

REPORT TO APANZ COUNCIL, OCTOBER 2024

From the President

From: John O'Connor

Report: To APANZ Council

Re: President's report

Dates: 2 October 2024

Introduction

Kia Ora Koutou,

My first few months as President of our Association has been a busy time. The following is an overview of my reflections on this period.

Council members

It is wonderful to be with such a vibrant and thoughtful group around the council table. Council now meets monthly on the third Monday of each month for an hour and half, plus two in-person meetings over a weekend each year, with the next in person weekend meeting coming up in mid-October this year. Council members who have stayed on the council from prior to the June 2024 AGM include ordinary member Mihili Alexander who continues to provide perceptive and thoughtful contributions, Claire Miranda, our Digital Communications Committee Chair, who is skilfully engaged in excellent and creative work in visioning and enhancing APANZ's digital communications, Gabriela Mercado, our Past President, who has been particularly active in continuing the work on the Academy site (now named Nexus), which will be a psychotherapy learning hub for the association membership, and which we are aiming to launch in November this year, and Susan Horne, the Chair of the Te Tririt Bicultural Committee, who is continuing her very thoughtful work in this area, including now building a new committee team, and Verity Armstrong and Anna Flemming our dedicated, passionate, and enormously generous Waka Oranga Council representatives. Kate Dent Rennie joined Council shortly before the AGM and is our new and very capable Chair of Ethics, Vijay Mahantesh is steadily and thoughtfully working into his role as our new Honorary Secretary, Jane Tuson has picked up the role of Treasurer with alacrity and skill, and ordinary members Jo McKenzie and Katheryn Mackenzie offer fresh and perceptive eyes on the work of Council, with Katheryn also joining Claire's digital communications team. We are an energetic Council and looking forward to meeting for the first time in person together this coming October.

Initiatives which Council are focused on the moment include:

1. Development and launch of the Nexus psychotherapy learning hub for members of the Association. Gabriela Mercado has picked up the leadership of this project, following on from the generous and creative work of John Farnsworth and his team. We are looking forward to launching this site with an aim of doing so in November.
2. Council have announced a deadline for feedback on Council's fuller response to the SOGICE (sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts) report, with responses needing to be in by 15 October, by email to Gabriela, and Council will then finalise our response and make this available to membership by 15 November 2024. (With the apology which Council has agreed to in relation to this report to be delivered by 15 June 2025).
3. Council colloquium: Council have had a trial Council colloquium which has been moderated, in which we discussed a paper, and used this as a springboard for our own reflections and ideas. This has been modelled on the IARRP colloquiums of past times and is something we may offer as an additional way of thinking together, for the whole membership in the future. We will be discussing this at our upcoming Council meeting.
4. Gabriela Mercado and John O'Connor continue to facilitate the monthly online zoom meetings entitled "Mindfields: thinking spaces" which is proving a helpful space for thinking with the membership about psychotherapy and our association within the context of this country.
5. We are delighted that a team of association members have agreed to organise a national conference for the Association for February 2026 (along with a preconference workshop), including the invitation of an overseas speaker, and more details regarding this conference will be announced by the organisers in the coming months.

Challenges

The central challenge, I see for our Association is one regarding the vision and purpose of our Association and Council's role in this, with much of our regulatory function now having passed some time ago to the registration board (PBANZ). Given this, the focus of our Association, I believe needs to be on developing a culture of associating, learning, and enhancing opportunities for membership to enhance their theoretical and clinical understanding, and intellectual, emotional and spiritual engagement with the art and craft of psychotherapy in this country, both within the microcosm of our clinical work, and the macrocosm of the wider sociopolitical context. I am looking forward to our October meeting, during which, in part, Council will spend some time deepening our own visioning in relation to this central task, and generating initiatives, in-service of the enhancing the creativity and value of our Association to its members.

Thank you to all, Council members in membership for the ongoing dedication and contribution to the life of our association

John O'Connor

APANZ President