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MEDICAL BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION OF NSW  
**ANNUAL REPORT**



2014

BY DOCTOR'S  
FOR DOCTORS



# MISSION STATEMENT



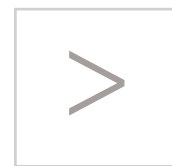
# 2014



MBANSW seeks to support the medical community in NSW and ACT by providing counselling and financial assistance to members of the medical family in need and others to support a timely recovery from illness or adversity.



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It remains our intention to make sure that every doctor in NSW and the ACT knows that help is available if needed .....

”

DAVID CHEN

*David Chen*



2014

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year marks the 118th year the Medical Benevolent Association of NSW has been providing financial assistance to doctors and/or their families. It is also the 73rd year that we have been providing the services of a social worker to doctors and their families in need. This was a move well ahead of its time and has proven its worth in providing a comprehensive service and reducing the financial outgoings of the Association.

It remains our intention to make sure that every doctor in NSW and the ACT knows that help is available if needed and that it is essential to have a financial survival plan if ill health strikes. However, if a doctor is in need of care, social work counselling/advice or financial assistance is readily available.

At present, our income is steady but unfortunately our donor pool is shrinking. Our donors however are more generous and we are always grateful to all our donors both individuals and groups.

In recent years we have had to be rigorous with our expenditure and we continue to encourage new referrals to see their financial assistance as a short term emergency stop gap rather than long term support. This has placed greater pressure on the councillors to work out how best to assist, as most of those who ask for assistance do not just have "short term" difficulties.

It has been a busy year for MBANSW as usual; I have highlighted some of our activities below:

As always we want to ensure that every doctor knows help is at hand if needed. To that end we have focussed some work on **promotional activities**. In the past year we have included service information in the RACGP Newsletter, NSW Doctor and Canberra Doctor, NSW Rural Doctors Handbook, Medical Board of Australia online newsletter and Medical Council of NSW online newsletter. Our Social Worker, Meredith McVey, presented a paper at the Health for Health Professionals Conference in Queensland. Brochures were sent to AMA ACT & NSW Orientation, NSW Women in Medicine High Tea, AMA Careers Expo and DHAS Caring for Colleagues seminar.

Although MBANSW is an independent organisation, it is important to ensure that independence does not cause isolation. Our **Networking activities** this year have included: Meredith McVey and I attended the Medical Council of NSW end of year function. Meredith and I joined with Fiona Davies CEO AMA NSW and President DHAS NSW to begin discussions about forming a closer working relationship with DHAS NSW. Meredith and Dr Reem Mina presented service information to staff of the NSW Medical Council. We joined a successful consortium bid as specialist provider for the Partners in Recovery Program.

.....if a doctor is in need of care, social work counselling/advice or financial assistance is readily available.

Meredith, Dr Sue Morey and I attended the DHAS AGM where Meredith was elected Hon Secretary and we participated in an AHPRA review of treatment programs for impaired health professionals.

It is important that we have an efficient and effective organisation and so we spend some of our time on matters of **Governance**. We conducted a review of all policies and procedures along with a review of our future financial plans including financial goals, fund raising, expense review and principles for long term and short term support. We noted changes to workplace bullying legislation and our obligations as employers. Staff performance reviews were also completed. We are routinely using electronic banking for our business accounts and website effectiveness was reviewed through “hits” analysis. Our investment portfolio restrictions were reviewed as was the Annual Investment Portfolio Report. In addition our income and expenditure form was reviewed and updated and a Financial Information sheet prepared for new referrals and added to our website.

### Changes of note in the last year include the following:

We had to farewell Dr George Boffa OAM who found it increasingly difficult to attend council meetings and we miss his thoughtful contributions to our council discussions. Drs Chaminda Werijatne and Richard Herlihy took a Leave of Absence from council for personal reasons.

Dr Gary Galambos has retired after many years on Council to take up the position of Chair of the NSW College of Psychiatry. He hopes to return in two years when his term ends and continues to be available for consultation as needed and has offered to do promotional work for us. We are grateful for his many years as Vice-President and his numerous interesting addresses at our past AGMs.

Eva Levy stepped in as Leave replacement Social Worker. She has vast social work experience and freed Meredith to have a well-deserved holiday.

Gary Scarr of BT Financial Group was made an Honorary Life Member at the last AGM on his retirement.

Our Association would not function as it does if not for the contributions of many people. We are most grateful for these people who continue to assist MBANSW.

### Our thanks to:

AMA NSW who provide us with their facilities so freely and especially to Fiona Davies CEO for her personal interest and support.

