future. This is because it is central to both our public identity and to our effective professional practice. In particular, it secures our legitimacy with the Registration Board; it educates and integrates new members to the Association; it is the means to create links to a variety of professional bodies and health agencies; it also strengthens our internal collegiality and will potentially engage registered members not currently active in the Association. Our recommendations are based on these principles.

We see the Professional Development initiative as, potentially, an exciting opportunity for NZAP. It allows our Association the opportunity to be innovative, generative, publicly visible and income-generating. These constitute important new directions for NZAP and we strongly recommend the Council to support these initiatives because of the promise they hold.

## Key Recommendations

### 1. The creation of a Professional Development team as a Committee of the Council.

Its core responsibility would be the encouragement and facilitation of professional development for NZAP members.

- It would facilitate, but not organize these activities itself. We outline in an Appendix the kinds of areas in which it might be engaged.
- We anticipate it would liaise with other committees, particularly the ACP Committee, as part of its commitments.
- We envisage a small and active team, active especially in setting up this new area.
- Below, we outline a draft MOU which would constitute the brief for its work and its relationship with the Council.
- The team would not be responsible for collating or managing the broad run of events currently offered via the website and newsletter. Its focus is generating professional development on behalf of the Association. If it became a clearing house for all training events, it is likely to be overwhelmed and unable to perform its key role.
- We consider the team's work would be best supported by a dedicated position on Council and therefore support a proposed Committee chair as a member of the NZAP Council. We are very conscious of the constraints on Council positions, but if this

area is to be treated with the significance we believe it deserves, such a role would ensure the success of this proposal for the long term.

- We recommend that a Professional Development team is put in place following the July Council meeting. We are willing to be approached to recommend members for the team.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Council.** This would include:

- Develop and maintain an annual/biennial programme for NZAP-organised training but not take care of other general training events in the Association.
- Contact and encourage members, and other non-NZAP practitioners, to offer workshops and training in an annual programme.
- Regular formal liaison with the ACP Committee.
- Liaison with He Ara Maori [HAMACP].
- Search for major presenters of central interest to clinical theory and practice.
- Contract out and supervise major event management with a professional manager.
- Publicise and upkeep the programme on the NZAP website, and through links to major professional organizations. Utilise apps, software. and social media outlets where possible (eg Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

## **2. Setting up the Review Team for The Promotion of NZAP and psychotherapy (Project I).**

As we have indicated, there is a close connection between professional development and the wider promotion of NZAP. To maximise the potential for NZAP's enhanced visibility in the wider professional and clinical community, we recommend that the Promotion review, already agreed at the last Council Planning Day (Project I), is prioritised and set up as soon as possible. If those recommendations are then supported by the Council, it will enable a synergy to be created between both projects to the benefit of both.

## **Appendix – Roles and activities to be considered by a Professional Development team**

If the Council decides to create a Professional Development team, we would strongly encourage team members to pay attention to the following possibilities. They are diverse but come from feedback and from experience amongst review team members:

- Professional Development events are organised throughout the year across regions, as now
- A major biennial event (similar to Nancy McWilliams / Jean Knox) is offered
- Events are open to any clinical professional, with NZAP members having first call and discounts
- Actively publicize to other professions: psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors, social workers etc: anyone in the health professions or mental health fields
- Events are normally self-funding or profit-generating, with underwriting from income generated from earlier major events (Jean Knox, Nancy McWilliams)
- Events can be any mix of face-to-face or online (including webinar and colloquia models)
- Priority is given to ACP workshops because these immediately benefit members and the Association

- Consideration given to earning credits for participation, leading towards a qualification or diploma
- Create a specific professional development page on the website for easy access
- Consider specific projects that could include:
  - ❖ Research and writing for psychotherapists
  - ❖ Workshops for supervisors – including a completion certificate
  - ❖ Both cutting-edge alongside ‘nuts and bolts’ practical workshops
  - ❖ Bicultural workshops (eg those run by Alayne Hall, Waka Oranga, or Te Tiriti Committee). Workshops in collaboration with HAMACP or bicultural supervision
  - ❖ Psychotherapy as a business; managing in private practice
  - ❖ Workshops on Registration requirements
  - ❖ Knowing the HPCA Act
  - ❖ Working with the low-paid [eg via Beneficiary Support]
  - ❖ Include non-psychotherapy trainers who bring specific skills and expertise
  - ❖ Workshops on promotion and publicity for psychotherapy
  - ❖ Working with other professions, or in NGOs, public sector, and across modalities
  - ❖ Linking up with Australian presenters (eg via IARPP or PsychOz)
- Consider both brief and extended workshops
- Either face-to-face or online delivery, including a mix of both
- Consider offering certification or credits for validation with employers and agencies
  
- Seek sponsorship, grant, or other funding alternatives where appropriate
- We suggest anyone can approach the Team to ask for help/support/funding if they have a worthwhile idea or plan. This is especially for help with administration.
- Consider disability needs