



OT AUSTRALIA Qld

Australian Association of Occupational Therapists - Queensland Inc.

Annual Report

2007-2008

***Australian Association of Occupational Therapists – Queensland Inc
Suite, 8, 416 Logan Rd, Stones Corner Qld 4120***

President's Report

Dear Fellow Members of OT AUSTRALIA Queensland,

It is with great pleasure that your colleagues on the Board of Management of OT AUSTRALIA Queensland present the Annual Report 2007-2008. My personal experience is that it has been an interesting and busy year for our Association and our profession.

2007 – 2008 Strategic Plan

You may remember our 07/08 strategic plan had three main directions including;

- Increased membership
- Improved professional development opportunities
- Effective governance

During this period, we worked towards achieving these objectives and recently appointed both a Professional Development Manager and Membership Services Officer to progress these areas. The Professional Development Manager has undertaken a needs analysis for professional development for OTs in Queensland. 2009 will see the implementation of a new CPD program with additional support for special interest and regional groups. This position was made possible with support from the Queensland Occupational Therapy Registration Board.

The membership services officer is involved in implementing the strategic directions of the membership reference group. Two initial projects that have been undertaken include the Champions strategy (engaging our profession leaders) and a revamp of OT Week. 2009 will see further work on the eight strategies of the membership reference groups; promoting what we already do, adopting successful ideas from other associations, promoting the profession of occupational therapy to the public, enabling participation for those who are time short, catering for members in mental health and generic roles, strengthening our role in professional development, providing corporate benefits and promoting pride in our Association.

Governance has continued to be on the agenda for the OT AUSTRALIA Qld Board of Management. As your representative on National Council I asked for a business plan to be developed to outline how the proposed structure would run, how it would achieve the aims of the Association, the strategic direction and risk management regarding federated versus single entity governance structures. The Queensland body continues to maintain that the governance review process should be justified and evidence-based, responsive, include consultation with members and incorporate a visionary strategic direction. Until you are sure that all these needs are met, I urge you to continue to have input in to the process and consider carefully how you vote for your Association's future.

2008 – 2009 Strategic Direction

The 08/09 strategic plan builds upon our last year. The quality of members services and professional development that we provide remain core components of our business and are thus constantly on the agenda. Likewise, governance remains a top priority, with the ongoing process considering a restructure to a single national entity. The 08/09 strategic plan additionally focuses on the development of communities of practice. Communities of practice offer an opportunity to foster positive environments for our members, characterised by improved knowledge dissemination, mentoring and support. Three special projects we are aiming to undertake in 2009 include OT Assistants, Specialisation Frameworks / Recognition of Advanced Practice and Extended Scope of Practice. We encourage all interested members to become involved in these projects and will be working closely with other state and national bodies to progress these.

Outgoing Board Members

The past year has seen some changes to the Board of Management and State Elected Councillor position. I would like to personally thank all these members for their exceptional contribution to the profession. Their service entails many hours of volunteer work to represent our members, the profession and to further our strategic direction. Special thanks to;

- Julie Connell – past state elected councillor
- Chris Kennedy – past president and past state elected councillor
- Jan Anderson – for her time as president, Jan continues to serve as a Board member

- Rachel Hawkins – retiring Board member
- Caroline Hennessey – retiring Board member, Chair of Professional Development Reference Group
- Trudi Epple – retiring Board member

Staff Changes

As mentioned previously, 2008 has seen significant changes in the office staffing. The appointment of a Professional Development Manager and Member Services Officer are investments in the future of our Association and a commitment to build member services. Unfortunately, this growth has been coupled with the resignation of our Executive Director, Nicole Hastie. Nicole's visionary qualities, as well as her personal and professional skills, have enabled several initiatives and have furthered the strategic direction of the Association. In Nicole's stead, we welcome Meg Milne who will be taking on the role of State Manager (a rebranding of the Executive Director role). Meg brings with her a wealth of experience in managing Associations and a valuable understand of the health care context. We are very excited to have Meg on board with our Association.

Closing Words

I would like to reiterate the importance of every member of our Association. The concept of a professional association is the joining together of members to collaboratively further our joint goals and vision, the enhancement of our profession. As a Board of Management, we strive wherever possible to engage our membership. There are always opportunities to become involved in the Association, with varying levels of commitment and service. I welcome every member to find or create an opportunity that suits your passion, context and drive.

