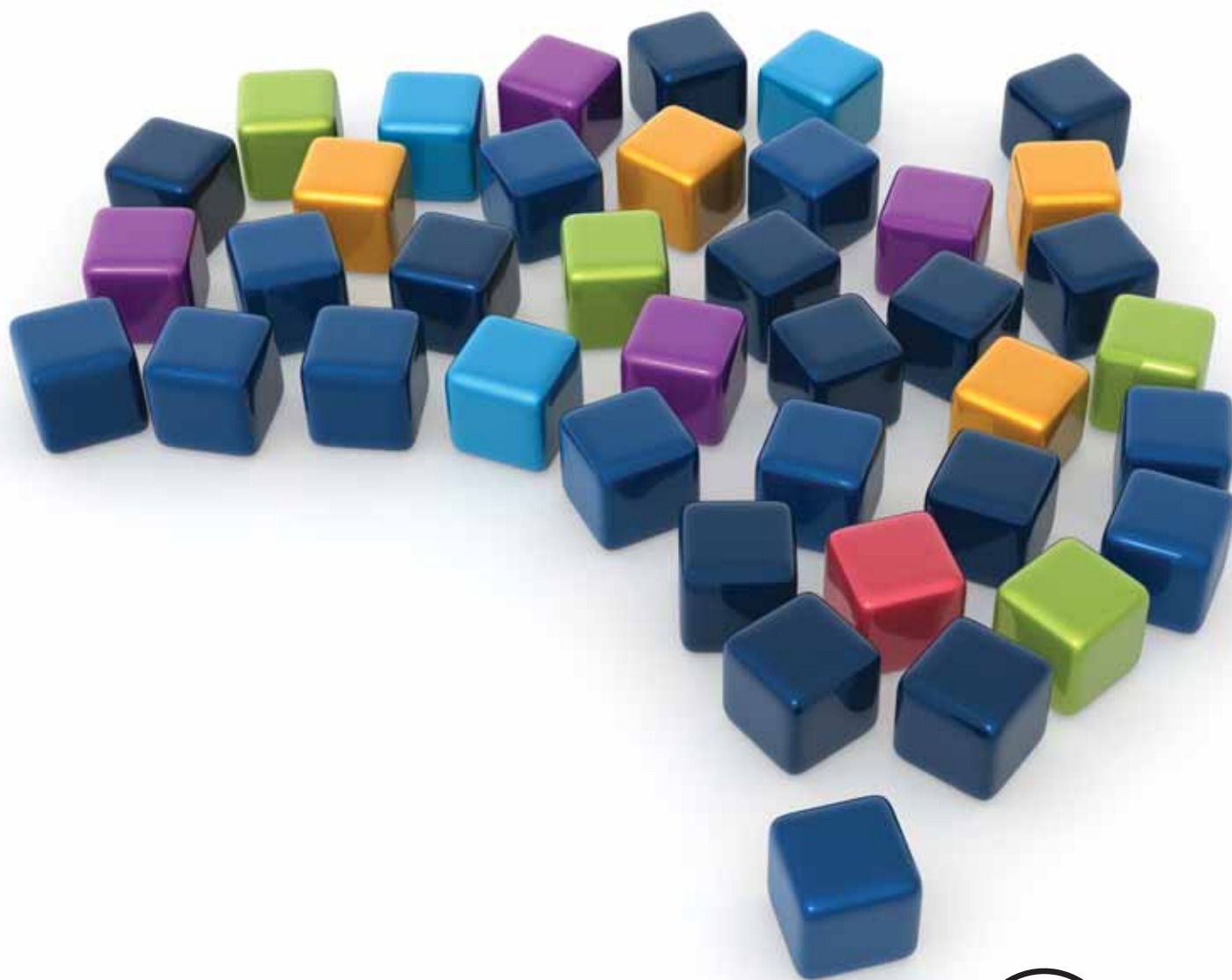
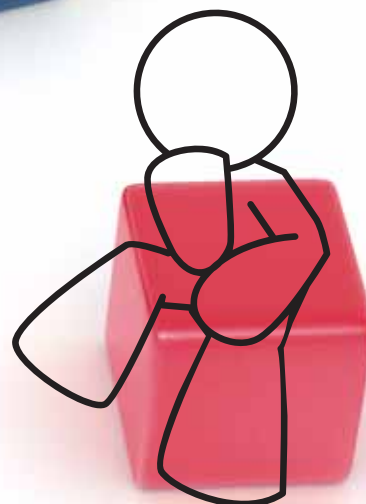




National Prescribing Service Limited



ANNUAL REPORT 2007–8



Celebrating 10 years of **thinking differently** about medicines

NPS and quality use of medicines

We are here to enable people to make the best decisions about medicines – quality use of medicines (QUM).

This can mean taking more or less of a medicine, or none at all.

It can include prescription, non-prescription, vitamin, herbal or natural medicines.

It is about using (or not using) medicines appropriately, safely and effectively.

Evidence based information, tailored for individuals, enables people to make the best decisions.

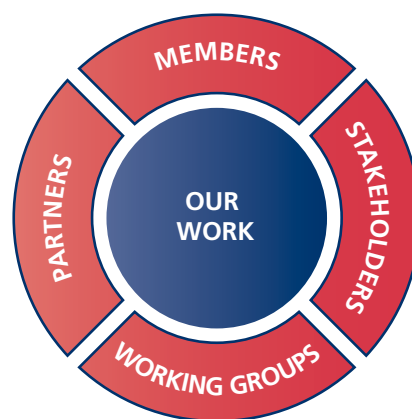
NPS's rigorous and independent information, programs and systems ensure that people consider quality use of medicines in their day to day and long term decisions about medicines.

Our messages reach mass audiences through diverse channels, as well as being targeted to specific audiences where indepth information is needed to make decisions.

Our members

NPS works in a highly collaborative model, which helps us capture and leverage the best ways to reach and appeal to our wide range of audiences. It also provides a strong base for developing new strategies and knowledge and creating change that is embedded in the practice environment or community.

This involves working closely with our member organisations, working groups, industry organisations, consumer organisations and government.



Members:

Australasian College of Dermatologists
Australasian Medical Writers Association
Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists
Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists
Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
Australian Council of Social Service
Australian Council on the Ageing
Australian Dental Association
Australian General Practice Network
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs
Australian Healthcare & Hospitals Association
Australian Lung Foundation
Australian Medical Association
Australian Nurse Practitioner Association
Australian Nursing Federation
Australian Pensioners and Superannuants Federation
Australian Postgraduate Federation in Medicine
Australian Practice Nurses Association
Australian Private Hospitals Association
Australian Self Medication Industry
Carers Australia
Chronic Illness Alliance

Consumers' Health Forum of Australia
Diabetes Australia
Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
Generic Medicines Industry Association
Health Consumers of Rural and Remote Australia
Medicines Australia
National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
National Asthma Council Australia
National Heart Foundation of Australia
NSW Therapeutic Advisory Group Inc
Optometrists Association Australia
Palliative Care Australia
Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
Pharmacy Guild of Australia
Royal Australasian College of Physicians
Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
Royal College of Nursing, Australia
Rural Doctors Association of Australia
Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia
Therapeutic Guidelines Limited
Victorian Medical Postgraduate Foundation

Who we are

National Prescribing Service Limited is an independent Australian organisation that identifies and resolves challenges around the way medicines are used, to bring the health benefits we expect from them.

Our work

We create and implement practical solutions that bring to life the quality use of medicines goals of Australia's National Medicines policy.

Working with our networks of members and stakeholders across many sectors, we create positive, measurable change in the way medicines decisions are made.

How we do it

Our rigorous, scientific approach delivers information, services and systems that help people make the best decisions about when and how to use medicines for better health and wellbeing.

We do this by:

- identifying issues around medicines and researching audience needs, barriers and enablers
- designing evidence-based programs to address issues
- collaborating with our stakeholders across industry and consumer sectors on design and delivery
- delivering our programs to a diverse range of health professionals and consumers, including disadvantaged groups and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- working in partnership with peak industry organisations
- evaluating our programs and using this to build the evidence base about best practice.

Our work is innovative: [we think differently about medicines](#) and challenge our audiences to do so.



Who we are for

We aim for better health and economic outcomes for individuals and the nation; to do this, we connect with health professionals, communities, consumers, industry and government.

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75% of health professionals now use *Australian Prescriber* to inform prescribing decisions.

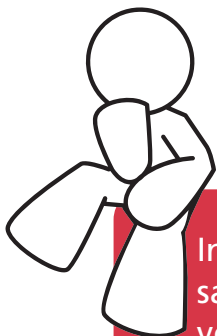


There has been a fall in antibiotic use, improved control of blood pressure and diabetes, and more use of lower doses of proton pump inhibitors since our work began.

Thinking differently about medicines – this year's highlights



Approximately 11,000 GPs participate in our programs each year.



In 2007–08 we reported savings for the previous year of \$58,793,293 from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, leading to 10-year savings of \$397 million. Savings came from reduced use of some medicines and more optimal prescribing of others, leading to better treatment and health outcomes.



We have delivered positive health impacts: for example, following our diabetes programs, increased use of metformin was estimated to equate to about 3,000 extra patients being treated, 231 myocardial infarctions prevented, 370 premature deaths averted and 1,719 life years saved.



6.8 million Australians were reached in NPS national awareness campaigns this year.

We are able to demonstrate better awareness of quality use of medicines among older people, multicultural communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Our stakeholders have given us very high approval ratings and tens of thousands of people access around 100,000 pages of NPS website information each month.



Highlights and achievements

Our work with health professionals

NPS works with health professionals to deliver messages on therapeutic topics through a range of contacts, from one-on-one educational visits and small group sessions, through to pre-eminent publications, case studies, clinical audits and pharmaceutical decision support tools.

Therapeutic topics

NPS focused on a number of priority health areas for medicines use in its activities with health professionals.

