



**Minutes for the 43rd Annual General Meeting
OF THE
Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd
(ACN 010 020 390)**

**Held at the Marriott Gold Coast Resort and Spa, 158 Ferny Avenue, Surfer's Paradise, Qld.
and online, on Sunday 30th May, 2021 at 14.00 AEST.**

ATTENDEES:

Board of Directors: Waveny Holland - *President and Chair* | Richard Li - *Vice President* (attending online in NSW) | Rosemary Pinter - *Minutes Secretary* (attending online in WA) | Andrew Matfin - *Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee* | Michael Poplewell – *Director*

Elected Director 2021: Rodd Sanchez attended online in NSW.

Executive: Paul Stadhams – *Chief Executive Officer, Company Secretary and Returning Officer*

Members Attending Onsite (35): Sally Austin, Christopher Bell, Ann Burns-Hutchison, Anila Calder, Helen Chan, Marney Commens, Jacqui Cooper, John Crothers, Derek Doran, Ricarda Funke, Kim Gatenby, Anthony Graham, Wendy Hee, Terence Hitzke, Robert Hollidge, Alexandrina Hovey, Cameron Kent, Candice Lambert, Lesley Lazarakis, John McDonald, Natalie McHue (Student observer), Sono Mitchetti, Yan Ming Mok, Brett Montgomery, Paul Nebauer, Russell Silich, Walter Simpson, Darlene Sourile, Joseph Chuen Kin Tan, Angela Weekley, Vicki Wooller, Xiao Mei Zhang.

Members attending Online (45): Dah Bin An, Esther Ariston, Rosalyn Bruerton, Christine Campbell, Wendy Carter, Xiaoming Dai, Li Feng, Sarah George, Louis Gordon, Mandy Gratzner, Caspian Helm, Carol Horn, Emma Iwinska, Carlos Jeldres, Wei Jiao, Mandy Jolic, Boo Huat Khoo, Daleth Koreny, Roseanne Lathouras, Ting-Chen Liao, Ying Shu Li-Cantwell, Ve-Vinn Lim, David Ching Feng Liu, Sheena Maxwell, Wei Meng, Amber Moore, Sayaomphou Phommasone, Peter Ruddy, Elisabeth Sever-Topping, Julie Simpson, Andre Sorger, Elisabeth Staunton, Phillip Strong, Natalie Strong, Nicole Ber Tan, Robin Tim So, Dennis Vander Kraats, Neil Whillans, Dominique Wood, Jie Xu, Lee Yap, Heidi Yuen.

1. OPENING AND WELCOME

Traditional Owners past and present were acknowledged.

Members present and online were welcomed, and an outline of meeting process was presented by the Chair, Waveny Holland.

2. QUORUM AND MEETING OPEN

The Chair asked the CEO, Paul Stadhams, as Company Secretary to confirm that there was a quorum. It was confirmed and the meeting was opened by the Chair at 14.10.

3. APOLOGIES

The CEO confirmed there was one apology from Member Stephen Janz.

4. PROXY VOTES

The CEO confirmed there were no proxy votes received.

5. TOTAL OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS

The total members eligible to vote was 2057. The total in attendance was 35 onsite and 45 online.

6. MINUTES OF THE 42ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the 2020 AGM were tabled.

The Chair proposed that the minutes of 42nd AGM of the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd (ACN 010 020 390), which was held online via Zoom, on Sunday July 5th, 2020, from Suite One, 1990 Logan Rd, Upper Mount Gravatt, Queensland be accepted.

The motion was moved by Michael Popplewell (#1096) and seconded by Yi Sui Liang (#706).

73 members were in favour of the motion. 7 members abstained. The Minutes were passed as read.

7. BUSINESS ARISING

The Chair asked if attendees if there was any business arising from the minutes of the 42nd AGM. There was no business arising raised.

8. PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020

Presented by Waveny Holland

The year of COVID-19 presented never before experienced challenges for the AACMA Board and National Office staff.

The National Office

The majority of staff worked from home during most of 2020 with regular Zoom meetings conducted to keep staff in touch and working cohesively as a team. The appropriate documents to cover working from home arrangements were drawn up to protect AACMA and our staff during these times and the necessary equipment was purchased to enable staff to be able to continue to work from home safely and securely.

The search for new premises has continued but again the uncertainty of COVID and poor availability of suitable commercial space for the AACMA national office to relocate has led to remaining at our current location for another year.

The new Client Management Resource and website has been operational for several months

with the office staff attending training in all the necessary areas. It has streamlined the submission of health fund reports to a touch of a button and has provided a payment platform for members to pay their membership fees directly.