Kieran Broome
President

Executive Director's Report

In 2007/08 OT AUSTRALIA Qld started planning to expand traditional services and products for members and the profession in Queensland. Having created a more representative state-wide governance structure in the preceding year, the challenge to create better value for members was the focus of our operational planning.

Operational Performance

Operational performance was enhanced during the year by the development of two important Reference Groups to the Board. The Professional Development Reference Group and the Membership Reference Group were created to drive performance in membership services. These reference groups were chaired by Board members (Kieran Broome, Bobbie Walker, Jan Anderson and Caroline Hennessey during the period) with Board and general members making up the group. Whilst unpaid, these members contributed significant time to operational tasks in the absence of paid staff; for example in the membership development role; or where paid staff was employed in a part time capacity only, such as the Professional Development Co-ordinator to December 2007, Ms Linda Cupitt who was employed for 15hrs/week.

Both reference groups were successful in gaining more staff support, with the full time Professional Development Manager Peter Bothams commencing in April and the Membership Development Officer Petrina Smith commencing at 0.5FTE in late June. The Association has committed special project funds to support Ms Smith's employment, whilst Mr Bothams position is largely funded by a grant from the Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland.

These new and improved positions have contributed to a higher investment in staff for the reporting period with dividends expected to be evident in the 2009/10 year. I encourage you to review the reports from each of these reference groups in this Annual Report.

Whilst much of the year was spent in setting the foundations for this growth, several achievements were made in the meantime. These are the highlights:

- The successful grant application to the Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland to fund the PD Manager position for 15 months;
- The development of a PD Project Charter targeting access to PD for 25% of the state's OTs as its goal for 2008/09;
- The creation of a Membership Development Plan with specific strategies designed to improve the value of membership for all members;
- Leadership of a National Database Acquisition Project that will result in a new membership relationship management database with significant benefits for members;
- The development of links with our American Association counterparts through former President Carolyn Baum;
- New Graduate Welcome events for JCU and UQ graduating students in November 2007;
- The co-ordination of the 2007 OT WEEK including the provision of marketing resources to over 80 workplaces;
- Development work in the work, soft tissue and driving practice areas on position statements and information fact sheets;
- A leading role in the improvement of the national governance review process resulting in improved communication and iterative consultation processes around the proposed Constitution and model;

Disappointingly, and after considerable consideration, we chose not to renew our arrangement with OT AUSTRALIA Victoria for the supply of the formal mentoring program called "Mentorlink". The low uptake of the program made the cost unacceptable on a per member basis. New ways of mentoring are being examined as part of a "community of practice" approach to groups. OT AUSTRALIA Victoria continues to provide a formal mentoring service on a user pays basis which can also be accessed by our Queensland members.

Advocating for occupational therapy continued to be a major focus this year. It has long been recognised that the most effective resource we have in understanding service needs and developments and responding to changes and trends, is our special interest (SIGs) and regional

groups (RGs). We are very grateful to those groups and members who provided advice and assistance in critical areas. Please refer to our acknowledgement in this Annual Report.

This year has seen significant growth in our organisational capacity and sustainable infrastructure and the leadership of the association needs to be congratulated on their commitment to investing in the organisation so selflessly to this end. The legacy of this work will be a strong, well governed, and well managed association in the coming years.

As President, Kieran Broome has reported, I am leaving the Association in October 2008 after three years in the role of Executive Director. I have been privileged to work closely with the Board of Management, but particularly with Rachel Hawkins, Jan Anderson and Kieran Broome who have been strong guiding forces and tireless workers on the Board of Management. Their leadership during this year and their resolve to serve the best interests of members has been inspiring.

Our operational performance would not have been possible without the continuing hard work of our team at the office. Sharyn Hillas, Carole Cherry, Linda Cupitt (till December) and most recently, Peter Bothams keep all the wheels turning and constantly amaze me with the innovative ideas, reliability and ability to get the job done on time, on budget and to everyone's satisfaction.

Thank you, it has been a privilege being a member of your community.

Nicole Hastie
Executive Director

Treasurer's Report

For the 2008 financial year, OT AUSTRALIA Qld posted a loss after tax of \$2137. At the end of the financial year members' funds totalled \$307230.

