

REPORT TO NZAP COUNCIL, APRIL 2023

From the Public Issues Portfolio

Mental Health and Addictions:

In late 2022, John Farnsworth stepped down from leading Public Issues to focus on his role in setting up the Academy. Victoria Smith took over as the chair. We were also sad to say goodbye to Roy Bowden who resigned from the Committee however we were delighted to have Clare Greensmith join us. The MH and Addictions Committee remains a hard-working group with several members, Andrew Clare, and Veronica Watt- non-Council members.

Veronica and John have continued to meet quarterly with Sue Dashfield however each time they have met with her she is accompanied by someone different. Sue herself has been seconded for 6 months to Te Whatu Ora as they begin to set themselves up. It has been proving difficult for the group to make much headway over the past 2 years in part due to the DHB change and the consequent shake up of MOH members.

At our last meeting on January 30th we acknowledged that we have finite energy in the group and spent time developing a different strategy going forward.

One of our greatest concerns is the invisibility of NZAP in the Public sphere.

We came back to a number of questions:

- 1 How can we get NZAP more known in the Public arena? How do we bring Psychotherapy into daily life?
- 2 Do we want to get Psychotherapy recognized as a necessary discipline by Government, therefore being in a position to ask for financial assistance for more training?
- 3 How do we get more Psychotherapists into the Private Sector?
- 4 Are we wanting to bring a Psychotherapeutic perspective to Mental Health issues?
- 5 What is Mental Health vs Normal distress?
- 6 What is the Psychotherapeutic response to catastrophe/climate change?
- 7 Are we wanting to provide a critical voice of conscience in the public arena?

We recognised that we need to develop a new Communication strategy.

We have decided to invite members to write public statements on pertinent issues that arise. We would like to be responsive in a timely manner.

We decided that we do want to have a voice in the public arena and to have a critical voice when appropriate. We would like to be a governance group that facilitates discussion and passion in the membership so that our work in Public Issues is sustainable.

We are going to encourage members to write position papers on various topics such as Group Therapy, Climate change, Mental Health and Mental Health apps etc.

We will open up an NZAP LinkedIn account.

We plan to run a public event for World Psychotherapy Day in 2023.

Further work is required on developing a new Communications strategy.

Meanwhile, John and Veronica will continue to meet with Sue Dashfield and have developed a description of Psychotherapy that we will use far and wide as well as with Te Whatu Ora members and the MOH Manatū Haruora.

Floods and Cyclone: The group decided to hold a Zoom meeting for anyone who wished to take part after these events whether they were affected and were able to take part, or whether members wanted to share their concerns. Victoria and Lynne ran such a meeting on Thursday 23 March. A small group attended and it was thought to be a worthwhile event.

The next meeting for the Mental Health and Addictions Group will be on Monday 13th March.

ACC:

Victoria has been attending meetings of the Sexual Violence Customer Advisory Group or SVCAP. She has facilitated a number of meetings with the sector over desired changes to the Sensitive Claims contract going forward. ACC are keen to listen to what is being requested and are working hard on bringing many of these ideas to fruition. They have developed a more diverse reference group in line with a more diverse Board. Victoria will step down from this group in June 2023.

AHANZ:

Allied Health Aotearoa New Zealand raised its membership fees considerably for this year but we decided to remain members as AHANZ serves as a powerful lobby group with its over 60,000 members. For instance it was AHANZ that lobbied to prolong the requirement start date for all health workers to be vaccinated during the Covid Pandemic.

The next AHANZ meeting will be on Wednesday March 22nd. Victoria is continuing to attend these meetings. Another Council representative will need to attend these from June 2024.

Victoria Smith