



AMA

Australian Medical Association Northern Territory Inc.

32nd Annual General Meeting

Thursday 7th May 2020

18:33 hours at 2/25 Parap Road, PARAP NT 0820

MINUTES

Meeting Opened: 18:33

Dr Parker thanked everyone for attending and confirmed we had a quorum.

Present in Person

A/Professor Robert Parker

Dr Jennifer Mitchell

Dr David Chapman

Ms Fiona Thomson (CEO)

Present via Teleconference

Dr Stephen Gourley

Dr Penny Stewart

Dr Georgina Taylor

Dr Charlotte Durand

Dr Haydn Dodds

Dr Matthew Paltridge

Mr Arun Mahajani

Dr Cameron Scott

Dr Nikita Robins

Dr Kane Vellar

Dr Emma Skowronski

Dr Howard Flavell

Ms Jessie Spargo (Student Representative)

Apologies

Dr Chris Clohesy

Dr Karen Flegg

Ms Thomson confirmed attendance and thanked everyone for nominating and attending. Ms Thomson highlighted that this year would be our largest Council to date and acknowledged that over the years we have had difficulties getting interest from members for Council. The Constitution is an NT specific model constitution and has not been reviewed since 2006 by then President, Dr Peter Beaumont and is well overdue for a review and update. One of the tasks for this year is to update and possibly hold a special general meeting or take it to the 2021 AGM. This will be discussed further at future Council meetings.

1. Acceptance of Minutes from the AGM held on 9 May 2019

The minutes from the meeting of 9 May 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved by Dr Robert Parker and seconded by Drs David Chapman and Stephen Gourley that the minutes be accepted.

Motion Carried.

2. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising.

3. Treasurer's Report

Last year 2019 continued in a financially very solid footing for AMA NT Inc. Membership income has increased somewhat to approximately \$109,000.00 for 2019 (2018 was \$92,000 approx.) due to increased member numbers which is encouraging. AMA NT has not been able to earn any substantial income from other sources again in the last 12 months although the secretarial staff continued to explore a number of

possibilities in the last year. Expenses have been well managed with slight increases in some areas. Management fees to AMA NT Pty Ltd for their continuing support of our branch increased last year, as we had a surplus in 2018 and felt that we could increase our contributions with the aim of having only a small surplus for AMA NT Inc. We may have slightly overcompensated with the management fees and this resulted in a very small deficit this year of \$304.00.

The financial audit has been performed by Merit Chartered Accountants and I thank them once again for their assistance. The audit has concluded that our financial records are up to date and truly reflect our financial position. They did not raise any concerns about our financial position this year and feel we are in a sound position to pay debts as and when they are due. In 2019, Merit Partners identified two issues regarding the association regulations that were considered low risk. The first was that there were Council meeting minutes not actually signed. This has been rectified and in 2019, minutes of every meeting are signed by the Chairperson at the beginning of the next meeting. The other issue raised was that two signatories on one of our bank accounts were no longer members of Council having left in the previous year. The old signatories have been removed now and only current Council members are officially listed for each of our accounts. We are only operating the accounts on-line via secure pathways with Ms Fiona Thomson only having access to the account. Cheques are rarely used.

The audit of 2019 has not raised any deficiencies in the accounts, or any management risks that arose from the last year. They have outlined some concerns about ongoing financial viability due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their report advises -

In light of the coronavirus pandemic, the Council of Management needs to continue to closely monitor the impacts (current and future) of the coronavirus pandemic on the business and financial reports to ensure that adequate strategies are in place to manage these impacts, if any, to ensure the financial sustainability of the Association.

As the NT has minimal numbers of COVID-19 cases currently and has very strong government policies in place, I feel that doctors in the NT feel comfortable with our current position and therefore at this stage, minimal impact in membership should occur. This of course may change if the COVID-19 cases increase and Council is very aware of how this may impact our small branch very quickly.

I would like to thank Fiona and Kerri for their dedicated commitment and hard work to our office. They are our bedrock in the office. I would also like to thank the Federal AMA for their continued support, in the running of the office. We hope that we can contribute the AMA family in many ways and remain a valuable resource to the wider organisation.

There were no questions of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer's report was moved by A/Professor Robert Parker and seconded by Dr Stephen Gourley.
Motion Carried

4. President's Report

A/Professor Parker started with apologizing for not starting the meeting with paying his respects to the Larrakia and Arrernte Elders past and present.