- We completed programs on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and analgesics in chronic pain.
- We commenced three major programs: In osteoporosis we focused on adequate physical activity, calcium and vitamin D in prevention and treatment, encouraged use of anti-osteoporotic drugs when needed after fracture, and discussed concordance and avoidance of adverse effects. In type 2 diabetes we looked at the importance of lifestyle interventions, highlighted the benefits of early initiation of insulin, and discussed emerging evidence of adverse effects of thiazolidinediones. The *Selective use of antibiotics* program was conducted in parallel with the *Common colds need common sense* community campaign.
- We also provided information on heart failure and long acting beta₂ agonists and inhaled corticosteroids in asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Our ongoing programs for quality use of medicines for management of heart failure include use of medicines with proven survival benefits, careful dosing of medicines, avoidance of medicines that may exacerbate heart failure, and patient self-management.

Activities with GPs

NPS works directly with GPs in many ways, including one-on-one educational visits, case studies and audits.

This year over 50% of Australian GPs participated in an NPS activity, which equates to around 23,000 instances of GPs participating, with many undertaking more than one activity. Educational activities included:

- 10,929 educational visits to GPs, delivered in partnership with the divisions of general practice network.

- 3,738 case study activities
- 3,830 self-audit activities, which reviewed care for around 76,000 patients.

Activities with pharmacists

- There were 4,783 instances of pharmacists participating in NPS activities.
- Self-audit activities were redesigned in the *Pharmacy Practice Review* to provide useful practice tools.
- Most graduate pharmacists undertook an NPS *Pharmacy Practice Review* self-audit in their first year of practice.
- There was an increased uptake of small group learning.
- Pharmacy technicians gave positive feedback about the *Pharmaceutical Society of Australia Self-Care Program on Generic Medicines*, run in collaboration with NPS.

Activities with nurses

- Over 900 NPS drug use evaluation (DUE) toolkits on hypnotics and antipsychotic medications were accessed. Almost half of participants were nurses. Other participants included pharmacists, students, academics, facilitators and other health professionals.
- More than 800 practice nurses participated in diabetes and chronic pulmonary disease programs.

Activities in hospitals

- In partnership with Therapeutic Advisory Groups, we supported drug use evaluation in 62 hospitals in the management of acute post-operative pain, resulting in better use of pain management tools. We began a second DUE with 49 hospitals to improve medication use after discharge for people with acute coronary syndrome.
- NPS has developed electronic data collection tools for participating hospitals to increase efficiency in conducting drug use evaluation activities.

Highlights
over 10 years

1998



NPS registered
with ASIC

NPS has 23 member
organisations



Activities with new and emerging prescribers

NPS is working in partnership with the Townsville GP Network, the University of Sydney (Office of Postgraduate Medicine Education) and Charles Darwin University on three separate projects that aim to understand the needs of new and emerging prescribers such as GP registrars, international medical graduates and nurse practitioners. Each project team has undertaken a needs assessment for their specific target audience to gain a better understanding of the most effective way to deliver QUM education to these audiences.

Activities with universities

NPS introduced an updated version of its online prescribing curriculum modules to 12 medical schools and five nurse practitioner schools. Growing the audience for these modules is important as the boundaries in the health workforce blur and more health professionals need to be competent prescribers. We also developed online learning materials to improve medication management for residential aged-care facilities and for dentistry students.

Pharmaceutical decision support and e-health

- NPS released two clinical e-audits during 2007–08: *Optimising drug use in ischaemic heart disease* and *Management of hypertension*, enabling general practitioners to assess their own practice against best practice guidelines.
- NPS completed a research project to evaluate drug interaction decision support in the prescribing and dispensing software applications used by health professionals. The results showed variability and shortcomings and we therefore made recommendations for improvements to publishers and software vendors.

- NPS held a national forum on the use of general practice clinical data for quality improvement, especially for quality prescribing in general practice. The forum was attended by a diverse range of local and international experts, and the outcomes included key recommendations to overcome some of the barriers to more widespread use of general practice clinical data.
- NPS is conducting several activities to support QUM in the electronic environment. For example, we are conducting research to assess the safety, quality and usefulness of general practice prescribing software, as e-health is a major strategic development which will have a profound impact on QUM.

Research and development

- NPS undertook a significant collaborative research project on complementary medicines, focusing on the information needs of health professionals, consumers and complementary health practitioners. The full report will be released in late 2008.
- We were awarded an ARC linkage grant, with the University of Sydney, to assist in improving the quality of life, preventing hospitalisation and reducing time away from work or school for people with asthma. The project will research education for health professionals to train people to use asthma inhalers correctly.
- The inaugural National Institute of Clinical Studies/NPS Quality Use of Medicines Fellowship was awarded this year to Mr Kevin McNamara, who is investigating ways to improve blood pressure control in people with cardiovascular disease using primary care collaboration.

Phone information services about medicines issues

NPS phone services help people get expert evidence-based information when they need it.

- The Therapeutic Advice and Information Service (TAIS) phone line responded to around 5,800 questions from health professionals.
- The Medicines Line answered around 20,000 calls this year from consumers, providing them with advice from a pharmacist.
- NPS funded the Adverse Medicines Event Line from September 2007. The service answered 942 enquiries from health professionals and consumers to June 2008.



NPS News and Prescribing Practice Review published

1999

First GP Clinical Audits; NPS Facilitators appointed: educational visiting begins



Highlights and achievements

Publications for health professionals and consumers

NPS publications give people authoritative, evidence-based information that enables best practice decision making about medicines.

Our publications for health professionals

Australian Prescriber, our pre-eminent, internationally respected journal, has the largest distribution of any medical journal in Australia. Figures and feedback include:

- published six times annually, *Australian Prescriber* is distributed to over 51,000 health professionals, with a further 8,000 copies sent overseas
- readers continue to tell us that it helps build their critical appraisal skills
- the *Australian Prescriber* website receives more than 600,000 unique visitors per year, and the average visitor reads 3.5 pages.

NPS News is distributed with *Australian Prescriber* and provides an overview of the evidence behind NPS therapeutic topics for health professionals. A multidisciplinary editorial group oversees the development of each issue, with invited clinicians providing expert review.

Topics covered in *NPS News* this year included inhaled corticosteroids and long-acting beta₂ agonists in asthma and COPD and managing issues associated with generic medicines, such as reducing confusion among consumers and supporting them to make choices between branded and generic medicines.

Prescribing Practice Review provides an overview of current practice in individual therapeutic topics and is distributed to GPs and specialists, pharmacists, dentists, nurse practitioners and others.

GPs receive a confidential report of their own prescribing relevant to the topic to assist them in reflecting on their practice in relation to current prescribing recommendations.

The four editions this year covered chronic heart failure, early use of insulin and oral antidiabetic agents, preventing fractures in osteoporosis, and managing hypertension.

NPS RADAR provides independent information about new drugs that have been listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), and reviews of new evidence about existing drugs expected to be important to health professionals working in primary care. *NPS RADAR* explains the reasons behind new and revised PBS listings and discusses the place

in therapy of new drugs relative to existing therapies. It is published to coincide with new PBS listings when few other sources of independent information are available.

Three print issues are published each year — in April, August and December — and distributed to more than 60,000 Australian health professionals.

NPS RADAR is incorporated into two GP prescribing software packages, with information prompts triggered when the user prescribes a drug reviewed by *NPS RADAR*. It is also available through the NPS website and subscribers receive free email alerts when new reviews are posted on the site. This year, more than 20,000 subscribers received 7 email alerts covering topics such as the withdrawal of lumiracoxib (Prexige), the PBS listing of varenicline (Champix) for smoking cessation, and emerging evidence about adverse effects with rosiglitazone (Avandia) and pioglitazone (Actos).

Publications for consumers

Medicine Update helps consumers to ask the right questions about new medicines. A complementary publication to *NPS RADAR*, *Medicine Update* explores, in plain language, how new medicines compare with existing treatments, who can be prescribed them on the PBS and other lifestyle and non-drug treatments that are available for the relevant condition.

Topics are selected to meet the information needs of consumers; for example, to provide information on a particular quality use of medicines issue, requiring discussion between consumer and health professional. Four issues were published on the NPS website this year containing information about new PBS listings for medicines used for osteoporosis, depression and smoking cessation. Topics are chosen and drafts reviewed by an editorial group comprising health professionals and consumers, and each issue is tested with consumers.

MedicinesTalk, a publication for consumers covering a range of medicine related issues, publishes four seasonal editions each year. Distributed in hard and soft copy consumer groups are encouraged to reproduce its articles and content about wise use of medicines in their own publications.

2000

10,000 NPS activities completed by health professionals



TAIS, phone service begins, 4,500 to 6,000 enquiries per year



Online publishing

A vast amount of information of value to health professionals, community organisations, workplaces, consumers, industry and government was published on the NPS website www.nps.org.au. On average 1,800 visits were made to the site each day.

Increasing demand for factual, authoritative, independent information about medicines means it is more important than ever before that people have access to reliable information sources. In response to this development, a major redesign of the NPS website was commenced to increase exposure to NPS as a preferred source of information.

To date health professional users of the website have told us that their key needs are for professional education, for information about a particular condition or medicine and associated resources, and for keeping up to date with new medicines and medicines news.

Consumers want to be able to find information about medicines and treatment options that are written for them. They also want to know about managing their health and their medicines and to be able to share these resources with others.

Our work with communities

The NPS Community QUM program works in partnership with many community organisations to link with consumer audiences with particular needs.

People with chronic conditions

When it comes to managing chronic conditions, Australians most commonly take a medicine rather than using any other form of treatment.

We are conducting a pilot program, *Moving On*, with Arthritis NSW and the University of New South Wales on self management for people living with chronic conditions.

Four organisations were selected this year to participate in a community partners initiative to reach disadvantaged communities with QUM messages: Arthritis NSW, Arthritis SA, Diabetes Tasmania and the National Heart Foundation. They will start working on initiatives using best practice consumer consultation processes this coming year.

Seniors

Working in collaboration with COTA Partnership and COTA Alliance, we delivered QUM messages to 16,000 older people at 1,000 information sessions, including some targeted to culturally and linguistically diverse groups. Feedback was strong, with most audiences saying their knowledge expanded and confidence grew, and that they had made significant changes since attending these sessions.

