

It is several months since our last Newsletter. In February the New Zealand Hepatitis Foundation ran a very a successful meeting – The 2nd New Zealand Viral Hepatitis Conference "Optimising Therapy for Hepatitis B & C" in Whakatane. The NZSG congratulates John Hornell, the Foundation CEO and conference convenor, for this success and we hope this becomes a regular event.

We are entering into a busy phase of the year with our forthcoming IBD Symposium, changes in our Secretariat, end of financial year and most importantly advertising and awarding the NZSG Fellowship for research in New Zealand.

1. Changes in our Office

I am sorry to report that our Administration Officer, Fran Horsley, who is based in the RACP Office in Wellington, has resigned having been lured away with an offer to good to refuse. In the short time she has been working with us she has done a superb job in improving our office functions and as a result everything is being run a lot smoother. The RACP Office will be appointing a replacement for Fran. We wish her well in her new position.

2. NZ Society of Gastroenterology Fellowship

Ferring NZ Ltd has for some time generously supported a Research Fellowship in conjunction with the NZ Society of Gastroenterology. This Fellowship will again be offered for 2008. The intention of the support is for a New Zealand trainee or Consultant to work in research within New Zealand for a 12 month period. The amount of the Fellowship is up to \$50,000 and the applicant can use it for living expenses whilst doing the research or can put it towards costs of the research. An interim and full report, with an expectation of presentation to the NZ Society Scientific Meeting is required as well as acknowledgement of the support in any publications arising from the work.

Information for applicants is available on the Website or from Fran Horsley at the RACP Office in Wellington.

The closing date for applications is July 4, 2008. The successful applicant will be announced at the IBD Symposium in Auckland on Friday July 25.

3. Changes to NZSG Rules (Constitution)

The new Rules for our Society have been incorporated and are now effective. The important changes are listed below:

- More than 1 member of the Executive can come from the same centre.
- There is still a requirement to have at least one member of the Executive from the South Island.
- There are now up to six Ordinary Members of Executive. As a result of this there will be a number of positions available on the Executive this year and nomination forms will be sent out in September this year. Voting for the Ordinary Executive Member positions will remain by postal ballot.

- Co-opted membership of the Executive has been modified with the intention that co-opted Members are project or issue orientated and are co-opted for a limited period of time.
- You can now vote by proxy at the AGM or EGM. Proxy nomination forms will be sent out with the notice of AGM or EGM.

4. Australia and New Zealand Amalgamation

As you all aware the GESA vote for amalgamation to form GANZA did not reach the required numbers to be accepted. Both Murray Barclay and John Wyeth as President and President-Elect respectively have been in correspondence and discussion with the GESA Executive. There is a strong willingness from GESA council for a closer working relationship with New Zealand and further discussions will be held in the near future. We will keep you informed of progress.

5. World Digestive Health Day 2008

A statement from the President of the World Gastroenterology Organisation, Eamonn Quigley, is included below. The NZSG are affiliated with the WGO.

"Each year the World Gastroenterology Organisation celebrates World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) on the 29th of May, the anniversary of the founding of the organisation in Washington DC, USA in 1958, by highlighting an important topic in the area of digestive health and disease. Such has been the success of prior topics, such as helicobacter pylori and hepatitis, which this year we have extended activities around this year's topic, nutrition and digestive health to cover the entire year. We are delighted that, in this year when we celebrate our 50th anniversary, so many activities relating to this crucial topic are being planned by our colleagues in national societies throughout the world. Working together we can make fellow health care professionals, the general public and our governments more aware of issues, local, national and global, relating to nutrition and, especially, as they relate to digestive health and disease."

NZSG is planning to raise awareness of Digestive Health Issues in New Zealand and is considering both topics and how we could achieve this. If any members wish to submit suggestions please contact us. The website for the WGO is below:

www.worldgastroenterology.org

6. NZ Conjoint Committee for Endoscopy Training

Unfortunately there is an increase in fees for applications for recognition of training to the Conjoint Committee to \$200 per application. The role of the Conjoint Committee is becoming increasingly important and this increase reflects these extra demands and associated costs. The Conjoint Committee is working closely with Australia to ensure similar standards are being adhered to in both countries. There will be some new challenges ahead if a national colorectal cancer screening program is launched, to ensure levels of endoscopic competency are maintained.

7. Regional Meetings

It is important to support our regional neighbour societies. Here are some of the forthcoming meetings in our region:

- 9th Inflammatory Bowel Disease Symposium, Auckland, July 25-26.
- APDDW, New Delhi, www.apdw2008.net/, 13-16 Sept
- AGW, Brisbane, www.gesa.org.au, 22-26 Oct
- NZSG Annual Scientific Meeting, Rotorua, www.gastro2008.co.nz, 19-21
Nov

Check the website for regular updates.

8. Contact Us

Our secretariat is now centralised in the RACP College Offices in Wellington and we have the services of an administration officer. It is now much easier to contact us if needed and all NZSG information is held on the one site. Also check www.nzsg.org.nz for Society information.

Contact details are:

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