Bill Nussbaum of HLB Mann Judd for his continuing accounting and auditing services and ongoing advice to our Treasurer and Finance Officer.

Chris Deegan of BT Financial Group for ably replacing Gary Scarr’s role in managing our investment portfolio.

We need to thank Mike Hawkins of In2art for his art work and ideas for the appeal brochures and letters over past many years and regret that he has now moved overseas to live.

A special mention to Danielle Doughty who continues to keep our books in good order, works out our budget estimations, is a general administrative support and has guided us into using electronic banking. Also for her help to both Meredith and Felix, our Treasurer in doing their roles.

Once again I acknowledge and thank the MBANSW Executive, Secretary Andrew Wines, our Treasurer Felix Choi, Vice-President Furio Virant for standing in as chair in my absences and new Vice-President Russell Pearson, as well as all the other councillors: John Allman, Catherine Brassill, Chris Dalton, Gary Galambos, Richard Herlihy, Reem Mina, Sue Morey AM, Michelle Penm, Vanessa Rogers, Ian Wechsler, Chaminda Wijeratne, Noel Wilton and Vincent Wong.

We endeavour to have councillors from diverse medical backgrounds and of varied ages and a balanced gender representation.



This allows us to have a broader perspective from which to have discussions. All of the councillors continue to contribute congenially to our sometimes lengthy deliberations and discussions at our regular monthly meetings, each offering the special knowledge they possess from their various backgrounds and experience. The decisions made are usually by general consensus and fortunately for me it is a rare occasion that I need to make a casting vote.

As always the most important person in this Association is undoubtedly our Social Worker and Executive Secretary, Mrs Meredith McVey without whom we would not function so efficiently. In a recent performance review she was more than satisfactory in all areas. Whether in her role as Executive Secretary or as Social Worker she does things professionally, efficiently and caringly. She likes things to be well organised and performed correctly. The wisest thing we did as a council was to choose her for this role.

Hopefully as we go into the future, we, the members of the council will continue to make similar wise decisions in order to further the work of the Association and bring even greater assistance to the people for whom we care.

DAVID CHEN

“

We endeavour to have councillors from diverse medical backgrounds and of varied ages and a balanced gender representation.

”



2013-14





# TREASURER'S REPORT

I hereby present the audited Financial Report for the Medical Benevolent Association of NSW for the financial year ended 30th June 2014.

This year has allowed us to rebuild the investment portfolio on which we had been relying heavily in the past few years. In the financial year 2012-13 our total accumulated funds were \$2,002,033. This has thankfully increased this year to \$2,218,867. However it is still below the 2007 accumulated funds of \$3,024,000. The increase has been due to a combination of positive returns in investments, increased donations and reduced expenditure. The Association has been working hard to maintain the balance of helping beneficiaries first but at the same time keeping a solid financial footing for the future.

This year donations from individuals and groups amounted to \$276,641 which is an increase from last year at \$221,819. In particular we had one very generous bequest. We are most grateful for the generosity of all our donors as this is our main source of income.

In the last financial year we spent \$171,932 on our beneficiaries, which included \$46,310 of social work assistance. Spending in 2012-13 was \$207,260. This decrease has occurred through much hard work especially with social work support allowing more beneficiaries to become financially independent. Independence for our beneficiaries is the primary aim of our work.

We had a net operating profit of \$249,235 this year which is up from last year of \$195,514. This increase from last year has been mainly due to increased donations. There was an offset due to increased annual appeals expenditure. This was due to the accrued invoices from the last financial year having to be accounted for in this year. The impairment of assets this year was nil compared with \$10,584 last year.

Once again I give thanks to Meredith McVey (Social Worker) and Danielle Doughty (Finance Officer) for their help in managing the accounts. The process of online banking has started and we are giving thought to how to possibly expand the process throughout our accounts.

I give thanks to Chris Deegan and his team from BT Financial Group which has been instrumental in increasing our current investment portfolio. Thanks also to our accountant Bill Nussbaum and his staff from HLB Mann Judd for his ongoing advice.

The Audited accounts are available on request.