Income

In 2008, income increased by \$62953 over 2007. The main sources of income for the year were membership fees, interest on investments, newsletter and website advertising, professional development seminars and the conference. Income from PD events and the conference totalled \$143424.

Membership fees collected decreased in real terms over the previous year; i.e. we attracted less members; with an overall decrease in membership income of \$14160. Newsletter income also decreased this year by \$2830. However this was offset by reduced expenses which will be dealt with later in the report.

Expenditure

The most significant expenditure items continue to be staff, the costs of maintaining office premises, telephone, postage and member services including the newsletter, mentor program, awards and the professional development program. These costs remained within expected parameters.

As reported above, changes in publication and distribution of the newsletter lowered costs this year by \$9703.

Expenses associated with PD events and the conference totalled \$121177.

Another item worth noting is the increased expense this year relating to prizes. The increase related to the costs associated with the board travelling to all events for the presentation of prizes and at the same time incorporating regional visits to members. Also the increased expense relating to the mentor program indicates the further costs associated with this member service.

Financial Management

The financial management of the association is the responsibility of the Board of Management. This responsibility is primarily supervised by the Treasurer and managed on a day to day basis by the Executive Director. The Board reviews profit and loss statements and balance sheet statements monthly, as well as financial analyses for profitability and liquidity.

Also this year, the Board developed and adopted a delegations policy that provides further accountabilities for financial management.

Auditor

Our auditor, Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty Ltd were previously known as Robertsons Chartered Accounts and have conducted our audit for several years. I commend their detailed report to you.

Jessica Glide
Treasurer/Secretary

Professional Development Manager's Report

The 2007-2008 year has been an exciting and productive period for the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program area of OT AUSTRALIA Qld. In August 2007, a Professional Development Reference Group (PDRG) was established to provide an overview and direction to the CPD program. The strategic goal of the group was to dramatically increase the percentage of Occupational Therapists attending OT AUSTRALIA Qld CPD activities.

The original PDRG was chaired by OT AUSTRALIA Qld Board Member, Bobbie Walker, with other members being Caroline Hennessey (OT AUSTRALIA Qld Board Member), Nicole Hastie (Executive Director), Tamara Hogan (Regional member) and Linda Cupitt (Professional Development Officer). The group met regularly and analysed trends and services that had been offered to members and discussed what was required to improve access and variety in the program.

At the end of 2007, the Professional Development Officer, Linda Cupitt who was working .2FTE resigned from her position. We extend our thanks and gratitude to Linda for her good work in maintaining the professional development program of OT AUSTRALIA Qld.

In November 2007, a proposal was submitted to the Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland to support the position of a full time Professional Development Manager. The proposal was accepted and a joint agreement was reached for the position to be coordinated by OT AUSTRALIA Qld from March 2007 until June 2009. Struan Ferguson from the Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland accepted an invitation to provide input and support to the newly created position by being a member of the PDRG.

The PDRG members now comprise Caroline Hennessey (Chair), Peter Bothams (Professional Development Manager), Struan Ferguson (Occupational Therapist Board of Qld), Tamara Hogan (regional member) and Suzanne Jesser (OT AUSTRALIA Qld Board member). Much gratitude and thanks is extended to past OT AUSTRALIA Board member and PDRG Chair Bobbie Walker for her professionalism and innovation in driving the PDRG.

Amidst the establishment of this position and an analysis of the CPD Needs of all Occupational Therapists across Queensland, OT AUSTRALIA Qld continued to deliver its education program during 2007-2008.

The highlight of the 2007-2008 calendar was the 9th State Conference – “Beefing up the Evidence” held at Yeppoon in Central Queensland. The conference attracted a diverse range of speakers and over one hundred Occupational Therapists from around the state made the journey to Yeppoon to “Beef it Up”. The networking and social aspects of the conference received the most welcome feedback with thanks to the meaty social events on offer.

A summary of the workshops from 2007-2008 is below:

WORKSHOP NAME	DATE	No. participants
Anatomy Skills Refresher Course	July 28	10
Winning Presenter Skills	August 22	12
State Conference (Yeppoon)	September 21-22	128
Major Home Modifications (Yeppoon)	September 20	17
Soft Tissue Workshop (Townsville)	December 2	6
Oedema Management	March 14-15	19
Oedema Management	April 18-19	20
Mental Health and Paediatric Symposium	June 4-5	114
Oedema Management	June	20

It is with sadness that we say bon-voyage to OT AUSTRALIA Qld Executive Director Nicole Hastie who has been instrumental in providing guidance to the professional development program and has been an enthusiastic driver of recent reform. Her energy and insightfulness will be missed. We

extend our thanks and gratitude to Sharyn Hillas and Carole Cherry for their superb organisational skills and ongoing support.