In addition, a new peer education module with a focus on chronic conditions has been developed ready for consumer testing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences

The *Good Medicines Better Health* training program aims to increase the QUM knowledge of Aboriginal health care workers in the Kimberley region, Port Lincoln and Melbourne. The initiative was developed with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia.

Culturally and linguistically diverse audiences

New strategic directions were developed in partnership with the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) for initiatives with Italian, Greek, Vietnamese, Chinese and Arabic communities. To educate culturally and linguistically diverse communities on the quality use of medicines, we worked with new modules in Queensland ethnic schools where we reached 1,200 students and their families. We built on existing systems with the Victorian Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) to distribute teacher kits, and also developed new bilingual medicines lists and Q&A resources.

We have also begun work focusing on the needs of people from Arabic-speaking backgrounds. This and other strategies were informed by the advice of our Multicultural Think Tank, a panel of external experts.



First National Medicines Symposium;
first Facilitators' Forum



Highlights and achievements

Connecting with consumer audiences

All Australians need to know how to use quality use of medicines to get better health outcomes.

Our large consumer campaigns reach audiences using direct channels and partner collaborations and through health professionals.

NPS excels at communication — it is how we help influence and promote good decisions about medicines.

We responded to and actively engaged trade and consumer media on QUM issues, achieving a 155% increase in the number of media mentions compared with the previous year.

Our integrated national awareness campaigns had significant impact and won wide recognition. We communicated with and through community organisations, health professionals and consumers to get out strong and consistent messages, for example:

- The *Get to know your medicines* and the *Generic medicines are an equal choice* campaigns reached

4.6 million people and stimulated a 400% increase in calls to the Medicines Line during the first phase and a 150% increase in traffic to the NPS website. By their close, 800,000 consumer and health professional resources had been ordered, more than doubling the previous record. These integrated campaigns used different channels, media and partners to effectively communicate key messages. The NPS campaign was well supported by numerous peak consumer and healthcare organisations.

- NPS won the International Gold Quill Award for excellence in a multiplatform business communication for our *Get to know your medicines* and *Generics are an equal choice* campaigns.
- The annual *Common colds need common sense* campaign reached 6.8 million people. The multifaceted approach is aimed at reducing the use of antibiotics for common colds and included story books for childcare centres, workforce strategies and advertising, and is aimed at reducing the use of antibiotics for common colds.

Major events

NPS brings together medicines experts from around the world every two years, to debate the state of the art in quality use of medicines.

National Medicines Symposium

NPS's fifth biennial 'National Medicines Symposium, QUM: what does it really mean for you? The science, the policy and the practice', was held in Canberra from 14 to 16 May. The symposium was extremely successful:

- It attracted a record 500 delegates from Australia and internationally, from across all parts of the health sector.
- 184 abstracts were submitted and more than 54 media mentions of the symposium were tracked in national media.
- Highlights included presentations from international speakers such as Jean Slutsky, from the US Department of Health and Human Services; Professor Anita Hardon, of the University of Amsterdam; and Rachel Elliott, Lord Trent Professor of Medicines and Health, School of Pharmacy, Faculty of Science, University of Nottingham.
- An international scholarship was awarded to the successful applicant from India, Mr M Surulivel Rajan from India, who also presented on rational drug use.

Senator the Hon. Jan McLucas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, presented the 2008 National QUM Awards at the NMS dinner. The awards recognise the originators of QUM work and highlight their contributions toward achieving better health outcomes for Australians. Winners from each of the seven categories were:

Community QUM Award

Winner: Good Medicines Better Health pilot project, a partnership of the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA), NACCHO and NPS.

Highly commended: The seniors quality use of medicines national peer education program administered by the COTA Partnership and COTA Alliance.

2001

First pharmacy practice audit



First Common colds campaign

common colds need common sense they don't need antibiotics





Health Organisation QUM Award (public and not-for-profit)

Winner: The Veterans’ Medicines Advice and Therapeutics Education Services (Veterans’ MATES), Quality use of medicines program, administered by the Medication Management Section, Policy and Development Division of the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

Highly commended: Safe Medication Practice Unit, Queensland Health.

Health Organisation QUM Award (Private)

Not awarded.

Media QUM Award

Winner: Vital Health magazine, which ran a series of generic medicines features, written for National Pharmacies and presented by Text Pacific Publishing.

Media QUM Award — Trade Media

Winner: Australian Pharmacist, Knowledge in Practice section, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

Student QUM Award

Winner: Ms Lisa Kouladjian, for ‘The importance of weight for calculating doses of renally excreted drugs’, Clinical Pharmacology Department, Royal North Shore Hospital and University of Sydney.

Highly commended: Ms Wern Jing Ding (Jing), for ‘Medication alteration in residential aged care facilities’, GP Partners.

Highly commended: Mr Ian Coombes, for ‘Safe medication practice tutorial program for medical students’, School of Pharmacy, University of Queensland.

NMS 2008 Poster Award

Winner: Medication management issues for the older person — focusing on people from three non-English speaking backgrounds, from Diversity Health and Community Health Services at the Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney.

Highly commended: Patterns of asthma medication use: an Australian population-based longitudinal study, from the Australian Centre for Asthma Monitoring.

Presentations, posters and publications by NPS staff are set out in detail on page 29.



NPS won the International Gold Quill Award for excellence in a multiplatform business communication for our Get to know your medicines and Generics are an equal choice campaigns.

10,000 NPS educational visits

2002



Medicines Line takes 8,500 calls in first year



Report from Dr Janette Randall, NPS Chair

It is a privilege to report to NPS members, having now completed my first year in the role of NPS Chair. And what a year it has been! As NPS goes from strength to strength, so too does the work of many of our partner organisations as we strive to make gains in quality use of medicines.

The National Medicines Symposium held in Canberra in May was testament to the depth and breadth of work in this area, with a record number of attendees treated to enjoyable social functions as well as excellent plenary and breakout groups. Thanks to all who participated.

Having achieved the important milestone of 10 years in the business of QUM, the board this past year has turned its mind and energy to the next 10 years. Working with our staff, we have developed a 10-year strategic plan for NPS, which will see us bring QUM messages to broader audiences through diverse and innovative communication channels. Watch for us on Facebook!

While continuing to do our core work well, we will explore new growth in areas such as medication safety, medication management across the continuum, complementary medicines, and e-health. By 2018, we intend that QUM will be a household concept similar to climate change. We will be able to measure QUM impacts in terms of health outcomes rather than just PBS savings. We will have grown the evidence base for QUM through innovative projects and research partnerships. And with our partners we will continue to implement locally while coordinating nationally. Expansion into international sectors is also likely as emerging economies look to the Australian QUM model as one worthy of adoption.

“By 2018, we aim to have quality use of medicines as a household concept.”

Government support

An important step along the way is to secure further government funding in the May 2009 budget. We have been busy developing our four-year refunding submission, and I want to thank all of our members and stakeholders who have had input into the document through a range of consultation mechanisms. Your feedback has very much shaped the priorities that we will progress from 2009 to 2013.

On behalf of the board, I would also like to acknowledge the recent decision by the Health Minister to establish a new consultation mechanism to continue the important work previously undertaken by APAC and PHARM. We believe this to be an important step in ensuring the ongoing development and implementation of the National Medicines Policy in Australia. NPS looks forward to supporting these new arrangements. Thanks must go to Dr John Aloizos, Chair of APAC, and Dr Ric Day, Chair of PHARM, for their years of dedication and commitment to medicines policy and strategy development through their respective committees.

Governance

As always, the NPS Board has had a strong focus on governance over the past year. Reports from the Audit Committee and the Governance and Nomination Committee are provided later in this document. We continue to undertake an annual board

2002

Pharmaceutical Decision Support starts



Australian Prescriber joins NPS



We will explore new growth in medication safety, medication management, complementary medicines, and e-health.

performance review, and have in the past year also moved to individual director development plans which focus on the contribution that each director can make. Directors are encouraged to undertake professional development, and as a board we have recently held professional development sessions in both financial governance and working with government. The board has continued to strengthen its director recruitment and selection processes. As the custodians of NPS, we owe it to our members to ensure that the highest calibre directors are sought and appointed. We have also boosted our capacity for environmental scanning, an essential skill at board level when faced with such a rapidly changing environment. And we have commenced a stakeholder mapping exercise to better understand the strengths and needs of our many stakeholders, and to better add value to our current and future partnerships.

Over the next 12 months, we will be asking members to work with us to undertake a review of the NPS Constitution. After 10 years of operation, it is timely to ensure that the constitution is contemporary and meeting the needs of the organisation and its membership. There are a number of areas in the constitution which the board believes are deserving of review. In particular, the current membership class structure needs examination because of the growth in the number and type of members since the inception of NPS. The board has formed a taskforce to undertake this work, and will be establishing mechanisms for member involvement. In the near future, we will also be establishing mechanisms for member involvement in the review process. We welcome your participation in recrafting the NPS Constitution for the future.

Board, management and staff

All the achievements of the past year would not have been possible without the efforts of our amazing CEO, Lynn Weekes, and her talented and hard working staff, and I thank them most sincerely.

I would also like to acknowledge my fellow directors for their commitment and professionalism, and their unwavering passion for QUM. This year has seen the reappointment of Dr Shiong Tan, GP Class Director. Since the end of the financial year we have farewelled Jenny Bergin, our Pharmacy Class Director, after six years on the board — a special thanks to Jenny and we wish her all the best. I would also like to thank Greg Peterson, who acted as Jenny's alternate for a number of years. Our new Pharmacy Class Director Debbie Rigby joined the board at the end of August 2008. We will soon be farewelling Sue Hunt, additional director with nursing experience. Sue also served six years on the board and will be sadly missed.

Special thanks again to Dr Roger Boyd who handed over the reins in September last year after nine years on the board.

In closing, I commend the annual report to you, and record my appreciation to all who have contributed to NPS and quality use of medicines in the past year.