FELIX CHOI

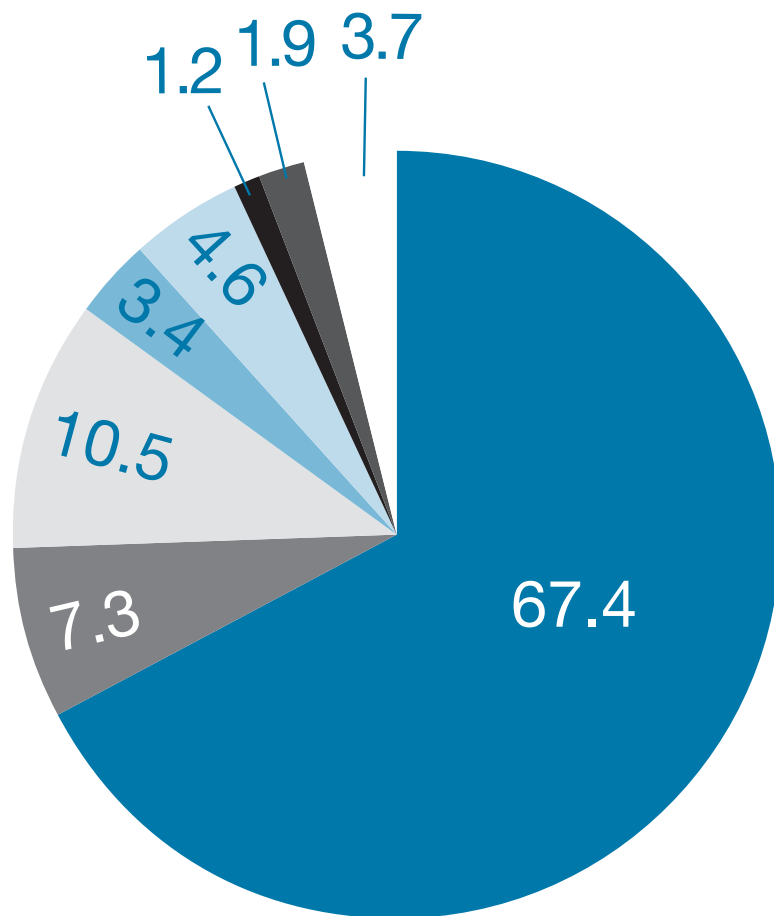










“

This year has allowed us to rebuild the investment portfolio on which we had been relying heavily in the past few years.....

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# EXPENDITURE



- |   |   |   |                                   |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Beneficiaries (including Social Work support) |  | Account/auditors fees             |
|  | Appeal expenses                               |  | Insurance                         |
|  | Employee benefit expenses                     |  | Legal Expenses - New Constitution |
|  | Portfolio management fees                     |  | Office costs and Sundry Expenses  |

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.....Every dollar  
donated makes  
a difference.....

”

# 2014

## DONATIONS



**July 13-June 14**

Hawkesbury Medical Staff Council	\$1000.00
Russell St Medical Centre	\$550.00
Westmead Hospital Medical Staff Council	\$2000.00
Kuring-gai District Medical Association	\$3000.00
Prince of Wales Hospital Medical Staff Council	\$1000.00
Sydney University Medical Graduates 1993	\$1000.00
Nepean Hospital Medical Staff Council	\$500.00
Sydney Children's Hospital Medical Staff Council	\$500.00
Australian Chinese Medical Association	\$2000.00
Kuring-gai District Medical Association	\$3000.00
Mona Vale Hospital Medical Staff Council	\$2000.00
The Hills Anaesthetic Group	\$1000.00
Lismore Hospital Medical Staff Council	\$3000.00
Sydney Medical Services Co-op	\$300.00
The Trust Company- Keston Foundation	\$3276.37
Canberra Retired Doctor's	\$92.50
Central Coast Medical Association	\$3254.65

**July-Oct 14**

Russell St Medical Centre	\$550.00
Ryde Hospital Medical Staff Council	\$1000.00
NSW Medical Council	\$30,000.00
Interchange General Practice	\$1000.00
Concord Hospital Medical Staff	\$1000.00

# SOCIAL WORKER'S



“

.....doctors are not immune to ill health, they are not untouchable when it comes to adversity.....

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# REPORT

As the Social Worker for the Medical Benevolent Association of NSW, I speak from experience when I say that doctors are not immune to ill health, they are not untouchable when it comes to adversity nor do they always make the best decisions when it comes to their own finances or personal relationships.

\* ST was first diagnosed with depression when she was 17. However, she studied hard in school and was accepted into a medical degree. She did well and coped through her junior years. She married and was accepted into an emergency training program in the same year. She couldn't say whether it was the hours of work or the psychological demands of the job that affected her, but she started using Stilnox to help her cope. ST came to the attention of her consultant at work and was referred to the Medical Council. Conditions were placed on her registration. Her marriage failed and so she decided to enter a treatment program to try to get on top of her unhappiness. The difficult family circumstances she had endured as a child were identified and longer term treatment began. A month after one of her many admissions to hospital she shattered her tibia in an acknowledged suicide attempt. This too was treated with further hospitalisations but 12 months after the fracture she ended her life by taking an overdose.

