

NZHPA Conference and Study Event (CASE) Working Group

Executive Summary

Group Members

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Background

In May 2017, the NZHPA Exec established a working group with the following remit

- To undertake a stock take of training resources currently available to members, including those delivered by other organisations
- To describe the self-identified learning and development needs of members
- To make recommendations as to the future format, role and purpose of
 - Annual conference
 - SIG events
 - Other learning activities considered of value

The group undertook a number of key activities including a survey and focus group discussions, in order to collect the data and information required to better understand the current landscape and the needs of members.

Summary of findings

There was a clear message from our members that they value the annual conference and the more specialty focused SIG meetings and wish to see both continued. Conference is seen as providing the bigger picture, hearing about research and innovation and thinking ahead as an organisation, whereas members want the SIG meetings to focus on practical, in-depth learning on specific topics. Technicians clearly indicated that they wanted to see more topics that were relevant to them. All events are seen as important for keeping people connected.

While the SIG meetings are seen as 'value for money', many members find the current cost of attending Conference prohibitive unless they have workplace support e.g. of the 54 survey respondents who had attended the 2016 Conference, only 2 entirely self-funded, while 52% received full funding and 44% a combination of self and workplace. Obtaining funding in many DHBs is increasingly challenging and the NZHPA must consider how it can manage conference costs differently to ensure members can afford to attend.

The option of holding Conference in the main centres of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch appealed to 45% of respondents, as this makes the conference more accessible, and often more financially viable, for those living in remote areas. 37% wanted to keep the current format of rotating it around the country, to provide an opportunity for all members to get involved, and to showcase a range of locations.

A very strong theme that came through was the important role that the special interest groups play within NZHPA. They allow members to connect with colleagues doing similar roles, or to access expert advice and support from a specialist. There were numerous requests to increase the number of groups and the NZHPA must give serious consideration as to how this can be achieved. A review of the SIG membership fee model may be necessary to ensure that cost is not a barrier to membership of multiple groups. Many of our members are generalists, and would see benefit in joining a range of SIGs.

Related to this search for support, was the value that many people place on potential collaboration with other organisations. There is merit in exploring these options in order to access expertise that we don't have, and to increase the range of resources we can offer members.

Many respondents felt we could make better use of technology, with suggestions for webinars from the Conference and a desire to see learning resources available on the website. There was also a huge demand for on-line learning material – both from pharmacists and technicians.

Clinical knowledge remains a key self-identified learning need for all pharmacists, irrespective of experience. There appears to be limited resources available in New Zealand to meet this need with most training materials focusing on primary care. NZHPA therefore has an opportunity to continue to fill the gap in this market and to become a leading provider of up to date, practice relevant clinical education. Related to this, many pharmacists would value the opportunity to gain Group 2 ENHANCE points from NZHPA events.

On-going learning opportunities for hospital technicians also appear to be scarce, with NZHPA SIG events identified as their main source of support. Technician roles will only advance in scope and responsibility, so this is another growth opportunity for NZHPA.

Conclusion

Our members want to learn and they also want to network and connect for the sake of doing their job well. The level of engagement with our survey, particularly the free text question, suggests that the NZHPA is seen as an important source of on-going learning by both pharmacists and technicians.

In order to continue to deliver this support in a valuable way, we have made a number of recommendations. To achieve many of these recommendations, the NZHPA should consider developing an education and training strategy under the governance of the Executive committee. It should articulate what the NZHPA wishes to achieve as an education provider, and provide a clear framework as to the role of face to face training events, support groups, and technology in achieving these aims. It should provide direction for anyone involved in delivering training, and ensure that we are providing valuable learning resources in a planned and coordinated manner

Key Recommendations

1. Develop an Education and Training strategy under the governance of the Exec, building on the findings of the CASE group

- Agreed in principle
- Widen the portfolio of the Exec member with SIG responsibilities, to include responsibility for the Training and Development Strategy
- Create a subcommittee of the Exec to support the delivery of the strategy
- Membership of the committee
 - Exec member with portfolio responsibility
 - SIG convenor or appropriate representative from each SIG
 - Representatives from Annual Conference Organizing Committee
 - This year's convenor
 - Next year's convenor
 - Last years' convenor (only for the first year of the committee)
 - Regional representative – 2 year term appointed via EOIs
 - Early Career Pharmacist representative -2 year term appointed via EOIs
- Function of the committee
 - Deliver the Training and Development Strategy
 - Develop a cohesive programme of educational events
 - Standardise aspects of events where possible e.g. registration process, printed material, documentation of CPD points.

2. Hold the Annual Conference in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch & possibly a smaller centre every 4th year.

- Agreed in principle, with a slight change to a 5 year cycle
- Likely to be a 5 year cycle since there are three large DHBs in Auckland e.g. Auckland/ Christchurch/ Auckland / Wellington / Regional

3. Review conference organizing model & consider an administrative role to bring this role in-house

- Review will occur and will include implications of NZHPA becoming an employer.

4. Consider different options for the conference organizing committee

- Agreed in principle
- We want to offer all members the opportunity to contribute to conference, irrespective of where they live
- We also want to remove the burden of organizing the conference falling to the same people, simply because they live in the larger centres
- Suggestion for membership of an Annual Conference Organising Committee
 - Convenor (Local)
 - Immediate Past Convenor (to ensure continuity)
 - Next years' Convenor (to ensure continuity)
 - Representative (s) from a regional location
 - Early Career Pharmacist representative (Local)
 - Technician representative (Local)

5. Continue SIG study events, which focus on in-depth practical learning about specific topics

- Agreed in principle

6. Grow the SIG concept but with the option of a different format e.g. networks

- Agreed in principle
- If members wish to create a new group there will be the option of
 - Special Interest Group (SIG) (structure & function: as now)
 - Special Interest Network (SIN) (structure & function: less formal, on-line support group, no committee required but 2 or 3 individuals will need to be the network leaders)
- Aim is for future website to support SIGs and SINS via closed on-line forums

7. Consider removing the SIG membership fee and review the SIG funding model

- On-hold for review in 12 months

- Optimum funding model likely to be determined by number of SIGs

8. Explore the potential for collaboration, particularly with the SHPA

- Agreed in principle

9. Develop a robust website to facilitate on-line discussion forums, eLearning, hosting of webinars, and organised placement of CE resources and SIG specific information

- Agreed in principle
- Website Development Working group already in existence.
- CASE report findings to be shared with group