2020 for Members

Lockdowns, social distancing and Federal, State and Territory Government imposed restrictions to combat the spread of the Coronavirus made practising difficult for many members last year. Communication was the key with a whole new page “COVID-19 Latest Information” including FAQs, added to the AACMA website containing continually updated information on Government requirements nationally and for each State and Territory. This in itself was extremely difficult with information changing several times a day on some days and specific information on allied health practitioners and their ability to practise during these times not being provided at all or with very vague guidelines that were open to interpretation. Since June 2020, due to the long lockdown imposed in Victoria, AACMA has established a good relationship with Victoria’s Chief Allied Health Officer Donna Markham. This has provided AACMA with constant, relevant communications delivering current information on our Victorian members’ ability to practise.

Regular email alerts were also employed to inform members immediately when any new strategy needed to be implemented or guideline adopted. Infection control guidelines were strengthened from the normal clinic practice, to triaging patients before they attended for their appointments, hand sanitising before and after treatments now included patients not just practitioners, wearing of masks and social distancing limiting the number of people in clinics at any one time were all part of the new daily routine for practitioners who were able to continue to practise.

AACMA provided downloadable posters for clinics so members could display vital information for patients regarding COVID signs and symptoms and instructions on what the public should do to protect themselves and others if they had any symptoms. Members were also provided all the relevant information and links to the Government financial packages that were available to them for support during the period that they were unable to earn a living. AACMA CEO Paul Stadhams and I conducted Facebook Live interactions for members in the weeks alternate to the regular fortnightly eNews letters providing members with another platform to communicate.

AACMAC

Unfortunately, the COVID pandemic also caused the cancellation of AACMAC – the national and international Chinese medicine conference hosted and organised by AACMA each year in May. With preparations well in hand to stage the conference, it was difficult to reschedule to later in the year due to the uncertainty of the spread of COVID. All registration fees paid for the conference were refunded and negotiations with the venue continued as they refused to refund the deposit paid. A financially more favourable agreement for AACMA was reached with the venue and they will host the 2021 conference as a hybrid event with local speakers in the room and overseas speakers presenting online.

International keynote speakers Lorne Brown, Debra Betts and Poney Chiang were engaged for 2020 and have confirmed their online attendance for AACMAC Gold Coast 2021. Other international speakers, Peter Deadman, Julian Scott, and Zair Maimon have been approached to present via Zoom at AACMAC 2021.

With AACMAC cancelled, AACMA provided over 30 hours of recorded professional development

seminars and workshops online, free to members so they could achieve their professional development requirements for registration and private health fund provider status. Live presentations were also conducted via Zoom, attracting hundreds of members to a variety of seminars and workshops covering topics such as acupuncture techniques, herbal medicine, advertising guidelines and care for self/mental well-being. These were well received and feedback from members was positive.

The CMBA relaxed CPD requirements for 2020 due to the hardship of COVID. The AACMA Board also voted to offer a 20% discount in membership fees if paid before November 30. Many members took advantage of this offer with the majority of them renewing the membership earlier than ever before.

Lobbying

Lobbying continued but included very different departments and agencies in our efforts to promote Chinese medicine and its practise especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chief Medical Officer was contacted regarding information on acupuncture and herbal treatments that could be employed in the fight against COVID-19, the Office of Health Protection, which is responsible for the National Stockpile, was approached to include Chinese medicine practitioners as allied health and thus primary care providers in the distribution of masks and hand sanitisers when supplies were limited. Manufacturers and suppliers were also contacted in the hope of securing supplies of personal protective equipment for members.

Private health funds were advised by AACMA that as first aid courses were not being run due to COVID restrictions, members whose first aid training renewal fell due during lockdown would not be able to comply with those requirements. This resulted in health funds relaxing their requirements with practitioners able to continue to practice and complete their first aid training as soon as courses resumed.

Submissions were made to the ACCC for inclusion of telehealth rebates for Chinese medicine treatments. While the ACCC ruled that health funds could provide rebates for telehealth consultations, the health funds chose not to provide this benefit to their members.

AACMA also lobbied the CMBA to provide a discount in registration renewal fees as many practitioners were financially affected by the lockdowns. The CMBA responded with a 15% discount for practitioners for their 2020 registration.

Lobbying for the inclusion of acupuncture into Medicare's Chronic Disease Management (CDM) continued but unfortunately was stalled due to the Government's response to COVID. The NHMRC was to hand down its report on the evidence AACMA provided in the submission for the CDM but the need to assess the various COVID vaccines for the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) naturally took precedence. AACMA continues to maintain contact with the relevant people and departments involved, to be able to progress this submission. It is hoped that the NHMRC report will be published in September 2021.

AACMA collaborated with other Chinese medicine associations to submit a proposal to the TGA for their November sitting. The proposal put forward was to have Zhi Fu Zi (prepared aconitum carmichaelii) rescheduled on the Poisons Standard or have Chinese medicine herbalists added to

the authorised users list. The proposal advanced to the next stage with a call for public comment due by 27.01.2021. The Advisory Committee on Medicines Scheduling will meet again in March 2021 to decide if the proposal is successful.

Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Research Bank

As promised last year, work has commenced on the research bank. All current Chinese medicine studies will be assessed for quality and rigour and divided into two sections. Section one will be the studies that are suitable to be used as references in advertising and section two will be quality studies that will enhance and inform clinical practice but may not meet Ahpra advertising standards. This research bank will include any studies included in Chinese medicine treatments- acupuncture, herbal medicine, tui na, Qi Gong, Chinese remedial massage, gua sha, cupping and Chinese dietetics. It will be available to all but free to AACMA members. Fees paid by non-members to access information will be ploughed back into sustaining this resource.

Social Media

AACMA has continued to post on its Facebook page to engage the public and promote Chinese medicine and AACMA members. A Community Service Announcement (CSA) promoting the use of acupuncture for pain relief was filmed for release during 2020, but again, due to COVID, this campaign has been held over for release in 2021. Contracts with Sky and Win TV have been negotiated for the CSA to be shown during prime time viewing.

In Closing

Despite the challenges faced in 2020, the Board and office staff has worked hard to maintain member services while coping with the extra demands that the pandemic created.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members, also volunteers, who have given up enormous amounts of time from family and clinic to be able to contribute to our association. A team who has continued to work well together, Richard Li, (Vice President) Rose Pinter (Secretary) Drew Matfin (Audit and Risk) and Michael Popplewell (Director) Thank you!

Our office staff under the guidance of CEO Paul Stadhams, has very capably supported the Board; Yan (accounts), Mia (events), Elena (membership), Chris (membership) and Ethan (reception) thank you for all your hard work on behalf of the members and Board even more especially because of the hardship of working from home.

9. FINANCIAL REPORT

The report was presented by Andrew Matfin, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. A full report can be found in the Annual Report which has been provided to members.

COVID19 caused a significant change in the Board and operational financial approach and budget. The AACMA was able to navigate an unprecedented year of financial uncertainty, achieving financial growth due to the adjustments made and with the considerable aid that came in being Jobkeeper eligible.

2020 profit was just under \$195,000.

Staff payroll is the largest expense of AACMA operations and remains stable from 2019.

The cancellation of AACMAC 2020 and in person State Committee CPD events substantially changed the revenue and expense figures of the AACMA profit and loss statement. But these

balanced out to make only a minimal difference in actual profit outcome due to such events being run mostly as member services rather than profit raising exercises.

Board approved major expenses included legal and media representation, and production of the Pain advertising campaign which had a delayed launch in April 2021.

At the end of 2020, AACMA was in a strong financial position with a small increase in membership numbers. As such the strong fiscal status of the AACMA allowed the Board to provide a 20% discount package to 2021 membership fees to help alleviate the financial impact of COVID19 on members.

Thanks to Yan, Paul, and fellow Board members for assisting in the smooth running of AACMA finances in 2020.

10. ACCEPTANCE OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ANNUAL REPORT

Andrew Matfin moved that the Financial Statements and Annual Report including the Auditor's Report, be accepted as tabled.

The motion was seconded by Michael Popplewell. Members accepted the report unanimously.

11. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Report presented by CEO Paul Stadhams.

With the advent of COVID 19, the administration office has worked remotely and has been able to remain flexible. The CEO and Ethan (reception) have been present in the office during the week except in lockdown with others working from home during the week and attending on Thursdays. Meetings have been held using Zoom. The new phone system has allowed for much greater flexibility and communication.

In 2020 the Board agreed to move to a new contract with Bond, an Australian company, for their webservices. All data is now kept safely in Australia. This change has really brought the Association forward. Yan (Finance) and Elena (Membership) did most of the work transferring information over to the new system and learning to operate in it. This has improved invoice payment and online access for members.

During the beginning of the pandemic, the Association was receiving the same information as the general community despite trying to stay in touch with Federal and State health bodies. We also reached out to other allied health associations, not just Chinese medicine associations, to get the latest information and updates. It became more and more difficult as time went on as each state had different lockdown rulings and information. For example Victorian rules do not class Chinese medicine as allied health. However as we have contacts within allied health we were able to push for Ahpra rulings.

We did have concerns initially that member numbers may drop off due to COVID restrictions and loss of income, but that did not occur. Due to the access to Jobkeeper and other grants, the Board were able to pass on a 20% discount to members for fees.

We are also very aware how hard it is to get CPD opportunities to regional members and those in lockdown which is why we offered online CPD. This was done with the help of members who

volunteered, such as John McDonald and others who volunteered their time and content, as well as the provision of recordings from previous AACMACs. This gave members 33 hours of free online CPD. The Wednesday night sessions were popular as were the hybrid events giving access to Q and A sessions with speakers. The average member attendance to the sessions was 300 which was really pleasing.