Dr Janette Randall
NPS Chair



Contracts signed with 100 divisions of general practice

National Prescribing Curriculum in 10 out of 10 medical schools



Report from Dr Lynn Weekes, Chief Executive Officer

“ We will continue to use rigorous processes to provide a strong evidence base for all our services. ”

A tenth anniversary is a significant point in the life of any organisation — one for reflection, review and celebration.

It is a pleasure to deliver this annual report, and to congratulate and thank everyone who has worked with us in our first 10 years. We have made a big difference in a complex and important field and we are ready to tackle new challenges in the years ahead.

The decision a decade ago to set up NPS as a member-based organisation at arm's length from government has been fundamental to our growth and success. We still have the same singular purpose — advancing the best use of medicines. The way we do this, however, is not singular.

We draw on a wide range of disciplines and networks. We work with health professionals, the community, industry, and government policy makers. We maintain an independent view, based on evidence. We collaborate, evaluate and innovate, enabling us to understand the issues, generate solutions and work with others to bring about effective change.

This unique and powerful way of operating has had a profound social impact, resulting in positive health outcomes as well as substantial savings to government and the Australian public.

Networking and innovation

One of this year's many highlights was winning the prestigious international Gold Quill Award for the 2007 *Get to know your medicines* and *Generic medicines are an equal choice* campaigns. This was an acknowledgement of the effectiveness of our collaborative, multifaceted approach.

Reaching across the full spectrum of audiences, we combined traditional media and public relations with targeted information and practical tools. Key messages went through channels ranging from one-on-one NPS facilitator educational visits and GPs working alongside peer educators with seniors groups through to mass media engagement. More NPS member organisations and peak bodies supported these campaigns than ever before.

Our achievements

Our partners are central to many of our gains — and I would like to mention just a few of this year's significant achievements. With the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils (FECCA), a partner since 2004, we have developed a range of new bilingual resources, piloted a multicultural schools project in Queensland, and commenced research with Arabic-speaking populations to identify medicines issues, needs, enablers and barriers.

NPS partnered with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA) to train primary health workers in Aboriginal communities, focusing on diabetes, hypertension, asthma and quality use of medicines. In the pilot program, eight senior health workers from three communities completed their training, in turn training 31 Aboriginal health worker colleagues.

COTA Partnership and COTA Alliance collaborated with NPS to train 46 peer educators in 2007–08. The program won a QUM award at the National Medicines Symposium in 2008.

2003

RADAR published, New Drugs and Consumer Quality Use of Medicines programs start

2004

Medicines without the mix-ups campaign



We are working with the Australian General Practice Network on a project that lets GPs make more immediate use of their own prescribing data. The project focuses on three prescribing areas: management of chronic heart failure, hypertension, and antibiotic prescribing. This work sits beside the regular programs in the divisions of general practice network, essential collaborators with NPS since inception.

Research and sound evaluation models have contributed to our work. This year we adopted more sophisticated data analysis techniques, improving our time series modelling. Improving the way we account for many complex confounders will provide better information, especially around chronic conditions such as diabetes.

E-health is a significant and rapidly evolving area. NPS conducted important research into existing decision support software, and we also developed innovative software to help integrate QUM into healthcare settings.

Most Australians use one or more complementary medicines regularly, spending an estimated \$1.31 billion annually. Our research this year assessed the information needs and knowledge gaps of consumers (who often self-prescribe) and health professionals. The outcomes of the research are due later this year and are eagerly awaited.

Securing the future

NPS continues to be a success thanks to the generous support of the Australian Government and our members and partners. Four years ago we had 94 staff; we now employ over 125. To adapt to this change, we built our first executive management team and I am delighted to welcome these new colleagues, who bring very broad expertise to the organisation.

With an eye on our future, the NPS Board and senior management have developed a 10-year plan to articulate NPS's broad goals.

Tens of thousands of people currently visit the NPS website, accessing around 100,000 pages each month. Knowing that demand was growing, we undertook a major user-centred website redesign project this year. We believe the enormous effort put into this project will deliver much greater usability and engagement, and support our efforts to make quality use of medicines a 'household concept'.

In closing

I would like to thank Roger Boyd, the immediate past Chair of NPS, for his hard work and influence. Roger contributed greatly and his efforts are much appreciated. Similarly, I would like to welcome Janette Randall as the new NPS Chair, whose first-class leadership will bring fresh energy to our board.

Thank you to everyone from our board, staff, working groups or networks, and partners in program delivery who helped ensure that NPS had a successful year and is prepared for the next part of this journey.

Dr Lynn Weekes
Chief Executive Officer



More consumers are seeking health information and advice through new channels. NPS intends to engage this growing audience, with the aim of making quality use of medicines a 'household concept'.

100,000 NPS activities completed

First National QUM Awards, run in conjunction with PHARM



Research and Development expanded



Board sub-committees

NPS Audit Committee

Mr Russell Edwards, Chair
Dr Janette Randall
Dr Ross Maxwell
Ms Jenny Bergin
Dr Roger Boyd

The NPS Audit Committee met periodically over the year to support both board and management in the diligent use of NPS funds. The committee regularly reviews financial results, oversees risk management, reviews and develops board policy in the areas of finance and risk, and oversees the annual audit process.

Dr Roger Boyd retired from the board in October 2007 and we thank him for his significant contribution to the work of the committee and as Chair of the Board. Dr Janette Randall

stepped down as Chair of the Audit Committee on her appointment as Board Chair in October 2007. Her ongoing contribution as a member of the committee is greatly valued.

Highlights 2007–08

- The accounting system and financial delegations were updated to align with the new NPS management structure.
- NPS qualified as a Health Promotion Charity and was endorsed by the Australian Tax Office to access charity tax concessions.
- Board reporting was further streamlined, with regular analysis of expenditure against budget to enable quarterly reallocations to be made.

- The organisation's risk management system, including the ongoing identification of strategic risks, continued to be reviewed and developed.
- An unqualified audit report is now received.

I would like to thank my fellow Audit Committee members for their efforts over the past year and the NPS finance team for their hard work and attention to detail.

Mr Russell Edwards,
Chair

NPS Board Governance and Nomination Committee

Ms Kate Moore, Chair
A/Professor Shane Carney
Dr Susan Hunt
Dr Graeme Killer
Dr Shiong Tan

Reappointment to board

Dr Shiong Tan
General Practice Class

Retirement from board

Dr Roger Boyd
Additional Director

This committee ensures that the NPS Board has the necessary skills and expertise to discharge its responsibilities. Prior to the end of each director's term of appointment, the committee identifies the essential criteria for their replacement, seeks applicants, interviews applicants and recommends appointment to the board. The board makes the final decision regarding appointment.

In May 2008, the NPS Board Nominations Committee was reconstituted as the NPS Board Governance and Nomination Committee and revised the Terms of Reference to include its additional responsibilities in providing advice on constitutional and other matters referred to it by the board and in drafting and regularly reviewing board policy and procedure.

Highlights 2007–08

- Professional development plans were prepared for each director.
- Nomination and selection process for the Pharmacy Class Director position was completed, resulting in the appointment of Ms Debbie Rigby, whom we welcome to the board.
- A thorough review was undertaken of the criteria for directors and for the additional director position in

particular. Criteria have been, and will continue to be, reviewed prior to each call for nominations.

For the full Directors' Report, please refer to the *2007–08 Financial Report*, published separately.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of my fellow committee members, in particular, those of Sue Hunt, who retired from her role as Chair of the committee in November 2007. Her sound advice and continued contribution to the committee has been invaluable.

