



Chair's Report 2012-13

Sleep Health Foundation Board 2013

Maree Barnes
Dorothy Bruck
Peter Cistulli
Graham Gourd
Matthew Harris
David Hillman, Chair
Craig Hukins
Doug McEvoy
Joseph Soda

It is a pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Sleep Health Foundation (the "Foundation") for the 2012-2013 Financial year. The Foundation is a national organisation devoted to education, advocacy and supporting research into sleep and its disorders. Over the last year we welcomed Craig Hukins as a new ASA nominee to the Board and Graham Gourd as incoming chair of our Business Council. We were pleased to retain Matthew Harris on our Board as an independent director.

The Sleep Health Foundation has continued to grow and develop. Some of our achievements over the last year have included:

- Further development of **our Website** (www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au) with a fresh new format and new facilities that allow our own staff to directly load material on to it. This allows a far more efficient, rapidly responsive and inexpensive approach, with new material regularly posted, providing vibrancy not previously possible. The format is attractive and contemporary, presenting a sophisticated window to the world. Helen Burdette has skilfully led these developments.
- Further expansion of our **information library**. This much acclaimed resource sits on our website as freely downloadable documents, consistent with our public education mission. We are now also producing trifold versions for sale. Apart from the public, the resource is proving popular with journalists as they seek easily digestible, accurate information with which to resource their material. Dot Bruck and Maree Barnes have led these activities.
- Engagement with social media. We now have a **Facebook** page AND a whole lot of "likes". Louise Tanguay has worked with Helen to set this up. It is an important tool with which to engage the community and has helped create growing interest in us and our website. A sharp and progressive increase in traffic to the website has followed this development. Facebook and our ongoing work with the **Healthshare** website ensure a strong social media presence.
- An **audit of knowledge and attitudes to sleep health** amongst national political and administrative leaders conducted early this year by Government Relations Australia, a bi-

partisan strategic consulting firm specialising in Australian public policy and government affairs. This was very revealing, illustrating just how little understanding of sleep health issues exist in Canberra and just how much work needs to be done to get the sleep health message onto the national agenda. Apart from the public health implications, progress in issues relevant to sleep medicine and sleep science will painfully slow until this is done.

- More positively, ongoing communication with insightful senators led to the **unanimous passing of a motion in the Senate** drawing attention to the work of the Foundation and to the necessity to pursue Sleep Health issues. The Foundation will pursue this over the coming year, in partnership with the ASA. We intend to instigate a grass roots campaign where members (and their patients) directly approach their parliamentarians to inform them of these concerns, combined with a series of meetings with national leaders in Canberra.
- Development of a **Code of Practice for Suppliers of Sleep Therapies** to encourage best practice in an otherwise poorly regulated market. This is to be rolled out at the ASA Annual meeting. The final document has been approved by the ASA Board.
- Related to this, **our ongoing relationship with the ASA**, with close attention to ensure that the public education concerns of the Foundation interface appropriately with the professional concerns of the ASA. The Board of the ASA have been very supportive and helpful, lead by Shantha Rajaratnam, Nick Antic and Stephanie Blower. Their support is an essential ingredient in our accomplishments.
- We continue to work with **Sleep Disorders Australia**, and look forward to continuing this relationship.
- Joint sponsorship with the ASA of a **special sleep edition of the Medical Journal of Australia** due to appear soon. The target audience is GPs and other medical specialists, although the MJA is also a popular referable source for journalists and the material will be an ongoing resource for them.
- An invigorated **media service**, run by Lucy Williams that has seen a steady stream of press, radio and television articles about sleep throughout the year.
- The success of **the Cooperative Research Centre for Alertness, Safety and Productivity** bid, of which the Sleep Health Foundation is a partner and contributor to its public education outreach plans. This partnership will bring additional shared resources to this area, allowing further expansion of the Foundation's activities.
- Ongoing support and input from our **Business Council**, an instrument which provides business know how for our organisation and allows us to refine ideas to better align professional principles with commercial realities as we seek to improve sleep health and sleep health practices.
- With the encouragement of the Business Council, plans to engage a **business development officer** to expand our funding base through new partnerships and programmes. These will include engagement with businesses seeking to both back and be seen to back the sleep health message. We have had unsolicited approaches from a number of high profile businesses over the last year and are developing a **value proposition** for them which codifies how we would relate to them in this area. This is significant work required here and we are concerned not to delay this unduly as we do not want the right opportunities to go begging.
- Ongoing sponsorship, with the Resmed Foundation, of the **"ResMed Foundation/Sleep Health Foundation Research Entry Scholarship"**. This scholarship, which is administered by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, addresses an important need to encourage young sleep physicians or physician trainees to engage in research in sleep medicine.

Membership

SHF membership continues to grow steadily under three basic classes of membership:

- **Individual Member**
- **Life Member**
- **Partners and Donors**
 - *Platinum Partners*
 - *Silver Partners*
 - *Bronze Partners*
 - *Corporate Members*

Finances

It is an ongoing challenge to balance our ambitions to expand our activities, and the encouragement we get to do so, with financial reality. The Foundation's structure is relatively low cost, which protects it from failure. We are aware, however, that failing to invest in key initiatives puts success at risk.

Over the last year our media budget has increased, reflecting a growth in this activity and we have been forced to trim other projects as a result. Our balance sheet remains healthy and we are looking to expand our income base over the coming year through our involvement with the CRC in Alertness, Safety and Productivity and through fund raising initiatives to be driven by a business development officer.

Our finances are detailed in the audited *Financial Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2013* that accompanies this report.

Our Donors and Members

Without the ongoing support and commitment of our major donors, Philips Home Healthcare Solutions, Resmed Limited, Fisher & Paykel Healthcare, Air Liquide and BioCSL the Foundation would not have the resources to support all these activities. Apart from their financial help our major donors are important contributors to our work through their advice and input to our Business Council. We are very grateful for their involvement.

Our Members are vital to our success as well. Demonstrating through their membership that our efforts have the support of sleep clinicians and scientists has enormous impact. In addition, their contributions through subscriptions, donations, input into our educational material, and helping dealing with media enquiries are invaluable direct help. We want to broaden our membership base and look to increasing membership numbers. Active involvement in our affairs is very much welcomed, but we understand many will be happy enough to support without seeking to add to already busy workloads.

The Year Ahead

Our activities this year have built on the year before. We have been challenged by the low profile sleep health has in the minds of our national leadership, but encouraged by the support we have received through their comments, from the senate and from the national funding success of our CRC in Alertness, Productivity and Safety partners. We are also encouraged by the enthusiastic engagement we have had with the community through our media, website and social media

initiatives. We know we have important messages to convey. We remain constrained by our narrow income base. We have more work to do.

One of the most rewarding and inspiring aspects of engagement in this project is to be surrounded by people of vision and purpose. Special thanks to our hard working Board and, particularly, to Helen Burdette who has worked tirelessly on Foundation business over the last year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DH', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

David Hillman

Chair, Sleep Health Foundation