I would like to welcome you to this AGM for AMA NT that is being held under unusual circumstances due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

AMA NT has been active in the context of the COVID crisis. I have been regularly asked to give public comment on issues related to COVID on the restrictions and health implications for the NT, such as the potential impact of COVID-19 on the Territory's Indigenous communities. I have also acted as a conduit for information between concerned clinicians, AMA NT members and health bureaucrats such as the NT Chief Health Officer on occasion.

AMA NT has a continuing concern about the lack of fluoridated water supplies in a significant number of rural communities. Continuing lobbying by AMA NT resulted in the AMA Indigenous Health Report Card for 2019 focusing on oral health issues.

There have been numerous situations through the year where there has been a call for more health services, particularly at RDH, with the government responding that no money was available because of the NT Budget Repair process. I have been also aware that the NT has been denied its equitable portion of Commonwealth MBS and PBS funding over many years. The details of this issue were outlined in the AMA NT March 2020 newsletter. As a result of the above and in the context of the five yearly Commonwealth and State/Territory health funding agreements that are due for completion in June 2020, I have written a letter to Federal Treasurer Freudenberg and Federal Health Minister Hunt arguing for more equitable health funding for the NT in this regard. NT Treasurer Manison was also included in this correspondence and was interested in the significant funding discrepancies outlined in the correspondence from AMA NT.

Congratulations to Dr David Chapman who has been lobbying, in his position as ASMOF NT President, for increased funding for mental health services in the NT. Dr Chapman has recently received a letter from Federal Health Minister Hunt promising the NT an extra \$30 million dollars over two years as a response to the lobbying by Dr Chapman.

AMA NT has also been very concerned about issues of premature mortality for Territorians that was highlighted in a report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report "Mortality over Regions and Time". The details of this report were outlined in the AMA NT August 2019 Newsletter. A key component of this premature mortality was smoking related early mortality for cardiac disease, respiratory disease and oral cancer. The sad fact that the AMA NT was again the recipient of the AMA Dirty Ashtray Award in 2019 highlighted the appalling lack of meaningful action by the NT Government in reducing smoking rates in the NT. AMA NT is in regular discussion with the NT Health Minister to attempt to change this outcome.

I would like to thank my fellow AMA NT Council members for their hard work and support through the 2019-20 year. I would also like to thank Ms Fiona Thomson and Mrs Kerri Warthold, AMA NT Secretariat, for keeping the whole show on the road.

A/Professor opened to the floor for questions.

Dr Penny Stewart queried if we would still be pushing for a National CDC stating that the pandemic has highlighted the importance of national coordination and accessing equipment for example PPE. A/Professor Parker agreed, and Council discussed and felt that waiting for the dust to settle would be the best approach. A/Professor highlighted that Dr Brendan Murphy is not supportive of a National CDC and may be the stumbling block even when he moves positions at the end of the pandemic. Dr Stewart also highlighted how many national led agreements had worked well.

The President's report was moved by Dr David Chapman and seconded by Dr Jennifer Mitchell.

Motion Carried

7. Vacation of Office

Dr Parker stepped down as President and handed over to Ms Fiona Thomson, Returning/Executive Officer.

8. Nominations:

President

A/Professor Robert Parker

Nominated by:

Dr Jennifer Mitchell

Seconded:

Dr Kane Vellar

Immediate Past President

Dr Peter Beaumont

Vice President	Dr Stephen Gourley	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr David Chapman A/Prof Robert Parker
	Dr Cameron Scott	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr Mahiban Thomas Dr Sabu Thomas
Secretary / Public Officer	Dr Kane Vellar	Nominated by: Seconded:	A/Prof Robert Parker Dr Jennifer Mitchell
Treasurer	Dr Jennifer Mitchell	Nominated by: Seconded:	A/Prof Robert Parker Dr Kane Vellar
Council Members	Dr Chris Clohesy	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr Emma Skowronski Dr David Chapman
	Dr David Chapman	Nominated by: Seconded:	A/Prof Robert Parker Dr Jennifer Mitchell
	Dr Howard Flavell	Nominated by: Seconded:	A/Prof Robert Parker Dr Kane Vellar
	Dr Georgina Taylor	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr Kane Vellar Dr David Carroll
	Dr Charlotte Durand	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr Jennifer Mitchell Dr David Chapman
	Dr Emma Skowronski	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr Chris Clohesy A/Prof Robert Parker
	Dr Matthew Paltridge	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr Georgina Taylor Dr David Carroll
	Dr Haydn Dodds	Nominated by: Seconded:	A/Prof Robert Parker Dr Stephen Gourley
	Dr Nikita Robins	Nominated by: Seconded:	Dr Stephen Gourley A/Prof Robert Parker
Students	Dr Penny Stewart	Nominated by: Seconded:	A/Prof Robert Parker Dr Stephen Gourley
			Ms Jessie Spargo Ms Marianna Diamandopoulos
Honorary Member / Historian			Mr Arun Mahajani

9. Election

Ms Thomson advised that under Clause 29 of our Constitution as there are no contested positions all those nominated are duly elected.