It is an exciting time for the delivery of continuing professional development for Occupational Therapists in Queensland. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland to deliver an innovative CPD program for the remainder of 2008-2009 and hope to see you at one of the many events on offer.

Peter Bothams
Professional Development Manager

Caroline Hennessey
Chair – Professional Development Reference Group

Membership Reference Group Report

Participation in the association is vital to the growth and prosperity of the profession. The Membership Reference Group was established in response to downward trends in our membership participation figures over the last 6 years. A review of our activities and operations identified that our membership numbers; over an extended time; are not increasing proportionately with the numbers of registered OTs in Queensland which is growing at a rate of 10 percent annually. This downward or stagnant growth is not unique to us and is being documented across most industry sectors and professional bodies globally. However, rather than be complacent about this trend, our Board resolved to reverse this trend over the next few years.

The MRG is primarily concerned with both improved membership retention and recruitment. Whilst we recruit good numbers of new members each year, we do not reach all potential members and we continue to lapse unacceptable numbers of existing members. This keeps our overall membership numbers relatively equal each year. To investigate the possible reasons for this, the MRG embarked on a series of discussions with members to ascertain key association strengths and weaknesses they perceived.

From consultation with member groups, individual members and a focus group of representative members, the Membership Reference Group synthesised data about members' needs and proposed eight strategic directions to maximise value for members and promote increased membership. The directions are to:

1. Promote what we already do;
2. Adopt successful ideas from other associations;
3. Promote the profession of occupational therapy to the public;
4. Enable participation for those who are "time short";
5. Cater for members in mental health and generic roles;
6. Strengthen our role in professional development;
7. Provide corporate benefits, and;
8. Promote pride in our association.

These eight strategic directions are a mix of improving current services and implementing new innovative ways of meeting members' needs. The Board embraced these initiatives and supported the MRG's proposal to employ a Membership Development Officer to develop and implement an operational approach to these strategies. Economically viable, pragmatically viable and sustainable initiatives must be tailored to meet these objectives. Petrina Smith joined the Association in late June, to bring these plans to fruition in 2009.

In the last quarter of the reporting period, the MRG worked on two specific strategies with the endorsement of the Board. The first was our "Lapsed Member Strategy" designed to firstly understand the reasons members choose not to re-join and secondly develop responses to that feedback to retain as many current members as possible.

The second strategy adopted was our "Champions Strategy" and this strategy was born out of the belief that our senior OTs critical to the profession and must be engaged in meaningful ways with the professional body. Over the next year a number of initiatives will be implemented to ensure we harness the incredible experience and support of our senior practitioners and work with them in a way that represents real value to them and our membership.

The first challenge for the coming year will be to build on the work we have been doing with students in their final year of study and educate them about the value of membership. New graduate membership needs to be dynamic, deliver targeted and focussed services and support. A challenge that makes us feel old at times, but one we cannot ignore, as these young professionals are the future of our profession and deserve our mentorship. Their enthusiasm for the profession is infectious and we are looking forward to welcoming them all into our OT world.

I would like to thank Petrina Smith, who has already made a great difference to our efforts. Fellow MRG member, Kieran Broome for his vision, commitment and work on this group and also, all of the members we have spoken to about their membership – what they love and what they don't. Thank you.

Jan Anderson
MRG Chairperson

Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative

OT AUSTRALIA Qld has been an active participant of the QOTFC since 2004, and we are proud of our ongoing commitment to ensuring adequate and quality placements for our future members.

The QOTFC strives to integrate professional ownership between universities, professional bodies, major employers and OTs to meet occupational therapy fieldwork placement needs and those of the workforce.

