



**October 2019**

## **President's Report**

Dear Colleague,

It is my intention to report to you periodically about College affairs.

### **1. Annual General Meeting**

This was held at AMA Queensland offices on 25 July. During the meeting, Dr Deb Mills presented a most interesting case of a child presenting with Kawasaki disease following a BCG inoculation.

### **2. Membership**

This remains a major concern. It is essential that we make College membership attractive to the professions and implement the strategies discussed at the Planning Meeting as soon as possible.

### **3. Planning Meeting**

This day-long executive planning meeting was held at AMAQ on July 25. Amongst matters discussed were:

- a) The selection of future conference organisers,
- b) Integration of Travel Health nurses into the College,
- c) Membership, the need for a communications and membership director,
- d) A quarterly newsletter,
- e) The Journal - the need for the College to have a higher profile and for the editor to give a brief report at each Council meeting, the desirability of having top researchers writing an editorial for each issue,
- f) The need to develop stronger links with toxicologists and ASID and their members contributing to our scientific meetings,
- g) Regional meetings, to be held in key centres each year
- h) Encourage research by developing a research grant for junior scientists through financial support of pharmaceutical companies.
- i) A call for submission of scientific papers. The best paper to be granted a monetary award, presentation of the work at an ACTM scientific meeting and its publication in the journal.
- j) Fellowship by distinction. Two recent appointments to the Journal editorial board have been invited to join the College as Fellows. This is different to the election of an Honorary Fellow, a College member who has made an outstanding contribution to the science of Tropical Medicine and/or the College.

- k) Travel Health Advisory Group. The College has two members serving on this committee and we are now inviting applicants for one appointee is retiring. More information may be obtained from the Secretary.

#### **4. 4th Southern Cross Travel Medicine Conference**

This highly successful meeting was attended by 173 registrants and held at Park Royal Hotel Darling Harbour Sydney on 4-6 September.

College members were entitled to a reduced fee.

There were 24 speakers including three international lecturers a significant contribution to the scientific programme by New Zealand members.

Three workshops were held during the meeting, including a highly successful collaboration with scientist and veterinary surgeons to discuss zoonotic disease in Australia. It is planned to hold similar workshops next year and add a program on toxinology-bites and stings being an important aspect of morbidity in the tropics and sub-tropics.

For the first time the SCTM conference was accredited by RACGP, RNZCGP and ACCRM for continuing education points. The process of obtaining accreditation is long and complex and we are very appreciative of the efforts of our administrative officer, Jennifer Burgess.

We took the opportunity at the meeting to promote the College and were ably supported by Jennifer Burgess, and Margy Smith from New Zealand and new members were recruited.

No conference can be successful without a dedicated team and we are appreciative of the work of the Organising and Scientific committees, the latter chaired by Bernie Hudson.

#### **5. 5th SCTM**

It is planned to hold next year's conference in Melbourne, from 4-6 September. Further information will be provided early in the new year.

#### **6. Honorary Fellowship for Professor Rose McGready**

During the Opening Ceremony of the 4th SCTM Conference it gave me much pleasure to confer Honorary Fellowship of the Australian College of Tropical Medicine on Professor Rose McGready. Rose, a College member, graduated from Sydney University and studied tropical medicine with your president at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. She then took up an appointment in the Oxford Department of Medicine at Mia Sot on the Thai-Burma border where she has remained for more than 25 years. She has been Professor of Medicine for some years. Rose is one of the world's most eminent authorities on malaria in pregnancy and continues to make an outstanding contribution to medical science in a wide range of tropical diseases whilst showing great compassion for refugees.

She has over 300 publications and been honoured in the United States and by Sydney University. We are delighted to have Rose as an active member and she is keen to continue her close links to the College.

### **7. The Role of the College in the Scientific Community.**

Frequently, we as a College are asked to provide an opinion on matters relating to tropical disease. It is generally agreed that the status of a medical college (as distinct from an association) depends on the quality of its contribution to medical science. To this end, we wish to encourage and support research in fields related to tropical disease and recruit to our membership medical scientists in Australia and New Zealand so that we are seen as the body to be consulted on matters pertaining to tropical disease. Last year, Emeritus Professor Graham Brown AM and I were invited to appear before the Australian Senate Inquiry into the use of mefloquine and tafenoquine by members of the Australian Defence Force. This year we received a similar request from lawyers appearing for the British Army in a claim for compensation by former serving members. Whilst we both declined the latter invitation, it reflected well on the College that its members were so approached.

### **8. Travel Health Nurses**

Travel Health Nurses play an important role in preparing intending travellers for their time in the tropics. The College is keen that these nurses be recognised by the College by becoming members. Discussions are under way with them to form a Travel Health Nurses Group as part of the College.

### **9. Connecting with Members**

It is planned to hold a dinner for members in major regional centres each year at which eminent clinicians and medical scientists working in tropical medicine will speak.

### **10. Tropical Health and Infectious Diseases TMID - the College Journal**

The journal has been widely acclaimed for the quality of its articles however as the College 'masthead' we are planning to have an eminent authority write an editorial for each issue and have a page in each issue detailing matters of interest to College members,

I would again like to thank the members of the Executive, Council, and Jennifer Burgess for the time and thought they all put into the College on your behalf.

Professor Geoff Quail OAM  
MBBS, PhD, DDS, MMed, FRCP, FACTM, FRACGP, DTM&H  
President.