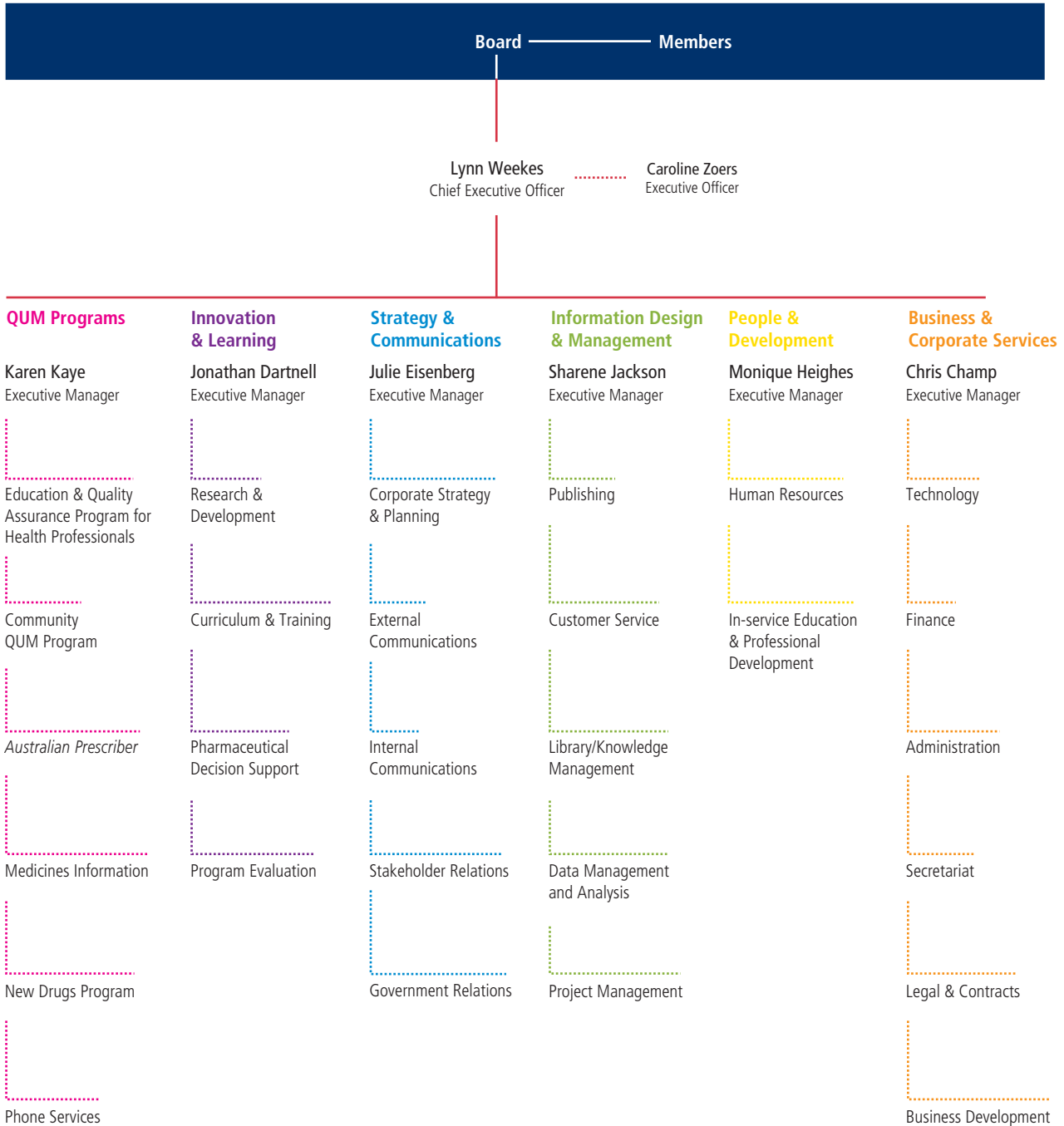
Ms Kate Moore,
Chair

2004

First Seniors Peer Educator session held in partnership with COTA

More than 10,000 GPs participate in NPS therapeutic program activities each year

Organisation chart

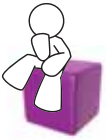


2005

27 NPS Facilitators achieve 5 years of service



NPS wins two awards for the Multicultural program



Chair

Dr Janette Randall

(Appointed to Chair October 2007)

Janette is a general practitioner in Brisbane. She has worked in general practice on a full and part-time basis since 1994, obtaining her General Practice Fellowship in 1996. She has a special interest in mental health issues, and has undertaken additional training in this area.

Janette has been significantly involved in the Divisions of General Practice Program since 1997, having held various roles with her local Division of General Practice in Queensland. She was a board member of the state-based representative body for Divisions in Queensland, retiring in October 2006.

Janette was, until recently, a member of the Queensland General Practice Advisory Council and a member of the Bayside Health Community Council.

She chaired the Audit Committee until October 2007 and was previously a member of the New Drugs Working Group (*RADAR*).



Previous Chair

Dr Roger Boyd

(Resigned October 2007)

Roger is a medical administrator committed to a balanced, efficient and effective healthcare system. He brought to the NPS Board considerable senior management and business experience gained over 20 years in public and private hospital management.

Roger is currently Director Medical Workforce for Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service and Honorary Secretary of the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators.

Joining the NPS Board shortly after its formation in 1998, he retired when he reached the maximum term allowed under the NPS Constitution. He remains a member of the AME Line Governance Committee and the Phone Line Services Working Group and Chair of the State of the Art Medicines Information Service Taskforce.

While NPS Chair, Roger was a member of the NPS Audit Committee, the National Medicines Chairs' Group, the Australian Pharmaceutical Advisory Council and a former member of its Continuity in Medication Management Working Party. He was also a member of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care's National Inpatient Medication Chart Oversight Committee and a member of the NSW Therapeutic Advisory Group & Clinical Excellence Commission's Performance Indicators and Medication Safety Project Steering Committee.



Directors

Ms Jenny Bergin

Jenny has qualifications in pharmacy and business administration. She has been a pharmacist in community hospital and regulatory settings, was a member of the Pharmacy Board of Tasmania and has managed community health services, including medical, dental, nursing and palliative care. She has a keen interest in the continuous quality improvement approach to the management of health services and quality use of medicines.

Jenny is a member of the Prescribing Intervention Working Group.

(Alternate Director, Professor Gregory Peterson)



Associate Professor Shane Carney

Shane is a nephrologist at John Hunter Hospital and an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, The University of Newcastle. Together with an interest in continuing medical education with the Hunter Postgraduate Medical Institute, he is committed to quality use of medicines. He is a member of the Therapeutics Advisory Committee of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

Shane is a member of the Research and Development Working Group and the Evaluation Working Group.

(Alternate Director, Professor Gregory Peterson)

Dr Susan Hunt

Susan has a long involvement with quality use of medicines, including the first *Be wise with medicines* campaigns in the early 1990s. She has a particular interest in preparing health professionals to apply quality use of medicines in various clinical settings. As a clinical nurse consultant and educator, she has specialised in care related to older people in residential and community settings.

Currently the Senior Nurse Advisor in the Office of Aged Care Quality and Compliance in the Department of Health and Ageing, Susan is a member of the NPS Research and Development Working Group and the Curriculum and Training Working Group.





Directors

Mr Russell Edwards

Russell's career in the pharmaceutical industry spans 36 years. In 1991 he founded the Australian branch of the biotechnology company, Amgen, and was its managing director for 15 years.

As a former board member of Medicines Australia, he sponsored the establishment of guidelines for relationships between consumer health organisations and the pharmaceutical industry and is Alternate Chair: Medicines Australia Code of Conduct Monitoring Committee. In 2005 he founded Medicines Australia's Biotechnology Group (MABIG). More recently, he has been Vice-President External Affairs at Amgen.

Russell has an understanding of issues in the public and private health sectors and the National Medicines Policy. He is regarded as an opinion leader in the pharmaceutical industry, particularly in the field of biotechnology.

Russell is a member of the Medicines Industry Liaison Group and the New Drugs Working Group (RADAR) and was appointed as Chair of the Audit Committee in October 2007.



Dr Graeme Killer AO

Graeme is Principal Medical Adviser to the Repatriation Commission. Trained as an occupational physician, he served for 23 years in the Royal Australian Air Force, including postings to Malaysia and the UK. He served in Malaysia during the Vietnam War and was involved in aeronautical evacuation. On retiring from full-time Defence service in 1990, he was appointed Director of Environment Health for the Australian Defence Force. He has been Principal Medical Adviser to the Department of Veterans' Affairs and has taken a leading role in departmental quality use of medicines initiatives.

Graeme is a Member of the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Reference Committee and Chair of the Editorial Committee and Consumer Reference Group for the Veterans' Medicines Advice and Therapeutic Education Services Program. He pioneered the introduction of care planning and preventive annual health assessments for older Australians and initiated the Health Links Program between the Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs.

His extensive healthcare interests include occupational and public health and aged care. He maintains part-time clinical practice and was personal physician to Prime Ministers Keating and Howard, and has a similar role with Government House, Canberra. He was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1999 for service to the veteran community.

Graeme is a member of the Communications Working Group.





Ms Kate Moore

Kate has had a long career working on consumer health projects. As a consultant, she has worked on projects such as the assessment of the Quality of Care Reports, published by Public Health Services in Victoria and as a special adviser to the Healthcare Management Advisors' Project that reviewed the Australian Pharmaceutical Advisory Committee.

She is Chair of the ACT Health Council, a member of the Executive Committee of the Health Care Consumers' Association of the ACT and Chair of its Policy Sub-Committee, and a member of several other committees.

Kate is the Chair of the Board Governance and Nomination Committee and represents the board on the Community QUM Working Group.

(Alternate Director, Ms Diane Walsh)



Dr Shiong Tan

Shiong is a GP and clinical adviser to the Western Australian Department of Health. He has a strong interest in the role that primary care services play in health promotion and advancing population health. He is a Commissioner on the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care and currently chairs the Commission's Primary Care Committee.

Shiong is a member of the Community QUM Working Group and the Pharmaceutical Decision Support Working Group.

(Alternate Director, Michael Nolan, appointed March 2008)

Dr Ross Maxwell

Ross brings to the board 25 years experience in general practice, with a very strong rural and regional medicine perspective.

He is a past president of the Rural Doctors Association of Australia and is an active member of his local Division of General Practice and the AMA Queensland. He is on the board of Health WorkForce Queensland and Chair of their Risk Management Committee. Ross is a member of the Professional Programs and Services Advisory Committee (PPSAC) and Chair of its Rural and Indigenous Sub-committee.

Ross is a member of the Pharmaceutical Decision Support Working Group.





NPS Executive Team



Dr Lynn Weekes

Chief Executive Officer

As inaugural Chief Executive Officer of NPS, Lynn has contributed significantly to the development of quality use of medicines resources and services for health professionals and consumers in Australia since 1998.

As part of her PhD thesis, 'Organisational structures to promote quality use of medicines', Lynn developed indicators for QUM for drug and therapeutics committees and for hospitals more generally. She has a strong professional interest in quality assurance, behaviour change and pharmacoepidemiology. Lynn sits, by invitation, on various national boards and committees in the government, pharmacy and academic sectors.

Lynn was formerly Executive Officer of the NSW Therapeutic Assessment Group where she was involved in drug use practice, evaluation and policy. As a pharmacist, she practised in hospital, community and research settings.



Karen Kaye

Executive Manager, Quality Use of Medicines Programs and Deputy CEO

Karen oversees NPS's program teams: Health Professional, Community QUM, Medicines Information and *Australian Prescriber*.

She was Executive Officer for the NSW Therapeutic Advisory Group for almost 10 years and worked with clinical experts and government agencies to inform policy development for quality use of medicines in hospitals and the wider community.

Karen holds a Bachelor of Pharmacy from the University of Sydney and has completed postgraduate studies in hospital pharmacy and pharmacoeconomics. She has practised in community, hospital, industry and academic settings and in the professional organisations of pharmacy. A former Director of Pharmacy at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney, she maintains a strong interest in hospital pharmacy practice through her role as a Federal Councillor for the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia.

Karen has a particular interest in promoting system changes to improve safe and effective medicines use across the continuum of care and ensuring a cost-effectiveness approach to evaluation of health technologies.



Dr Jonathan Dartnell

Executive Manager, Innovation & Learning

Jonathan leads NPS's Curriculum & Training, Pharmaceutical Decision Support, Program Evaluation and Research & Development teams.

Formerly with Therapeutic Guidelines, an independent not-for-profit organisation that prepares and publishes national clinical guidelines, he oversaw the expansion of its guidelines series and development of electronic products.