Major achievements of the QOTFC for 2008 include the following:

- **Website launch**

The QOTFC launched the website in 2007. Make sure you see the latest edition of the Mental Health Clinical Educators Resource Kit. Hard copies of this are available from fieldwork staff at each university. <http://www.qotfc.edu.au/mental-health/index.html>

- **Creating Well Practitioners and Organisations Workshops**

Dr Loretta do Rozario provided two single day workshops on Creating Well Communities, Organisations and Practitioners on 29 and 30 April 2008 in Brisbane and Townsville. These workshops were very well attended and aimed to provide a reflective day for practitioners in mental health and other areas of practice in relation to managing workload, burnout, stress, professional and organizational matters.

Conference submissions:

Presentations:

- Rodger, S., Thomas, Y., Fitzgerald, C., McBryde, C., Dickson, D., Edwards, A., Broadbridge, J., & Hawkins, R. (2008) Evaluation of a project to engage occupational therapy clinicians in fieldwork. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 71(6), 248-252
- Thomas, Y., Dickson, D., Broadbridge, J. Hooper, L., Hawkins, R., Edwards, A. & McBryde, C. (2007). Benefits and challenges of supervising occupational therapy fieldwork students: Supervisors' perspectives. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 54, Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, 54, S2-12
- Rodger, S., Thomas, Y., Dickson, D., McBryde, C., Broadbridge, J., Hawkins, R. & Edwards, A. (2007). Putting students to work: Valuing fieldwork placements as a mechanism for recruitment and shaping the future occupational therapy workforce. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 54, Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, 54, S94-S97

Posters:

- Edwards, A., Rodger, S., Thomas, Y., McBride, C., Hawkins, R., Broadbridge, J., and Greber, C. (2008) Growing our mental health workforce. A poster presented at Creating the Future, OT Australia Conference, Melbourne 2008.
- Edwards, A., Rodger, S., Thomas, Y., McBride, C., Hawkins, R., Broadbridge, J., and Greber, C. (2008) Looking for resources for clinical educators! A poster presented at Creating the Future, OT Australia Conference, Melbourne 2008.

Presentations:

- Sue Holley along with Brianna Parker and Sarah Langford (students) presented QOTFC Mental Health Project at the OT AUSTRALIA Qld Paediatric and Mental Health Symposium on 4 June 2008.
- Sylvia Rodger presented on "QOTFC: Innovation in OT Fieldwork" – Queensland Health, Allied Oral Health Clinical Education forum, 25 August 2008. Brisbane, Qld.

Mental Health Fieldwork Project

This Queensland Health funded state-wide project culminated in a symposium recently held in Brisbane. The symposium focussed on Mental Health Placement Provision, Support and Options. Thank you to those members who participated and ensured its success.

Corporate Identity

You will note that the QOTFC now has a wonderful corporate logo. The QOTFC use this logo on all communication to ensure our professional identity is splashed across the world. Thank you to those members who contributed photos to help brighten up our website.

New additions to the QOTFC team

This year the QOTFC has welcomed Bronwyn Pringle who will replace Anne-Marie Hunter in providing invaluable support to the collaborative. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Anne-Marie Hunter for her efficient support throughout the year.

Thank you

Acknowledgement goes to the following individual members or stakeholders who have made a significant contribution to the QOTFC this year: Project officers, Sue Holley – Mental Health project, David Dickson – Papers, Liz Springfield – Mental Health project evaluation officer.

The QOTFC are most grateful to Queensland Health for their ongoing support of the QOTFC initiatives.

On a personal note, I am grateful for the opportunity to work with such an inspirational and effective group of amazing clinicians who make up the QOTFC. Their passion and enthusiasm for fieldwork in Queensland and beyond astounds me. The outcomes that the group achieves with the available resources is incredible and I know that in future, the collaborative efforts of the group will positively impact the profession for years to come – that is, enough and great placements for our students.

Rachel Hawkins

OT AUSTRALIA Qld – University and Board liaison representative

Special Interest and Regional Group Reports

Southside Paediatric SIG

Convenor: Sarah Rickert

During the 2007-2008 the group worked to improve the quality of speakers at meetings and encouraged the sharing of responsibility for hosting meetings. More members were willing to take on administrative roles and the group as a whole recognise the challenged of maintaining group numbers.

Burns and Trauma SIG

Convenors: Amber Jones and Giovanna Tornatore

The Burns and Trauma SIG was re-established during the financial year offering bi-monthly meetings. Regional members have the option of participating via video conference link-up. Meetings have included educational presentations and a clinical problem solving session/forum has been established within the meetings. The focus for 2008/09 will be to continue to provide good quality educations sessions and discussions based on contemporary service delivery.