President: There being only nomination at the AGM for the position of President, Dr Robert Parker was declared elected.

Vice-Presidents: There being only two nominations at the AGM for the positions of Vice-President, Drs Stephen Gourley and Cameron Scott were declared elected.

Secretary: There being only nomination at the AGM for the position of Secretary, Dr Kane Vellar was declared elected.

Treasurer: There being only one nomination for the position of Treasurer, Dr Jennifer Mitchell was declared elected.

Council Members: The following members were elected to AMA NT Council:

Dr David Chapman – Councillor
Dr Chris Clohesy – Councillor
Dr Howard Flavell – Councillor
Dr Georgina Taylor – Councillor
Dr Charlotte Durand – Councillor
Dr Emma Skowronski – Councillor
Dr Matthew Paltridge – Councillor
Dr Haydn Dodds – Councillor
Dr Nikita Robins – Councillor
Dr Penny Stewart – Councillor

DiT Reps: In keeping with the decision of the 2006 AGM, it was determined to have two DiT Representatives, one in Darwin and one in Alice Springs. Drs Haydn Dodds in Alice Springs and Dr Charlotte Durand have both put their names forward to be the relevant representatives.

It was acknowledged that there are now six (6) Doctor-in-Training representatives on Council which is a milestone for the AMA NT.

It was opened to the floor and Dr Taylor queried if Dr Paltridge was interested in the position? Dr Paltridge indicated he had spoken with Ms Thomson and was happy with Drs Dodd and Paltridge taking on the official role. Therefore, the meeting agreed to appoint both Drs Dodds and Durand as the DiT representatives. Ms Thomson commented that she was hopeful that the DiT representatives would work together to represent all DiT's in the Territory with the possibility of a more official DiT Committee being formed.

Student Rep: The Student Representative role is as an Associate Member position with no voting rights. Ms Jessie Spargo and Ms Marianna Diamondopoulos have both expressed an interest to represent the Student body in the Territory and have agreed to share the role with both being encouraged to attend and participate whenever possible.

Public Officer: Dr Vellar will remain as the Public Officer.

10. Confirmation of position of Immediate Past President

Dr Peter Beaumont was once again declared the Immediate Past President.

11. Other Business

11.1 AMA NT Representatives on AMA Committee's

It was requested that Ms Thomson provide a brief outline of what these positions involve for the new Council members. Ms Thomson explained the AMA NT's role on the various AMA Councils. Alternates were requested for each Council as it is important to have an AMA NT representative at all meetings.

Election of Representative to AMA Federal Council

The Federal AMA has requested a representative from the Northern Territory to this position.

As has been the practice in the past the President is automatically elected to this position. Therefore A/Professor Robert Parker will remain in this role.

Election of Representative to the AMA Council of General Practice

The Federal AMA has requested a representative from the Northern Territory to this position.

Dr Taylor was happy to hand over to anyone else who may be interested in the position and commented that Dr Andrew Webster agreed to be the alternate in the past. Ms Thomson advised that unfortunately due to other commitments Dr Webster has resigned from the AMA NT for the time being.

Dr Taylor agreed to remain in this role. Dr Skowronski has agreed to be the alternate.

Election of Representative to AMA Council of Public Hospital Doctors

The Federal AMA has requested a representative from the Northern Territory to this position.

Dr Stewart will remain in this role. Dr Scott has agreed to be the alternate.

Election of Representative on the AMA Council of Doctors-in-Training

The Federal AMA has requested a representative from the Northern Territory to this position.

Drs Dodd and Durand will be the AMACDT representatives with Drs Robins and Paltridge as alternates.

Election of Representative to AMA Taskforce on Indigenous Health

This role is by appointment by the AMA Federal President.

No further action required on this position.

Election of Representative to AMA Council of Rural Doctors

The Federal AMA has requested a representative from the Northern Territory to this position.

As Dr Clohesy is not present at the meeting Ms Thomson will contact Dr Clohesy.

Election of Representative to the NT Workers Compensation Committee

Ms Thomson has recently been advised that Dr Goodhand is unwell, however has not heard from him direct. Ms Thomson to follow-up and see if a new representative is required.

12. There being no further business the AGM closed.

Meeting closed at 19:11 hours

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Dr Robert Parker
President