A former hospital pharmacist in Australia and England, his skills in working in resource-poor settings were applied in Belize, where he developed and co-ordinated pharmacy education and training programs. He co-ordinated the Royal Melbourne Hospital Drug Usage Evaluation (DUE) Program and led many quality use of medicine projects while undertaking doctoral studies in DUE. He assisted in establishing state and national DUE groups and steering several DUE projects.

Jonathan has a long-standing interest in medicines and public health, with a focus on improving access to quality use of medicines knowledge at the time of decision making, and evaluating the impact of our work.



Julie Eisenberg
Executive Manager,
Strategy & Communications

Julie oversees NPS's corporate strategy, communications, and government and stakeholder relations. Her team includes marketing, advertising, public affairs, digital and strategy specialists.

A former executive of SBS Corporation, she helped create organisational change through a time of dynamic industry change and audience evolution. With the Communications Law Centre, she advocated the public interest, published extensively and lectured at UNSW in post and undergraduate communications law. As a media lawyer, she acted for commercial media corporations and the ABC.

Julie has been President of the International Institute of Communications Australian Chapter since 2006 and is currently an advisory board member of Vibewire and the Centre for Media and Communications Law at Melbourne University. She is a former board member of Digital Broadcasting Australia and the Telephone Information Services Standards Council.

Julie is interested in innovation strategies that extend and deepen NPS's impact on its audiences.



Sharene Jackson
Executive Manager,
Information Design & Management

Sharene leads the team responsible for design and production of NPS publications and resources, data management, knowledge management, project management and customer service. She has a strong commitment to ensuring that we offer the highest quality products and services to our clients, in the most efficient, cost-effective way.

Sharene's training in journalism and instructional design led her to a career in developing print and online publications for the health and education sectors.

She has been with NPS since 1998 and, in her current role, combines her passion for information design with her keen desire to find better ways of doing things.

Chris Champ
Executive Manager,
Business & Corporate Services

Chris served as Executive Manager for Business and Corporate Services until August 2008. He came from a finance and administration background with experience in the retirement and aged-care sectors.



Monique Heighes
Executive Manager,
People & Development

Monique is responsible for developing strategies that contribute to and support a strong corporate culture and ensuring that our people practices support us to achieve our organisational goals. Since joining NPS in 2006, she has effectively promoted and repositioned the human resource function to be recognised as a significant strategic driver within the organisation.

Monique previously managed and delivered strategic and operational human resource services in executive and managerial appointments across a diverse range of environments in both high-level consulting and in-house roles.

Monique has a Masters in Organisational Psychology and a Diploma in Human Resources and is an accredited executive coach. She is interested in applying her unique perspective on people and development strategies to complement this forward-thinking organisation.



Working groups and committees

Our Working Groups provide essential input and advice to our overall QUM program. They assist in identifying new and emerging issues, provide peer reviews of our materials and advise on approaches to issues and program design. Our Working Groups are a key mechanism for us to turn 'partnership' into a meaningful process by working together with health professionals, community groups and industry to promote QUM and change how people think about medicines.

Australian Prescriber Editorial Executive Committee	Prof John Tiller, Chair	Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne
	Dr John Dowden	Editor, <i>Australian Prescriber</i> , NPS
	Dr Cate Howell	General Practitioner, South Australia
	Dr Shanthi Kanagarajah	Geriatrician, Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital
	Dr Anne Knight	General Physician, Manning Base Hospital
	Dr Paul Kubler	Clinical Pharmacologist Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital
	Dr Julia Lowe	General Physician, John Hunter Hospital
	Dr Lynn Weekes	Chief Executive Officer, NPS
Communications Working Group	Ms Simone Rossi, Chair	Managing Editor, <i>Australian Medicines Handbook</i>
	Ms Trish Tuffin, Convenor	Manager, Publishing, NPS
	Dr James Best	General Practitioner, New South Wales
	A/Prof Nick Buckley	Clinical Pharmacologist, University of New South Wales
	Ms Jan Donovan	Consumer Representative, Victoria
	Dr John Dowden	Editor, <i>Australian Prescriber</i> , NPS
	Dr Graham Emblen	General Practitioner, Queensland
	Dr Graeme Killer	NPS Board Member
	Ms Judith Mackson	Manager, Education and Quality Assurance Program, NPS
	Ms Deborah Norton	Pharmacist, Victoria
Community QUM Working Group	Ms Susan Parker	Head of Medical Affairs, Pfizer Australia
	Ms Diane Walsh, Chair	Consumer Representative, Northern Territory
	Ms Hannah Baird, Convenor	Manager, Community Quality Use of Medicines Program, NPS
	Dr Parisa Aslani	Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Sydney
	Mrs Diana Aspinall	Consumer Representative, New South Wales
	Mr Michael Bolt	Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
	Dr John De Vries	General Practitioner, Queensland
	Ms Judith Mackson	Manager, Education and Quality Assurance Program, NPS
	Mrs Alison Marcus	Consumer Representative, South Australia
	Dr Jo Mitchell	Health Promotion expert, NSW Health
	Ms Kate Moore	NPS Board Member
	Ms Sharon Ride	Consumer Representative, Australian Capital Territory
	Mrs Coral Rizzali	Consumer Representative, Queensland
	Ms Alexandra Storm	Consumers' Health Forum of Australia
Dr Christine Walker	Consumer Representative, Victoria	
Curriculum and Training Working Group	Prof. Gillian Shenfield, Chair	Consultant Clinical Pharmacologist, New South Wales
	Dr Meg Stuart, Convenor	Manager, Curriculum and Training, NPS
	Mr Neil Cottrell	Senior Lecturer, University of Queensland
	A/Prof Patricia Davidson	School of Nursing, Curtin University of Technology
	A/Prof Christoph Gatzka	Clinical Sub Dean, University of Melbourne
	Dr Susan Hunt	Senior Nurse Advisor, Office of Aged Care Quality and Compliance
	A/Prof Charles Mitchell	School of Medicine, University of Queensland
	Prof Gregory Peterson	School of Pharmacy, University of Tasmania
Mr Antonio Russo	Consumer Representative, South Australia	

2006

50,000 NPS educational visits

2007

First e-Audit and e-Case studies





Evaluation Working Group	Dr Tim Driscoll, Chair	Consultant Epidemiologist, New South Wales
	Dr Neil Donnelly, Convenor	Manager, Evaluation Program, NPS
	A/Prof Shane Carney	NPS Board Member
	Mr Neil Day	Centre for Program Evaluation, University of Melbourne
	A/Prof Rosalind Hurworth	Centre for Program Evaluation, University of Melbourne
	Ms Rosemary McKenzie	Research Fellow, University of Melbourne
	Dr Stephen Phillips	General Practitioner, Queensland
	A/Prof Jan Ritchie	School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales
	Prof Glenn Salkeld	School of Public Health, University of Sydney
Prof Stephanie Short	School of Public Health, Griffith University	
New Drugs Working Group	Mr Graeme Vernon, Chair	Pharmacy, Austin Health
	Ms Alice Bhasale, Convenor	A/Manager Independent Information, NPS
	Ms Karen Binnekamp alternating member with Sue Swensson	Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
	Dr John Dowden	Editor, <i>Australian Prescriber</i> , NPS
	Dr Alice Glover	Editor, <i>Therapeutic Guidelines</i>
	Dr Sarah Hilmer	Head of Department, Clinical Pharmacology, Royal North Shore Hospital
	Ms Karen Kaye (resigned)	Executive Officer, Therapeutics Advisory Group (TAG)
	Ms Anne McKenzie	Consumer Representative, Western Australia
	Ms Deborah Monk	Director, Innovation and Industry Policy, Medicines Australia
	Prof Paul Rolan	Professor of Clinical Pharmacology, School of Pharmacology, University of Adelaide
	Ms Simone Rossi	Managing Editor, <i>Australian Medicines Handbook</i>
	Prof Gillian Shenfield	Consultant Clinical Pharmacologist, New South Wales
	Ms Sue Swensson	Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Dr Shiong Tan	NPS Board member	
Dr Lyndal Trevena	Senior Lecturer & Researcher, University of Sydney	
NMS Scientific Program Committee 2008	Dr Stephen Phillips, Chair	General Practitioner, Queensland
	Prof Marc Cohen	Australian Integrative Medicines Association
	A/Prof Gabrielle Cooper	School of Pharmacy, University of Canberra
	Prof Richard Day	PHARM
	Ms Rhonda Galbally, AO	Chief Executive Officer, Our Community
	Dr Paul Kubler	Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists (ASCEPT)
	Dr Rebekah Moles	Associate Lecturer Department of Pharmacy, University of Sydney
	Dr Greg Pearce	Medical Advisor, Alphapharm Pty Ltd
	Dr Marie Pirotta	Senior Lecturer, University of Melbourne
	Dr Shiong Tan	NPS Board member
	Dr Janney Wale	Consumer Representative, Victoria
	Dr Lynn Weekes	Chief Executive Officer, NPS
	Dr Stephen Phillips, Chair	General Practitioner, Queensland
Dr James Reeve, Convenor	Manager, Pharmaceutical Decision Support, NPS	
Prof Michael Dooley	Director of Pharmacy, Alfred Health	
Mr Michael Farrell	Pharmacist, Queensland	
Dr Pradeep Jayasuriya	General Practitioner, Western Australia	
Dr Heather Leslie	Ocean Informatics, Victoria	
Dr Winston Liauw	Clinical Pharmacologist, St George Hospital	
Prof Siaw-Teng Liaw	Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne	
Dr Ross Maxwell	NPS Board member	
Ms Anne McKenzie	Consumer Representative, Western Australia	
Dr Rod Pearce	General Practitioner, South Australia	
Prof Gregory Peterson	School of Pharmacy, University of Tasmania	
Dr Marie Pirotta	Senior Lecturer, University of Melbourne	

50,000 seniors participate in NPS Community QUM program.



