



association for the wellbeing
of children in healthcare



AWCH

Annual Report

2008/09

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About AWOCH



The Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare advocates for a holistic, family oriented approach to child and adolescent healthcare, and works to ensure the unique and specific non-medical, psychological, social and behavioural needs of children and their families in the Australian health care system are recognised and met.

Objectives

- ① Promote change and maintain policy and practice to minimize the distress for children and young people in health facilities
- ① Provide information and resource services to families, health professionals, community members and students
- ① Provide appropriate planning of continuum of care of children and young people who use the health system
- ① Provide national advocacy, consultations on policy, practice and facility development in child health
- ① Ensure health facilities are family and child friendly

Major Achievements 08-09

- ① Emergency Department Waiting Area Project completed and report coming soon
- ① Launch of Standards for the Care of Children and Adolescents in Healthcare http://www.awch.org.au/pdfs/child_health_nationalstandards_media.pdf
- ① 2008 Healthcare for Kids Conference http://www.awch.org.au/conf_2008.htm
- ① NSW State Award for the AWCH Ward Grandparent Scheme http://www.awch.org.au/pdfs/WGS_Seniors_Week_Awards_09.pdf
- ① Her Excellency Quentin Bryce becomes AWCH Patron <http://www.awch.org.au/about.html>

Helping You Help Kids



AWCH advocates for a family-oriented approach to the care of children, acknowledging that families are the main support and strength for children and young people when they are sick or have a chronic illness or condition.

Helping Families

AWCH helps families. How? Here's an example! This is the support provided to a mother of a 3 year old who was going into hospital for a tonsillectomy.

The mother is still breastfeeding her 7 month old and wanted to stay overnight with both children as she felt this was in the best interests of both children. The hospital has a children's ward. The hospital has suggested the mother finds alternative arrangements as they do not want the breastfeeding baby to stay in the ward.

AWCH Members were asked what approach hospitals take to accommodate a family with these particular needs. Any information on current practice was sought.

Helping Professionals

AWCH Helps Professionals in the Healthcare Industry. Here's some of the feedback we received.

"Many thanks for your most impressive research - no wonder AWCH has such a good name!"

"Thank you so much for all the very useful information you are sending. I really appreciate it and I have already had cause to use this service."

"Just wanted to say thank you for this listing. It is wonderful! We love your new brochures on resources for families!"

"Thanks for your assistance. I have contacted Kids Xpress and they appear to be a useful tool for us to access. "

Thankyou AWCH members for your help

AWCH Ward Grandparent Scheme



State Award Winners

The Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare (AWCH) is proud to announce that the Ward Grandparent Scheme is a state award winner in the Community Service/Volunteering category of the 2009 NSW Seniors Week Achievement Awards.

NSW Seniors Week is funded by the NSW Government and organised by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) to thank and recognise older people across the State for the contributions

they provide to the community. It was an excellent opportunity to recognise and thank our volunteers for the work and services they provide. Our 'ward grandparents' have shown great enthusiasm, commitment and dedication in giving their time to hospitalised children and providing a loving pair of arms and a familiar, reassuring face when families cannot be with them for the duration of their stay in hospital. The award was accepted by AWCH National President, Professor David Bennett and Dorothy Tanner, who has been a volunteer for the scheme since 1988.

The Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare (AWCH) was started in 1973 by parents and health professionals who had a concern about the emotional and social needs of children during their stay in hospital. Apart from the AWCH Hospital Ward Grandparents Scheme activities include the provision of information through the AWCH Library, linking families to other families whose child has a similar condition through the Paediatric Support Link service, resources to prepare children for hospitalisation, advocacy and support for parents and professionals who are having difficulty in regard to a child's health care, quality of care or the facilities available as well as information and resources to assist in advocating for change in facilities or practice approach.

