



It gives me great pleasure to provide my first contribution to the ASA newsletter as the Association's new President. I would firstly like to acknowledge the enormous amount of work put in by Maree Barnes, as President over the past 2 years. Maree will be staying on the Board as immediate past President and will be an invaluable help to me and the other Board members in progressing the many initiatives she has put in place, and supporting the new activities planned for the coming years. I would also like to acknowledge Alan Young, who left the Board as the last ASM, and who has made a huge contribution to the many and broad-ranging activities of the Education Committee.

I am based in Perth and share my time between the Centre for Sleep Science, University of Western Australia and the West Australian Sleep Disorders Research Institute, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. I hold appointments as a NHMRC Research Fellow at the hospital and as a teaching and research academic at the university. I oversee a research and teaching programme that is focused on the diagnosis, treatment, pathogenesis and epidemiology of sleep disorders. I look forward to applying my experience in working in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary environment with both clinical and scientific colleagues to the ASA, which as an Association also represents individuals with a broad interests in sleep science and sleep medicine that includes clinicians, scientists and researchers.

As President of the ASA, I will make every effort to ensure that the Association spends its efforts and resources on achieving its stated mission *"...to lead and promote sleep health and sleep science in Australia and New Zealand and to facilitate the professional development of its members by providing education and training, fostering research and establishing clinical standards within the field."* Interest in sleep by the general public has never been greater and the ASA has a critical role in ensuring that the community are provided the best evidence-based information on good sleep health and sleep disorders. A strong working partnership with the SHF and recently established SHF NZ, are essential to ensure such an educated community, whether it the general public, industry or government. In Australia, the ASA and SHF are already working closely on Advocacy activities with the Federal Government. Our joint ambitions are high, and include seeking Government support for a parliamentary enquiry on sleep health; increased NHMRC funding for research into improving sleep health; educational programs for primary care and allied health professionals on sleep disorders; and sleep awareness education packages for school-aged children. The recent MBS item number review highlighted the absence of national data related to pathways that patients take from diagnosis to treatment of sleep disorders and the outcomes. The ASA has been informally approach to see whether it would consider helping develop a simple-to-use 'universal request form' for use by all Sleep Physicians. The data generated from such a form would be invaluable in highlighting to government the magnitude of the health issues related to poor sleep and sleep disorders, and the marked individual, economic and social benefits associated with their effective treatment. These issues are current under consideration by the Clinical Committee.

The ASA will continue to find innovative ways to facilitate the professional development of its members. The flagship education program is the Annual Scientific Meeting. The recent conference in Auckland was a huge success, and again I would like to thank Sarah Biggs for developing a scientific program with outstanding high-quality content. The Conference Committee always welcomes input from all members with regard to program content, and I encourage all of you to send in your ideas

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and thoughts. We now start counting down the days until the next meeting, which will be held in Brisbane from the 18th to 20th of October, 2018.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy festive season. It will have been a long year for many of you, so please use the opportunity to wind-down a bit, catch up with family and friends, rest, recover and sleep well.

Peter Eastwood

ASA President