



*The peak national forum promoting a social approach to male health and wellbeing*

## **Presidents Report**

As president it is once again my privilege to report on the activities of Australasian Men's Health Forum Inc.(AMHF), *the national peak body seeking to the improve male health by a holistic approach*, the 2011/13 period.

I am very appreciative of the commitment and support given to AMHF by the executive, who all give time for no financial reward to improve the wellbeing and health outcomes for all Australasian males irrespective of their race, age or social background.

For me as president this overarching principle of inclusiveness is a most important aspect of what AMHF stands for as we move forward with our program, which is to develop and address better wellbeing and health outcomes for all males. Too often when focus is placed on areas of extreme need, it can have the effect of diminishing our commitment to the overarching problems, which can then lead to symptom remediation without addressing the fundamental causes creating symptoms.

Examples of this are evident across the spectrum of males in our society, from boys in school to Aboriginals in remote communities to farmers, business managers and miners struggling to hold life and family together. The great thing about AMHF is the focus on social determinants and all this encompasses to address ways to improve the long term Health and wellbeing outcomes for all Australian males.

Our last Face to Face AGM was held in Perth at the end of a very successful gathering. Once again this Brisbane Gathering has exceeded expectations in many areas, quality speakers, fantastic facilities, breadth of male inclusiveness, good food etc, these things do not happen by chance and we thank everyone involved in organising this very successful event..

Preliminary work is now being undertaken in planning the next gathering. More information will be provided on Friday, so watch this space and start planning to be in there in 2015.

AMHF is continuing to monitor the National Male Health Policy plus the National Longitudinal Study of Male Health. Our official representative on the consumer group is Jonathan Bedloe from Tasmania, thanks Jonathon. Also Greg Milan is on this reference group as one of the two Chairmen and John McDonald is on the professional reference committee. I am confident these men will look after the interests of Australian men through the perspective of AMHF.

An exciting development has been the establishment of state based male health organisations. Several teleconferences and a face to face meeting at this Gathering, hosted by AMHF and involving representatives from the state and territory organisations has helped in linking state bodies together and assisted in developing our vision and purpose statement. I anticipate these meetings will continue to be held periodically and are an important strategy for developing a national approach to the issues facing men and boys.

AMHF is very supportive of these state based organisations and to date has been able to demonstrate that support by giving small loans to get programs rolling in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania.

Another initiative which Anthony Brown is leading is AMHF having input into the establishing of a worldwide organisation. (You may remember John McDonald talking of his experiences in Vienna.) It is early days but AMHF has contributed \$1,500 towards this project which could start to influence Male health on a much wider stage.

AMHF continues its support of two very important special interest groups, the Aboriginal Male Health Leadership Group and the Men and Vulnerable Families Sector Development Group. Both are sub-committees of AMHF. This provides them with a legal entity. Currently The Vulnerable Families committee is struggling and needs some new people to take up the challenge of leading the group. Andrew King has been leading out for a number of years and is going to have a well-earned break. Again on behalf of AMHF we thank you for your time and dedication to this important work.

The executive group has worked hard to ensure the peak body position of AMHF is better understood. To assist with this the executive has developed a new Logo, information leaflet and linked website information. This has proved more difficult than first expected but is now complete. I urge you to use the brochure, which is in your satchel and refer people to the website. We hope you like what is the result of much brainstorming and hard work. Our objective remains, to support state organisations and promote male health needs at the Federal level more effectively.

Another task completed this year has been revising our constitution Terry Melville, Anthony Brown and Gary Bryant have led out with this project and places us in a much better place, with less unnecessary jargon. I trust you agree as we need membership support to change the constitution!

AMHF was again involved significantly in promoting men's health and wellbeing activities around the International Men's Health Week in June. Significant numbers of events were promoted on the website in conjunction with our partner organisations.

I would particularly like to thank Shannon Beal, the volunteer newsletter editor for producing a very high quality newsletter, which has been well received by the members.

Another volunteer to be thanked is Tom Glavas, who is looking after our website.

As this report indicates there have been many opportunities for executive members to represent AMHF views in a variety of formats. I would encourage members to keep us informed of issues as they emerge so that we can have our voices heard in relevant circles. I would particularly thank the retiring members of the committee Andrew King and Chris Johnson. These men have given tirelessly over many years and much of the success of AMHF must go to them.

It must be noted that Chris has been the financial guru of AMHF and I am pleased to report that even though he is stepping down as treasurer he will continue as our Financial Controller. His contribution to AMHF has been significant and I think his stewardship has helped us remain financially viable. On behalf of everyone, thanks Chris.

Our continuing goal must be to do what we do well, look for additional resources to achieve more but keep our courage, we are making a difference.

Finally there are individuals that give significantly to keep the organisation on track who need a special mention. Anthony Brown our Secretary and Gary Bryant our hard working Administrator, who tries to hold everything together with limited resources, our heartfelt thanks for your dedication which goes well beyond any remuneration you receive. To each committee member, state and territory leaders a sincere thank you. Finally to every member, your support is so important as we move forward in this exiting era of male health development.

Thank you

Julian Krieg

President.

23 October 2013