*\*Composite case study*

At present there are 118 members of the medical family receiving either financial and/or social work support from the Association. Referrals have remained at an average of two new referrals per month for some years. This year the requests for financial assistance outweighed requests for counselling support. Gender does not seem to make a difference, with an equal number of referrals from males and females. Requests for assistance from doctors far outweigh requests from family members.

General Practitioners make up half of the referrals with the other half equally divided between other specialist groups and doctors in training. The average age of all who requested assistance this year is 47, with an age range from 19 to 85 years, with most referrals coming from the 41-50 age bracket. Doctors within this age range are usually cementing their careers, but often have High School aged children, mortgages and possibly practice set up loans.

\* BT was diagnosed with melanoma at age 39. Treatments had not been successful; he had reached the limit of radiotherapy and had completed his third round of chemotherapy. He was advised to get his affairs in order. Doing so was no easy matter; he had two children - one was about to start high school and the other, although in main stream education, had autism. BT's mother-in-law had also been diagnosed with Breast cancer.

*\*Composite case study*



Those who ask for assistance are usually facing difficulties in several areas of their lives, so while a crisis precipitates a call, there are often other factors which have left the doctor and his/her family's resources depleted.

In broad terms, half of those receiving assistance nominate mental health difficulties as the reason for referral. This year that group includes doctors who have anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, PTSD, eating disorders and substance abuse problems. Approximately one third of referrals are from doctors who have physical health problems, some of which are temporary, some are chronic and sadly some are terminal. The other third of referrals are made up of doctors experiencing difficulties in their work and difficulties in their personal relationships.

Underpinning one third of referrals, across all groups is the unique stressor of having gained a medical qualification overseas. These medical practitioners often take 'area of need' jobs at the same time as undertaking study. They have strict visa requirements, manage without family support and have a carefully balanced financial situation which understandably leaves them vulnerable if adversity strikes.

Requests for information advice and referrals are regular and come from all parts of NSW and ACT. They are for such diverse matters as 'I need to find a psychiatrist', 'how can I help my father who I think is drinking too much' or 'as part of a Uni assessment we are putting together a video presentation and I need to check that we have the information correct'.

My other role with MBANSW is that of Executive Secretary. Both roles are equally challenging for different reasons. The governance requirements for an Income Tax Exempt Charity with Deductible Gift recipient status are growing. We have responsibilities to the Australian Tax Office, ASIC, Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC), Office of State Revenue and the Office of Regulatory Services (ACT).

MBANSW is committed to having an efficient, effective and transparent organisation. As our

President has outlined, we have a range of measures in place to meet this commitment.

This year, my association with the Doctors Health Advisory Service continues. I am serving as the Hon Secretary. I was fortunate to be invited to participate in the DHAS Caring for Colleagues seminar to speak about the support available through MBANSW. Great changes are coming for the structure and funding of DHAS and I believe a close relationship between the two organisations is essential.

Before I close I would like to acknowledge those who make my work as both Executive Secretary and Social Worker easier:

Danielle Doughty is the MBANSW Finance Officer. She is immensely supportive, capable and efficient. She has crystal clear thinking when I find myself tangled in some red tape or complex governance requirement and always has time to listen. Thank you Danielle, I could not do this job without you.

This year MBANSW employed a Social Worker to provide back up so that I could have a much needed holiday. Mrs Eva Levy graciously and capably stepped into my role for a few weeks. Thank you Eva.

Thanks also to Fiona Davies and her staff at AMANSW. Fiona and her legal staff always make time to provide advice and support on behalf of our beneficiaries. Fiona endlessly promotes the work of MBANSW. Thank you Fiona, and thank you to your staff who answer my many IT, HR or promotional questions with a smile, make meeting space available for me and even "unjam" the photocopier with good grace. Your staff are always welcoming. My personal thanks to Melodie Burdin, Member Supervisor.

Christine Brill at AMA (ACT) is also supportive of the work of MBANSW. She promotes the service both directly and through direct mail and local publications. Thank you Christine and your staff.

Mike Hawkins of In2art has been doing graphic design work for MBANSW since well before my time. Again this year Mike has worked on our appeal letters and reports demonstrating



both creativity and a good understanding of our work. Unfortunately Mike is overseas for some time and we are working with a new graphic designer, Amelia K Designs. Amelia has stepped into the role at the last minute and this report is her first work for us. Thank you Amelia and in absentia, Mike.