Driving SIG

Convenor: Kerry Mallon

The Driving SIG continued to meet regularly throughout the year. The group continued to liaison with Queensland Transport and Queensland Health regarding notification procedures for drivers with medical conditions, the assessment of drivers with medical conditions. The group is awaiting the outcome of a submission for funding to train OTs in driver assessment. Biannual meetings between driver trained OTs, driving instructors and vehicle modifiers have been established with the aim of improving communication between stakeholders, services to clients and collaboration when meeting with Queensland Transport. A driving information brochure has been compiles for use by OT AUSTRALIA Qld. Professional development events during the year have included a presentation by Jacqui Little on the UQDrive program; Driving and Diabetes was presented by Renae Knight and Kerry Mallon will present a poster at the National Conference. Amanda Bewert compiled a comprehensive vehicle modification list and Andrew Hinckley compiled an information package on driver assessment in Queensland for NSW and Victorian OT driving assessor training courses. A driving workshop for driver trained OTs to update skills and information is being planned for 2008/09.

Mackay Regional Group

Convenor: Nicole Boccalatte

The OT AUSTRALIA Qld Mackay Regional Group has had an eventful 2007/2008! This year saw a change of the group convenor (Wendy Allan) and secretary (Claire Woods) and the re-introduction of the social convenor (Caroline Bailey) position in our region.

Monthly meetings held at different workplaces across Mackay have helped to build networks between the ever growing Occupational Therapy community in our region.

The group has managed to draw a regular and enthusiastic crowd of OTs from across the region at monthly meetings, as well as offering opportunities to entice more members to the group by inviting non-OT AUSTRALIA Qld members to social functions.

Our aim this year has been to increase numbers to assist in professional development which has been addressed by each site providing an in-service increase knowledge on a variety of topics – including services provided by each organisation, specific diagnoses, and special interests. Additionally we have had presenters external to the profession, provide information to assist with our practice. Thanks goes to the Library staff of Mackay Base Hospital for their time.

Our social convenor Caroline Bailey has had an excellent year by organising social events such as the very successful OT Cocktail Party and coffee and cake. The OT Cocktail Party was aimed at professional networking and lifting the OT profile within the Mackay district. Attendance included clinical OTs, rural OTs, doctors, dieticians, physiotherapists, local equipment providers and of course significant others! She has continued to do this role so effortlessly since the beginning of the new financial year by organising a coffee event, social drinks and the upcoming OT Week breakfast.

In addition there has been another change in leadership of the group in the region, Nicole Boccalatte is now the group convenor and Claire Woods had to unfortunately relinquish her role as secretary which has now been filled by Claire Anderson.

Planned events are undecided upon Christmas event and opening further professional development activities for the remainder of the year include various OT Week orientated for 2009 with movement science approach education being on the cards.

Gold Coast Regional Group

Convenors: Melanie Roberts and Lauren Frame

In response to a survey the group began rotating meeting times between different days of the week. This has led to increase attendance at meetings this year. Speakers have included Diane Pendergast from the Office of the Adult Guardian. The group is considering offering half and one day workshops twice a year. The group would like to thank Lauren frame, Kellie-Anne Sullivan, Tanya Allomes and Melanie Roberts for their contribution to the group in organising presentations during the year, and also thank Anu Thakur, previous convenor who retired in August 2007. The group will again organise an OT Week breakfast and survey members for ideas on topics for meetings in the 2008/09 year.

Soft Tissue

Convenor: Peta James

Members of the Soft Tissue SIG have been working on a Soft Tissue Position Statement for the Association and discussing the potential for a certification process for OTs trained in Soft Tissue in Queensland. Teleconference of meetings has led to increased participation among regional members who can now be actively involved in presentations and discussions. The group would like to acknowledge a core group of members who have consistently attended meetings, Kieran Broome, Fiona Luke, Peta James, Alison Noble, Kerry Stingel, Troy De Cruz and Denise Stewart. During the 2008/09 the group will be actively involved in the Work and Soft Tissue Symposium, Introductory Soft Tissue Management Courses at The University of Queensland and the Sunshine Coast University. Meetings will continue bimonthly, with teleconference facilities available to regional members.