A decision has been to no longer produce the Jing Luo as an electronic magazine. The trial of the magazine in this form had less than 100 downloads from over 2000 members. Instead, the Jing Luo will now be an interactive web interface. This new approach will not only provide members with access to articles and industry news, but by utilising a QR Code, patients sitting in your waiting room can use their phones to also gain access. We see this as a major improvement and with COVID Safe plans meaning that physical magazines and brochures are no longer an option, the new Jing-Luo will give people a better level of access. New Articles will be put up as well as access to all previous articles and allow for the presentation of research papers also.

Social media was put into hibernation last year, with static ads with a book now feature. This year that book now feature with shorts from the new Community Service Announcement is getting good use.

Thank you to all in the office for their transition through this challenging year.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

These notices of motion A and B were tabled and read out by the Chair.

12.1. RESOLUTION A

Appointment of Auditors for the year ended 31st December 2021.

Members are asked to consider and if agreed resolve that, Independent Audit Services be reappointed as auditors for the year ending 31st December 2021.

The motion was moved by Waveny Holland and seconded by Michael Popplewell.

Members voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

12.2. SPECIAL RESOLUTION B

Ex gratia payments to Directors.

Members are asked to consider and if agreed resolve that, in accordance with Section 5.1.3 of the Constitution of the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd, the basis of ex gratia payments to directors for the 2021 calendar year to the 2022 AGM shall remain unchanged. That is, the total amount shall not exceed \$60,000, the distribution of which is at the Board's discretion. In addition, Directors must, at their own expense complete Board approved, Director and Governance training.

Explanation of Special Resolution B

In 2019 the Board moved that there is a requirement for all Directors to undertake approved governance training within six months of election or appointment to the Board.

The motion was moved by Waveny Holland and seconded by Michael Popplewell.

Members voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

The current breakdown of these ex gratia payments for five Directors are listed below:

Five Directors	Total Base Honorarium	Quarterly Honorarium
Chair	\$13,846.16	\$3,461.54
Vice Chair	\$11,538.46	\$2,884.61
Director	\$11,538.46	\$2,884.61
Director	\$11,538.46	\$2,884.62
Director	\$11,538.46	\$2,884.62
Total Outlay	\$60,000.00	\$15,000.00

13. DECLARATION OF BALLOT

This year, two nominations were received for the two vacant Elected Director positions, in accordance with the AACMA Constitution. No election was required. The nominees are;

Rose Pinter
Rodd Sanchez

The Chair moved the motion that the two nominees for Elected Director be accepted in accordance with the AACMA Constitution.

Michael Popplewell seconded the motion. Members voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

14. 2021 / 2022 BOARD MEMBERS

The Chair thanked Michael Popplewell for his time and contribution to the Board and wished him well for his future endeavours.

The Chair announced the full 2020 / 2021 AACMA Board of Directors.

Waveny Holland	Term expires at 2022 AGM
Richard Li	Term expires at 2022 AGM
Andrew Matfin	Term expires at 2022 AGM
Rosemary Pinter	Term expires at 2023 AGM
Rodd Sanchez	Term expires at 2023 AGM

15. GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair to called for any items of General Business.

A question was raised from the floor by Xiaomai Zhang (#3001) asking for information. Has AACMA been doing anything re Chinese medicine practitioners being part of Medicare. She stated that she had a letter regarding the FCMA/CMASA submission to MSAC re Chronic Disease Management inclusion had been told it had been refused and the issue had come to an end.

The Chair responded by stating that the issue was still ongoing and discussions had not come to an end. AACMA has been in constant contact with Federal Health Minister Hunt, NHMRC and other bodies regarding this issue. AACMA did not join the FCMA push as we were already engaged with a different approach. Unfortunately, COVID has slowed negotiations down but not ended them.

A further question was raised from the floor by John McDonald (#114), asking if AACMA could ask AHPRA about changing the current term/terminology 'high quality' that they use for the level of research required for use in advertising as it is unrealistic. He suggested that a systematic review with moderate quality would be better. Could we get them to clarify their position statement

The Chair replied that she had actioned this request of his in 2020 at the Chinese Medicine Reference Group and the response was that the 'high quality' requirement was endorsed by all of the 15 Boards and that they were not going to review or change those rulings.

The Chair raised an item regarding the newest initiative from the Board this year. The programme is intended to help Chinese medicine students, both AACMA student members and non-members to get started after graduation. It would offer them the opportunity to do half hour quality workshops with senior practitioners. The proposal has been very well received by all universities approached except for UTS which is unfortunately closing down its course.

16. MEETING CLOSED

The Chair thanked members for attending in person and online. We are all thinking of those in Melbourne under lockdown at this time.

The meeting closed at 14.50pm AEST.