



VICTORIAN DOCTORS HEALTH PROGRAM

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Chair's Report for AGM, 11th November 2013

This year has continued to be a difficult year for the VDHP because of the continued uncertainty related to the ongoing consultation and determination of the relationship between the Medical Board of Australia, and external doctors' health organisations. We appreciate the importance of the work being done by the Medical Board of Australia, and we also understand the necessity to spend time on producing the best possible outcome that the board can attain. However, the fact that this process has now entered a further year does put very significant pressures on our organisation.

In particular, our dedicated staff have found it very difficult to continue their work effectively, while there has been significant uncertainty about the long-term future of the organisation. I would particularly like to thank Dr Kym Jenkins for her excellent leadership during this difficult time. I am pleased to say that the normal activities of the organisation have continued at the same level as has occurred in previous years. I would note that new assessments are at similar numbers to previous years; case management has continued with existing doctors, and Kym and her staff have even managed to produce research papers that have been published. I believe this is a continuation of the very high standard work of our organisation during a time of significant stress and uncertainty. I would also like to thank the loyal staff that work with Kym to achieve these results.

During this phase of uncertainty, we have certainly appreciated the ongoing support of our two key stakeholders in the organisation. The Medical Board of Australia and AHPRA have provided excellent advice and support during the time that necessary consultations and determinations are occurring. We have particularly appreciated a further tranche of funding that was provided by them, to continue our activities for a further financial year. This funding was not at the same level as previous years, but it is still significant, and is much appreciated by our organisation. We have also received excellent support in kind from AMA Victoria. The support of this member-based organisation is much appreciated, especially given that the VDHP in fact provides support to all doctors, not just AMA members.

We have been most appreciative of the significant input from a number of new supporting organisations. At this difficult time, the provision of donations from those organisations has been extremely valuable, in allowing us to continue a similar level of service provision to the doctors and students who ask for help from us. Those doctors numbers have not decreased, and the valuable donations made by these organisations have allowed us to continue at almost the same level of service delivery. In addition to this, the organisations are organisations that we regularly liaise with in a number of different ways. The organisations which have donated funds to VDHP are: the Victorian Medical Benevolent Society (VMBA);

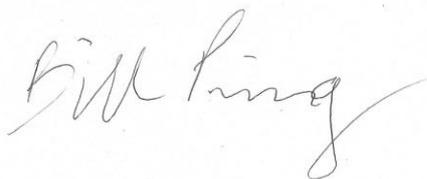
the Victorian Medical Insurance Agency Ltd (VMIAL); Deakin University; The University of Melbourne and Monash University. We are deeply grateful for their support and donations.

We hope that a decision about the parameters applying to external doctors' health organisations can be made early in the New Year. We understand that this is likely, and an early New Year announcement would allow us to make the necessary organisational changes which will be required, in order to continue our services in the most efficient way.

As well as the work carried on by our organisation, Dr Jenkins and I were able to attend the international doctors health conference conducted in Brisbane in early October this year. The focus of the conference was not just on doctors' health, but on providing health to other health professionals as well. This was an opportunity to liaise with other doctors' health advisory service organisations, and two meetings were held prior to the actual formal conference for DHAS representatives from Australia and New Zealand. We hope to continue working with the Australasian Doctors Health Network (ADHN) towards developing further the activities conducted in all jurisdictions. In particular, it may be possible for organisations like our own to provide some increased services to other state jurisdictions, which may have difficulties in providing the full extent of services due to their staffing circumstances.

Finally, I would like to thank the Directors of our Board for all their excellent input to the running of the organisation. During the year we were fortunate to have the appointment of Dr Leon Shapero as a replacement for Prof Napier Thomson who had to stand down from his position on our board late last year. We have welcomed Dr Shapero and his contribution to our Board thus far. I would like to note the loss of two further directors from our Board in this last year. Early this year Dr Trish Molloy stood down because of family commitments and at this AGM Dr Robyn Mason has announced that she will step down from the Board, also due to personal commitments. Dr Mason has made an extremely strong contribution to the Board as Chair for two years and then as a Director for two years, and in recent times she has led the financial management of our organisation. It should also be noted that Dr Mason was one of the key foundation architects of the development of the VDHP. At that time she was the CEO of AMA Victoria and under her leadership, AMA Victoria joined with the Victorian Medical Board to form the VDHP. I would like to acknowledge the enormous contribution Dr Mason has made to the health and well-being of Victorian doctors and medical students, over such a long period of time. I will ask the AGM to pass a vote of thanks to Dr Mason, for all the work that she has undertaken for us.

Dr Bill Pring

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Pring', written in a cursive style.

Chair of the Board of Directors
VDHP