Welcome to Sutherland Hospital Our newest ward grandparent scheme

Thank you to all our wonderful ward grandparent volunteers and the hospital volunteer coordinators

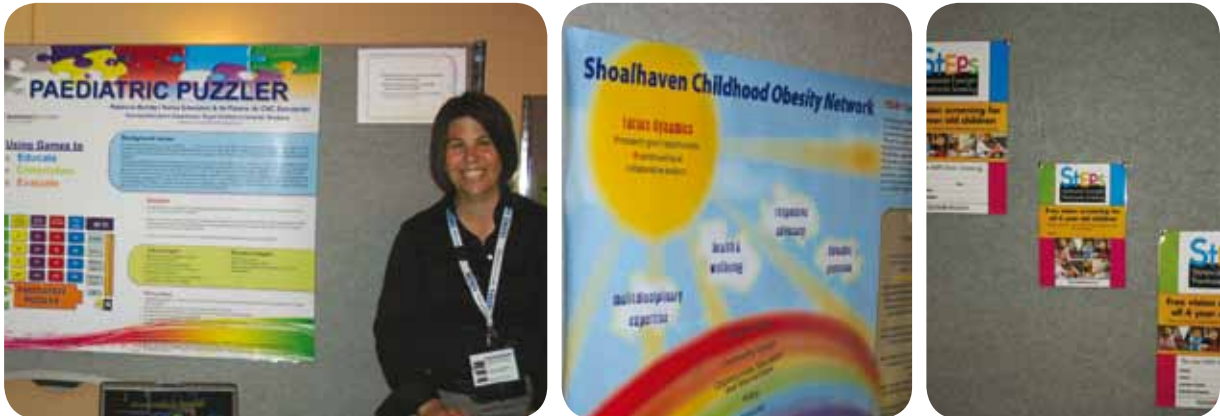
Child Health Conference 2009



Healthcare for Kids: The People, The Map &
The Measure

Co-convened by Children's Hospitals Australasia (CHA)
and the Association for the Wellbeing of Children in
Healthcare (AWCH)

Poster Presentations



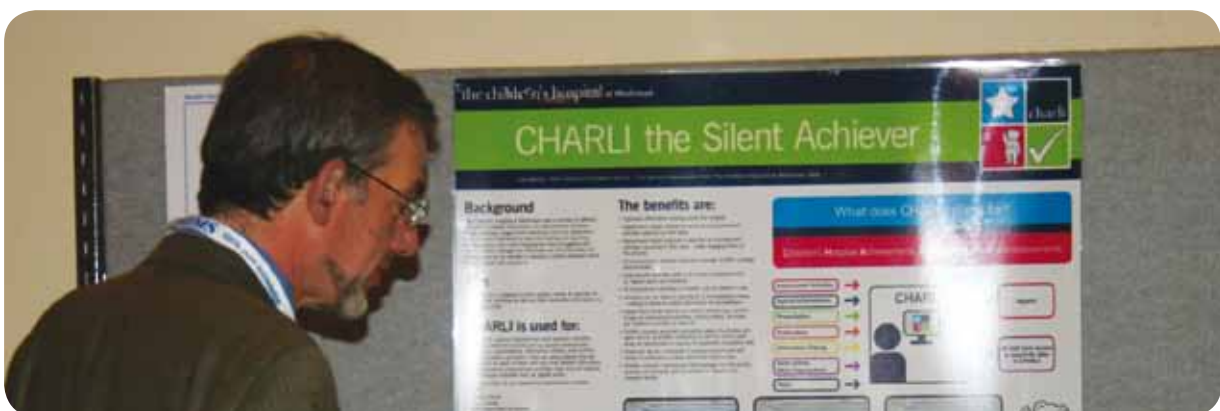
Feedback from delegates

"I found the parent/young person sessions particularly powerful."

"Food excellent. Dinner great fun."

"Always the most influential and memorable and challenging sessions are those presented by children and their families about their learnings from their experiences."

"This was the best conference I have ever attended! Unfortunately I could only come for the first day but I found the opening speakers interesting & inspiring. I felt that it built an important bridge between clinicians & patients. I had to travel a fair way but it was worth it & I have recommended it to my colleagues. Well done on a fascinating day."



