

Presidents Report 2015/16

As President I have the privilege to report on the activities of the association for this reporting period. This Annual General Meeting (AGM) of our association, I believe it is a critical point in the history of AMHF.

Your board has faced many challenges in the past year, lack of financial capacity to implement goals as quickly as we would like has been an ongoing problem but we have not let this stop our progress.

At the beginning of this reporting period we developed a "Sponsorship Proposal Pack" That has been used successfully in raising \$22,500 from corporate and private sources. Thanks to Mader Contracting, WFI Insurance and Wheatbelt Men's Health and two individual donors. This has been sufficient to develop and deliver some new initiatives, while maintaining our basic operations.

We have also submitted a proposal to the Federal Minister for Health for funding. Unfortunately this process was interrupted by the Federal election. We are continuing to pursue this proposal and have a high expectation we will receive funding in the near future.

AMHF does remind many levels of government, and the community in general, of our fundamental purpose that "*promoting a social approach to male health and wellbeing*" has a critical influence in improving and maintaining the health and wellbeing of Australian males and is central if we are to have a well balanced society.

As a way of getting this message out we were fortunate to have Gary Misan develop our foundation position statement *Male health in Australia - A call for action....* Once written Michael Woodhouse completed the graphic design and the position paper has been widely circulated and used by many as a tool to outline the deficiencies in Male Health and Wellbeing services and programs around the country. It also formed the basis for our funding application to the Federal Government.

The board also initiated a Crowd funding proposal to develop a position paper on male suicide. Unfortunately we did not achieve our primary goal but it certainly raised the profile of AMHF and the issues around male suicide in a very different section of the community. A spin off from this project has been gaining permission from the Australian Institute of Male Health Studies to promote their excellent book, *Preventing Male Suicide: Become Part of the Solution*, on our website.

Also we have now been able to create a second position paper on Male Suicide by a different means. This time, Glen Poole of the Stop Male Suicide Project and author of the book *You Can Stop Male Suicide*, has written an excellent document on our behalf. Again our thanks to Michael Woodhouse for his ongoing support with the graphic design work.

I would remind members again of our key purpose for existence and both these position papers fit into that purpose, that being

- That AMHF is the peak body representing a wide a cross section of male health and wellbeing support agencies.
- We do not want to be totally reliant on government funding so we can retain our independent advocacy role

The National Men's Health Gatherings held in Terrigal in 2015, produced a magnificent program and our congratulations go to Matt Stubbs and his hard working committee. In particular, the Aboriginal component was highly innovative and Stuart McMinn is to be thanked for coordinating it.

Unfortunately, like the 2113 Gathering in Brisbane it made a financial loss. As a result the Board decided that it would defer a Gathering in 2017 and will review future possibilities once the financial position of AMHF has been stabilised.

One of the major governance issues your committee, and in particular our Executive Officer Gary Bryant, has been working on this year is a board restructure. A number of proposals need to be voted at this meeting as these changes will allow the board to co-opt relevant skills that might not be readily available in the membership. Our thanks to Gary for his work on these proposals.

Teleconferences involving representatives from the state and territory organisations have been held twice. AMHF remains very supportive of these state based organisations but unfortunately is not in a position to assist financially with projects or programs beyond the teleconferences at this time. The teleconferences will continue and are an important strategy for developing a cohesive national approach to the issues facing men and boys.

AMHF in cooperation with the Men's Health Information and Resource Centre at the University of Western Sydney was also involved promoting men's health and wellbeing activities around International Men's Health Week in June. 188 events conducted in all states and territories, an increase of 25%, were promoted on the website in conjunction with our partner organisations.

AMHF continues to play a very active role in the establishment of the Global Action on Men's Health, which has a website www.gamh.org plus a Twitter account @globalmenhealth Our Secretary, Anthony Brown is the Chairman of the committee.

There have been 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 Anthony, Greg, Paul, and Gary for their support in this area. Our past president John Macdonald also continues his active support of AMHF in his academic area of influence, thank you John.

AMHF is currently represented on the Mens Health Longitudinal Study advisory group by myself and Greg Milan also representing the NSW Men's Health Forum.

AMHF wrote to the major political parties and key politicians prior to the federal election. The submission was based on the position paper *Male health in Australia - A call for action....*

As we move forward I again remind members our role is to represent ALL males. There is much to do, it can only be achieved as funding permits.

Our 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.

One strategy that we hope to adopt is to continue to invite members to be involved in the development of working parties and the preparation of position papers on various issues.

Finally there are always individuals that give significantly to keep the organisation on track who need a special mention. A big thank you to Grant Westthorp, who produced the newsletter and to Karthika Nambiar, who looked after the website. Our treasurer Ken Meldrum working with Chris Johnson to keep us financially on track, Anthony Brown our Secretary and Gary Bryant, Executive Officer, in particular deserves much more than we can offer. I think without Gary keeping us all on track I don't know where we would be, on behalf of the board and membership we thank you. To each board member, a sincere thank you and to every member, your support is important as we move forward in this exiting era of male health development.

I also acknowledge the contribution and passion of all all Board members: Greg Millan, Vice-President, Anthony Brown, Secretary, Ken Meldrum Treasurer, Peter Kelly, Peter Mitchell, Paul Mischefski, Grant Westthorp and Kim Hopkins.

It may be slow but we are making a difference!

Your President
Julian Krieg
24 November 2016