Chris Deegan of BT Financial Group has taken over managing our investment portfolio. Thank you Chris for keeping a watchful eye on our portfolio, which, thankfully has started to inch forward. Your report to the Council was well received and easily understood. Thank you for your willingness to answer my questions several times.

Bill Nussbaum, our accountant from HLB Mann Judd has provided clear and well-reasoned advice to council for many years. This year he and his staff have again provided assistance throughout the year and prepared the accounts well ahead of time. Bill is endlessly cheerful and patient with my many queries.

Ron Heinrich and Karen Keogh of Tress Cox Lawyers continue to provide behind the scenes support for MBANSW. Thank you Ron and Karen for answering my sometimes anxious calls and providing calm reassurance about how to respond to various legal requests that come across my desk.

This year, our beneficiaries have been fortunate to have the legal advice of John Van de Pol

of Holmann Webb Lawyers. John has offered a consultation at no charge for beneficiaries faced with professional issues. However, I have stretched the generosity of his firm who have given support to beneficiaries on a range of legal matters including immigration law. Thank you John.

Last but not least, I would like to express my thanks to the Councillors and acknowledge the difficult job they do. The doctors who ask us for assistance are usually in great distress and their circumstances can be overwhelming. The Councillors are empathic and compassionate and never dismissive of a doctor's situation. They talk long and hard about how best to help within the limited financial resources of the Association. They support my work and help to keep me on track. All on council make themselves available at any hour to provide advice, assistance and consider and approve an urgent request or accompany me to speak about the work of the Association. All share their unique blend of life and professional skills to enrich the services our beneficiaries receive.

My particular thanks to the President, David Chen, who always makes time for me whether to ensure the smooth running of the Association or listen to my worries. Thank you David for your patient assistance.

In closing, I would like to thank our generous donors and acknowledge our beneficiaries.

MEREDITH MCVEY




“Every dollar donated makes a difference to your colleagues in need, all of whom demonstrate courage in facing the circumstances life has thrown at them.”



## Composition of Council as at June 14

Dr John Allman	
Dr Catherine Brassill	
Dr David Chen	President
Dr Felix Choi	Treasurer
Dr Chris Dalton	
Dr Gary Galambos	
Dr Richard Herlihy	
Dr Reem Mina	
Dr Sue Morey AM	
Dr Russell Pearson	Vice President
Dr Michelle Penm	
Dr Vanessa Rogers	
Dr Furio Virant	Vice President
Dr Ian Wechsler	
Dr Chaminda Wijeratne	
Dr Noel Wilton	
Dr Andrew Wines	Secretary
Dr Vincent Wong	

## Specialisations

General Practice  
Psychiatry  
Anaesthetics  
ENT  
Endocrinology  
Public Health Medicine  
Orthopaedics  
Doctor in Training  
Ophthalmology  
Occupational Health Medicine  
Academic Medicine

# AGENDA



MEDICAL BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION OF NSW,  
78th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
MONDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2014 at 7.30pm

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Notice of Meeting – Annual Appeal Letter, June 2014
4. Minutes of 2013 AGM
5. President’s Report
6. Treasurer’s Report
7. Social Worker’s Report
8. Councillors continuing in office: (per constitutional requirements)

Drs Felix Choi  
John Allman  
Christopher Dalton  
Richard Herlihy  
Ian Wechsler  
Chaminda Wijeratne  
Reem Mina  
Catherine Brassill  
Russell Pearson  
Noel Wilton  
Michelle Penm  
Vanessa Rogers

9. Retiring Councillors: (per constitutional requirements)

Drs David Chen  
Sue Morey AM  
Vincent Wong  
Andrew Wines  
Furio Virant  
Gary Galambos

10. Election of Councillors for 2014/2015 (Nominations received as per Constitutional requirements )

Drs David Chen  
Sue Morey AM  
Vincent Wong  
Andrew Wines  
Furio Virant

11. Election of Office Bearers for 2014/2015

President	Dr	David Chen
Vice-Presidents	Drs	Furio Virant Russell Pearson
Hon Secretary	Dr	Andrew Wines
Hon Treasurer	Dr	Felix Choi

12. Appointment of Auditors - HLB Mann Judd

13. Appointment of Accountants - HLB Mann Judd

14. Meeting Address - Dr Stuart Dorney Medical Director, NSW Medical Council

# BY DOCTOR'S FOR DOCTORS

BY DOCTORS FOR DOCTORS



## Administration

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## Social Worker

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