NPS is funded to manage the Adverse Medicines Events (AME) line



Working groups and committees

Pharmacy Review Group	Dr Jane Robertson, Chair	Pharmacoepidemiology, Discipline of Clinical Pharmacology, University of Newcastle
	Ms Judith Mackson, Convenor	Manager, Education and Quality Assurance Program, NPS
	Mr Jason Campbell	Community Pharmacist, New South Wales
	Prof Andrew Gilbert	School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences, University of South Australia
	Miss Sally Marotti	Pharmacist, John Hunter Hospital
	Prof Frank May	Director, Drug and Therapeutics Information Service (DATIS), South Australia
	Mr Robert Peck	Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs
	Ms Nancy Pierce	Consumer Representative, Western Australia
	Miss Toni Riley	Pharmacist, Victoria
	Dr Guan T Yeo	General Practitioner, New South Wales
Phone Line Services Working Group	Ms Roberta Lauchlan, Chair	Consultant Pharmacist, New South Wales
	Ms Eva Rozario, Convenor	Phone Line Services Manager, NPS
	Dr Roger Boyd	Medical Administrator, New South Wales
	Dr Susan Furphy	General Practitioner, Victoria
	Ms Susan Parker	Head of Medical Affairs, Pfizer Australia
	Ms Marea Patounas	Mater Health Services, Queensland
	Ms Josephine Southwell	Community Nurse, ISIS Primary Health Care
	Mr Graeme Vernon	Pharmacy, Austin Health
	Ms Diane Walsh	Consumer Representative, Northern Territory
Ms Jennifer Zwart	Pharmacist, New South Wales	
Prescribing Intervention Working Group (PIWG)	Dr Guan T Yeo, Chair	General Practitioner, New South Wales
	Ms Judith Mackson, Convenor	Manager, Education and Quality Assurance Program, NPS
	Ms Josephine Farrugia	Pharmacy Director, Medicare Australia
	Dr David Gleave	General Practitioner, Western Australia
	Prof Frank May	Director, Drug and Therapeutics Information Service (DATIS), South Australia
	Mr Robert Peck	Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs
	Ms Nancy Pierce	Consumer Representative, Western Australia
	Dr Jane Robertson	Pharmacoepidemiology, Discipline of Clinical Pharmacology, University of Newcastle
Ms Maxine Robinson	Secretary, Drug Utilisation Sub-Committee, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing	
Research and Development Working Group	Prof Richard Day, Chair	Department of Physiology and Pharmacology, University of New South Wales
	Ms Margaret Williamson, Convenor	Manager, Research and Development, NPS
	A/Prof Shane Carney	NPS Board Member
	Dr Timothy Chen	Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Sydney
	Prof Jane Gunn	Primary Care Research, University of Melbourne
	Mrs Hadas Haileselassie	Consumer, Australian Capital Territory
	Dr Ken Harvey	School of Public Health, La Trobe University
	Dr Susan Hunt	NPS Board Member
	A/Prof Elizabeth Manias	School of Nursing and Social Work, University of Melbourne
Prof Nicholas Zwar	School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales	

2007



Two National Awareness Campaigns held – *Get to know your Medicines* and *Generic medicines are an equal choice*



Adverse Medicines Event (AME) Line Governance Committee	Dr Rohan Hammett, Chair	Therapeutic Goods Administration
	Ms Eva Rozario, Convenor	Phone Line Services Manager, NPS
	Mr Michael Bolt	Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
	Dr Roger Boyd	Medical Administrator, New South Wales
	Ms Karen Kaye	Executive Manager, Quality Use of Medicines Programs, NPS
	Dr Gary Lacey	Therapeutic Goods Administration
	Ms Roberta Lauchlan	Consultant Pharmacist, New South Wales
	Mrs Alison Marcus	Consumer Representative, South Australia
Medicines Industry Liaison Group	Ms Treasure McGuire	Mater Health Services, Queensland
	Dr Lynn Weekes	Chief Executive Officer, NPS
	Ms Jude Tasker, Chair	Senior Manager, External Relations, Pfizer Australia
	Ms Julie Eisenberg, Convenor	Executive Manager, Strategy & Communications, NPS
	Mr Andrew Carter	Managing Director, Commercial Eyes
	Mr Russell Edwards	NPS Board Member
	Mrs Mary Emanuel	Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI)
	Ms Di Ford	Generic Medicines Industry of Australia (GMIA)
	Ms Angela Lance	Regulatory Manager, Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI)
	Ms Deborah Monk	Director, Innovation and Industry Policy, Medicines Australia
State of the Art Medicines Information Service Taskforce	Dr Greg Pearce	Medical Advisor, Alphapharm Pty Ltd
	Ms Robyn Ronai	Corporate Affairs Manager, Alphapharm Pty Ltd
	Dr Lynn Weekes	Chief Executive Officer, NPS
	Ms Caroline Winkler	Program Director, Mundipharma
	Dr Roger Boyd, Chair	Medical Administrator, New South Wales
	Ms Eva Rozario, Convenor	Phone Line Services Manager, NPS
	Ms Karen Kaye	Executive Manager, QUM Programs, NPS
	Ms Roberta Lauchlan	Consultant Pharmacist, New South Wales
	Ms Kate Moore	NPS Board Member
	Ms Lynn Weekes	Chief Executive Officer, NPS

Overseas visitors

NPS is a world leader in implementing quality use of medicines. We regularly host visits from international delegations to showcase our approaches and successes in QUM. These visits also provide us with a network of international contacts to develop a learning community around QUM.

Visitor	Organisation	Country
Dr Anita Hardon	University of Amsterdam	Holland
Jean Slutsky	Center for Outcomes and Evidence, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, US Department of Health and Human Services	US
Prof. Gillian Braunold	NHS Connecting for Health	UK
Barb Shea	Canadian Optimal Medication Prescribing and Utilization Service (COMPUS)	Canada
Denis Bélanger	Canadian Optimal Medication Prescribing and Utilization Service (COMPUS)	Canada
Prof Rachel Elliott	University of Nottingham	UK
Lena Westin	Kilen	Sweden
Jan Albinson	Kilen	Sweden
Marama Parore	PHARMAC (Pharmaceutical Management Agency)	New Zealand
Adam McRae	PHARMAC (Pharmaceutical Management Agency)	New Zealand
Janet Mackay	PHARMAC (Pharmaceutical Management Agency)	New Zealand

More than 800 practice nurses involved in therapeutic topics – 2,753 since 2005

2007-2008

TAIS and Medicines Line take more than 25,000 calls



Publications, presentations and posters

We value evidence, and our work both informs, and is informed by, evidence and good practice in quality use of medicines. NPS board members and staff have been active in developing papers and posters and presenting at conferences, to promote our learning in QUM and achieving behavioural change.

Peer-reviewed publications

Tobin L, de Almedia Neto AC, Wutzke S, et al. Influences on the prescribing of new drugs. *Aust Fam Physician* 2008;37(1-2):78–80.

Mandryk JA, Wai A, Mackson JM, et al. Evaluating the impact of educational interventions on use of antithrombotics in Australia. *Pharmacoepidemiol Drug Saf* 2008;17(2):160–71.

Ostini R, Hegney D, Mackson JM, et al. Why is the use of clopidogrel increasing rapidly in Australia? An exploration of geographical location, age, sex and cardiac stenting rates as possible influences on clopidogrel use. *Pharmacoepidemiol Drug Saf* 2008;17(11):1077–1090.

Horn FE, Mandryk JA, Mackson JM, et al. Measurement of changes in antihypertensive drug utilisation following primary care educational interventions. *Pharmacoepidemiol Drug Saf* 2007;16(3):297–308.

Wutzke SE, Artist MA, Kehoe LA, et al. Evaluation of a national programme to reduce inappropriate use of antibiotics for upper respiratory tract infections: effects on consumer awareness, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour in Australia. *Health Promotion International* 2007;22(1):53–64.

Invited presentations

Event	Date	Topic	Presenter/s
School of Pharmacy, Faculty of Medicine, Chinese University of Hong Kong	July 07	The service arm of quality use of medicines in Australia	L Weekes
Monash–King’s Pharmacy Education Symposium, Monash University	July 07	Improving medicines use: a variety of approaches	L Weekes
FECCA Congress 2007	July 07	Issues of diversity and health in Australia	H Baird
Pharmacy Australia Congress	August 07	How to determine where new drugs fit into established therapy: using the evidence	G Higgins
Pharmaceutical Policy and Analysis, Zeist	September 07	Interventions to influence prescribing of new drugs	L Weekes
A Fresh Approach: Annual National Conference on Primary Care, Edinburgh	October 07	Practical prescribing: the Australian approach	J Dowden
National Institute of Clinical Studies, Thromboembolism prevention workshop	November 07	Online medical education modules to support quality use of medicines	M Stuart
Medicines Design to Delivery	December 07	Improving quality use of medicines for consumers: sharing strategies, results and challenges	H Baird
Policy for Purchasing, Prescribing and Consuming Prescription Drugs in States, Provinces, Australia and New Zealand, Milbank Memorial Fund	March 08	The service arm of quality use of medicines in Australia	L Weekes
EA/PA Congress	April – May 08	Shaping your career progression	B Wilson