Other AWCH Activities



ARACY Commitment to Young Australians

The Commitment to Young Australians is a statement of principles to guide ARACY member organisations in their decision-making and actions related to children and young people. AWCH is a signatory to The Commitment.



Patron Quentin Bryce AC

AWCH is pleased to announce that Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, has accepted the position of Patron of the Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare.

ABC Radio's Life Matters

Professor David Bennett discusses the National Standards for the Care of Children and Adolescents in Health Services on ABC Radio National. Listen online at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/lifematters>.

Standards Launch

The launch of the National Standards for the Care of Children and Adolescents in Health Services took place during the Health Care For Kids National Conference Manly Pacific Hotel Sydney November 18 2008. View the standards online at <http://www.awch.org.au/media.php>.

Q&A With Our New Chief Executive Officer



Michelle Sloane

Welcome Michelle, can you tell us a bit about yourself?

I started my working life in the early 1980s as a psychologist and then took a job as a personnel manager with Unilever. This job marked the beginning of my career as a human resources professional. For over twenty five years I worked as an executive manager, consultant and trainer with a wide variety of organisations in both the private and public sectors. During this time I established what has become a successful management consulting practice specialising in human resource management.

I have worked extensively in the areas of change management, organisational analysis and design, human resource management, program management, stakeholder engagement as well as leadership development and training

What attracted you to working with awch?

AWCH is an enormously important organisation. For over 30 years it has been campaigning for the rights of children, young people and their families in healthcare settings.

AWCH has been instrumental in securing many advances in the care of children in healthcare such as flexible visiting hours for parents, carers and siblings, increased involvement of parents in all aspects of a child's care in hospitals and so on. However, despite these very significant advances AWCH is unknown to most people.

Much of what AWCH has achieved is taken for granted and it is assumed by many that these things have always been available to parents. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that many of the things we take for granted such as dedicated paediatric wards in hospitals are being eroded as increasing pressure is brought to bear on the healthcare and hospital system due to tight budgets and the need for beds.

The work of AWCH has never been more important. Not only do we see what appears to be a continuing national decline in the number of dedicated paediatric units in hospitals but we are also witnessing a loss of focus on the needs of children specifically the psychosocial needs – such as play - which are so important in a child's recovery from illness.

I am very keen to work with the Board to strongly advocate for the needs of children in healthcare and to ensure that the voices of children and young people are heard as we enter a period of considerable change in the hospital and healthcare system in Australia.

What plans do you have for awch in 2009/10?

Oh....there are so many things I want to do!

I am very lucky to join a small but very professional team at AWCH. Anne Cutler and Rowena Sebastian are the backbone of AWCH! Together we are preparing a detailed plan of activities for the year ahead, details of which will be placed on our website very soon.

However, my goals for the next 12 months are:

To broaden our funding base – we cannot advance the wellbeing of children and young people in healthcare without improving our level of funding which will in turn enable us to take our programs and services to a wider community of parents, carers and professionals working with children.

To raise our profile within the community and with key State and Commonwealth government stakeholders – to ensure we have a strong voice in the current conversations occurring around Australia concerning the future of healthcare and hospitals

To forge stronger links with young people and with indigenous children – I am keen to ensure that AWCH works closely with young people and that their issues and concerns are well understood; in relation to indigenous Australians it is critical that we understand the specific needs of indigenous children in the healthcare system. I would like to partner with relevant indigenous organisations to ensure the best possible healthcare outcomes for these children.

During the months ahead, I look forward to working with all our members and supporters as we manage the current issues while building a strong and secure base for the future work of AWCH.

Meet the Team



Michelle Sloane
Chief Executive Officer

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Anne Cutler
Program Manager

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Rowena Sebastian
Communications Officer

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Our Vision

The best possible healthcare for children and young people

Our Mission

To advance the wellbeing of children and young people in healthcare

Thankyou 😊

to all our volunteers



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