2008

NPS has 45 member organisations





Presentations

Event	Date	Topic	Presenter/s and/or Author/s
RCNA Annual Conference 2007	July 07	Integrating the NPS QUM Modules into a Nursing Undergraduate Program	S Hunt, M Stuart (co-author K Baskett)
18th World WONCA Conference, Singapore	July 07	Reducing risk in type 2 diabetes: using multiple interventions in general practice	N Faruqi (co-authors S O'Riordan, E Slaytor, J Mackson)
5th Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care	August 07	Self-assessment of quality indicators in prescribing and use of medicines across settings: Acute post-operative pain management project	J Mackson
Medinfo 2007 Congress	August 07	Managing health information: effective use of XML	B Lewis
Doing Evaluation Better: AES International Conference 2007	September 07	Bringing results together: tears and triumphs in designing and implementing program evaluation with multiple evaluation inputs and stakeholder needs	E Slaytor
Doing Evaluation Better: AES International Conference 2007	September 07	Complexities of a multi-faceted evaluation to inform an annual national health campaign: short and intermediate measures	J Vajda, M Artist
The 66th National Scientific Congress of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists and the 9th Biennial Congress of the Asian and Oceanic Society of Regional Anaesthesia and Pain Medicine	September 07	Analgesic use in the post-operative period and at discharge: a quality improvement initiative	A Wai
RACGP Annual Scientific Convention	October 07	Workshop: Using a desktop electronic tool to optimise drug therapy in ischaemic heart disease	J Reeve, J Mackson, G Yeo (GP)
SHPA 28th Federal Conference 2007	November 07	Evaluation of the quality of drug interaction decision support in clinical software: implications for practitioners	J Reeve, M Sweidan
SHPA 28th Federal Conference 2007	November 07	Analgesic use and communication at discharge in post-operative patients: the APOP initiative	A Wai
SHPA 28th Federal Conference 2007	November 07	QUM in Aboriginal health: a review of the integration of research, programs and experience	P Travers-Mason
SEAWP-ASCEPT Joint Annual Scientific Meeting	December 07	Drug interaction decision support in clinical software: user beware!	Presented by Dr Jennifer Martin (PDS Drug Interactions Project expert panel member), co-authored by J Reeve, M Sweidan
SEAWP-ASCEPT Joint Annual Scientific Meeting	December 07	NSAIDs: the good the bad and the ugly (Perceptions of risk and OTC NSAIDs)	NPS sponsored symposium session, which included presentations by J Mackson, K Knights, D Henry and British pharmacoepidemiologist J Aronson
SEAWP-ASCEPT Joint Annual Scientific Meeting	December 07	A tool for teaching prescribing online: updates to the National Prescribing Curriculum	M Stuart (co-author G Shenfield)
Ozzawa 2008: The 13th Ottawa International Conference on Clinical Competence	March 08	Teaching and assessing prescribing skills via an online curriculum	M Stuart (co-authors K Baskett, G Mendrela, G Shenfield)
Diversity in Health	March 08	Individual approaches to healthcare (medication)	NPS sponsored session (J Stephenson, session chair)

10 year summary

Every year more than 50% of all GPs actively participate in at least one of our major programs. More than 25,000 individual GPs have participated, most on several occasions. Since 2004, approximately 10,000 educational visits occurred each year.





Publications, presentations and posters

Presentations (continued)

Event	Date	Topic	Presenter/s and/or Author/s
Diversity in Health	March 08	Moving up the ladder? Critical reflections on health promotion theory applied to project design for the health needs of consumers from CALD backgrounds	A Maberly, C Dobson (FECCA)
3rd International Congress on Complementary Medicine Research	March 08	The information needs of complementary medicines users on safety and efficacy of CM	J Tudball, M Williamson (co-author M Toms)
QIP/AGPAL Quality Carnivale	April 08	NPS QUM toolkit for GPs	J Mackson, S Aristidi
Challenges in Cardiology VIII Conference	May 08	Initiatives to improve patient concordance in cardiovascular disease medicines	J Mackson
Challenges in Cardiology VIII Conference	May 08	Quality use of medicine: the heart of the matter	M Koo, K Barry
RACGP/PSA Congress on Ageing	May 08	Quality use of medicines for older Australians	A Heaney
GPCE	May 08	Workshop: negotiating early initiation of insulin in type 2 diabetic patients	J Elliott, J Ramanathan (NPS Facilitator)
CME Congress, Vancouver	May 08	Academic detailing: improving prescribing practice in Australia	J Mackson (co-authors D Rowett – NPS Facilitator – A Wai)
ConPharm 08	May – June 08	Leading edge new drugs seminar	G Higgins
ConPharm 08	May – June 08	Workshop on palliative care	A Heaney, D Rowett (NPS Facilitator), L Nissen (UQ), P Allcroft
General Practice and Primary Health Care Research Conference	June 08	Use of specific antihypertensive drugs with potentially favourable effects on coexisting conditions: results from GP clinical audits	K Barry (co-authors J Mackson, S O'Riordan)

Posters

Event	Date	Topic	Presenter/s
ICT: Providing Choices for Learners and Learning, Singapore	December 07	Redesigning a more Learner-Centred Prescribing Curriculum	K Baskett, G Mendrel, M Stuart
SEAWP-ASCEPT Joint Annual Scientific Meeting	December 07	A tool for teaching prescribing online: updates to the National Prescribing Curriculum	M Stuart, G Shenfield
Medicines Design to Delivery	December 07	A tool for teaching prescribing online: updates to the National Prescribing Curriculum	G Shenfield, M Stuart, K Baskett, G Mendrel
Heart Failure in 3D: Drugs, Devices, Diagnostics	January – February 08	Educational interventions to improve prescribing, use of echocardiography and provision of patient information in chronic heart failure in primary care	J Mackson, N Huang (Heart Foundation)
3rd International Congress on Complementary Medicine Research	March 08	What consumers want to know about complementary medicines	M Williamson
General Practice and Primary Health Care Research Conference	June 08	Clinical e-Audit: an effective quality improvement activity to optimise treatment of ischaemic heart disease (IHD) in general practice	S O'Riordan (co-authors B Lewis, H Parsons, J Mackson, J Reeve)
General Practice and Primary Health Care Research Conference	June 08	Information needs and preferences of General Practitioners on complementary medicines	J Brown (co-authors M Williamson, M Toms, M Pirota – University of Melbourne)

For the past 3 years almost half of around 5,000 community pharmacies have hosted NPS activities. About 2,000 pharmacists and another 1,000 pharmacy graduates (interns) have participated in NPS activities each year for the past 3 years.





National Medicines Symposium — Presentations

Topic	Presenter/s and/or Author/s
Herbal and natural remedies are our new first preference	M Williamson
Prescribing patterns and quality for a new drug, Rosuvastatin	M Gillies (co-authors E Slaytor, K Loukas)
Building consensus on features supporting safety, quality and usefulness of general practice prescribing software	J Reeve (co-authors A Smith, M Williamson, M Sweidan, K Harvey)
A study of the quality of drug interaction decision support in prescribing and dispensing software	M Sweidan (co-authors J Reeve, J Brien, P Jayasuriya, J Martin, G Vernon)
Clinical e-Audit: an effective quality improvement activity to optimise treatment of ischaemic heart disease	S O'Riordan (co-authors B Lewis, H Parsons, J Mackson, J Reeve)
Do we need to rethink consumer medicine information?	M Koo
Generic medicines: is there a QUM problem?	J Mackson (co-authors M Artist, M Koo)
Consumer focussed awareness campaign delivering medicines messages in 2007	H Baird (co-authors L Rhodes, S Corlette, L McKerracher, E Rozario)
Do general practice prescribing systems include features that support patient safety and quality of care?	M Sweidan (co-authors A Smith, M Williamson, Z Ali, J Reeve)
Use of specific antihypertensive drugs with potentially favourable effects on coexisting conditions: results from GP clinical audits	K Barry (co-authors J Mackson, S O'Riordan)
Optimising hospital management of acute postoperative pain: a national quality improvement initiative	A Wai (co-authors D Maxwell, K Kaye, K McIntosh, M Robertson, A Tompson, G Peterson, A Reeves, L Pulver, S Tett, J Mackson)
Delivering the veterans' MATES 'Therapeutic Briefs' using an academic detailing approach	D Rowett (co-authors R Azam, J Gailer, L Jackowski, M Koo)
Impacts of the 2007 NPS National Awareness Campaign: findings from surveys of consumers	N Donnelly, H Baird (co-author N Orr)

National Medicines Symposium — Posters

Topic	Presenter/s and/or Author/s
Information seeking by consumers and associated QUM practices: recent trends from the NPS Annual Consumer Survey	N Orr (co-author N Donnelly)
Addressing barriers and enablers to early insulin use in type 2 diabetes	J Elliott (co-author M Koo, E Slaytor, J Mackson)
Data extraction and NPS indicators of quality prescribing	V Noble (co-authors J Reeve, J Mackson)
Biting the URTI: helping GPs to target the use of antibiotics	P Travers-Mason (co-authors H Parsons, S O'Riordan, J Mackson, K Mulligan)
Antipsychotics for schizophrenia: a weighty dilemma	M Koo (co-author J Mackson)
Complementary medicines and consumer information: what do they need, where do they go and what is the point?	J Tudball (co-authors M Williamson, M Toms)
How do seniors use medicines information provided in peer-led sessions?	L Klein
Families get to know their medicines: learning from the Queensland pilot	L Klein (co-authors C Dobson, A Maberly)
Determining disease prevalence and expected effects of interventions for sample size calculations in general practice research: an example	H Parsons (co-authors F Garden, M Williamson, J Mackson)
Making a stand for medicines awareness	J Brown (co-author J Blennerhassett)
It's not easy beating the blues: barriers and enablers to improving the use of antidepressants	K Gurman (co-authors E McEwin, F Horn)
Information needs and preferences of general practitioners on complementary medicines	J Brown (co-authors M Williamson, M Toms, M Pirota (University of Melbourne))
Introduction in training undergraduate nursing students in the current use of National Inpatient Medication Chart	J McCauley (co-authors S Hunt, K Baskett, M Stuart)
Moving on: a self-management program for people with a chronic illness: getting the most out of your medicines	L Stevenson (co-authors D Aspinall, A Williams)
Continuing professional competence for nurse practitioner prescribers	S Dunn, A Cashin, D Anderson, T Buckley, R McShane, R Rumble, H Rysavy, M Stuart, K Cook
Using e-learning to help build confidence in young prescribers	K Baskett (co-authors G Mendrela, M Stuart)
NPS Facilitators: QUM training and the quest for the gold medal performance	G Higgins (co-author R Shorten)
Prescribing hormonal contraception: conundrum with the humdrum?	T Loo (co-authors M Koo, J Mackson)
Osteoporosis — a bone of contention: findings from a general practitioner clinical audit	A Heaney (co-authors S O'Riordan, H Parsons, J Mackson)

The next
10 years

2009-2018

By 2018, we aim to have
quality use of medicines
as a household concept.

NPS is an independent, non-profit organisation for Quality Use of Medicines,
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