

2015

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Building on the work of previous years, 2015 has seen a continued emphasis on providing valuable services and benefits to the more than 22,000 APS members in their diverse professional roles. The APS has worked hard to provide comprehensive information and advice, and a large range of professional resources and networking opportunities to keep members up-to-date, connected and supported in the fast-paced world of psychology. The vast array of continuing professional development (CPD) offered this year by the APS Institute, APS Member Groups, and the suite of prominent APS Conferences has ensured considerable opportunities and support for the continuing education and development of our members.

The APS maintained a strong advocacy role using its expertise and experience to actively represent psychology to government and other regulators and key organisations. A particular focus this year was on contributing and responding to the National Mental Health Commission's Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services.

Throughout this past year, the APS has contributed significantly to community wellbeing through submissions to a variety of inquiries, through important funded projects concerning children's mental health, forced adoption and Indigenous psychology education, and through delivering public statements on such issues as racism, refugees and marriage equality.

In sharing this brochure, I would like to sincerely thank all those who have contributed to the substantial achievements of the APS in 2015 – members, office bearers and others who willingly volunteer their time on committees, APS National Office staff, and Directors on the Board.

Lyn Littlefield

Professor Lyn Littlefield OAM FAPS
APS Executive Director

Our vision

Psychology enhances all aspects of Australian life.

Our mission

The APS is dedicated to advancing the discipline and profession of psychology for the benefit of members and the communities they serve.

Our values

The conduct, activities and decision making of the APS and its member groups are guided by these values:

- Proactive and responsive
 - Making a difference
- Integrity and professionalism
 - Respectful relationships.

Member services and resources

Information, advice and resources

Comprehensive provision of information

Members were kept abreast of the latest information and professional updates through a range of communications.

- *InPsych*, the APS bulletin, featured updates on developments in professional practice, science and education, and topic-based reviews offering psychological perspectives on domestic violence, assessment of capacity, pornography, creativity, and psychologist self-care.
- APS Matters provided access to the latest developments in psychology, professional resources and CPD opportunities.
- The APS website provided access to all psychology news, research and member-only resources, while e-newsletters from APS Branches, Colleges and Interest Groups delivered more focused updates.

Expert advisory services

The APS Professional Advisory Service and the Member Assistance Centre responded to almost 12,000 member queries about professional and ethical issues, membership issues, and study information.

Enhanced ethics resources

Revised ethical guidelines provided guidance in a range of complex professional situations including providing pro bono psychological services, providing services in response to disasters, and providing services for and research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In addition, the *Charter for clients of APS psychologists* was updated and the suite of 'Q & A' ethical guidance resources was expanded.

New professional practice resources

A wide range of new professional resources were developed to support members including a privacy and confidentiality guide for school psychologists, resources on psychological testing, information on contracting arrangements, a suite of 'How to' guides and 'Comfortably compliant' guidance.

EQIP online resources

EQIP (Evidence-based and Quality Information for Psychologists) continued to develop new content to support psychological assessment and treatment across a range of conditions. The member-only site attracts over 2,000 visits per month, with 97 per cent of users rating the content they read as 'helpful'.

APS Division Forums

The Forums of the three APS Divisions (APS Colleges, General Psychological Practice, and Psychological Research, Education and Training) gave APS members further opportunities to find communities of interest within the APS in which to air their concerns and have their needs attended to through tailored resource development, advocacy and policy responses.

Expansion of APS social media profile

APS's social media profile expanded to more than double the number of subscribers to a total of 25,000 people across five APS Facebook pages and four APS Twitter accounts. A growing number of APS Branches and Interest Groups also improved their social media reach.

Recruitment for member research

A total of 59 member research projects seeking subjects were published in APS Matters and listed on the APS website during 2014-15.

Employment and business assistance

Quality professional indemnity insurance

Aon continued to provide a high quality professional indemnity insurance product as the APS approved insurance broker. A large number of members utilised Aon's two hours of free legal advice per year, and information sessions were held at APS Branches across the country.

Extensive Find a Psychologist Service

More than 2,400 APS psychologists in private practice were listed on the searchable database, which attracted more than 1,000 searches per day.

APS Member Identity Program

A total of 3,543 members registered for the APS Member Identity Program which enables the use of a member version of the APS logo to enhance public recognition as an APS psychologist.

Employment opportunities through PsychXchange

PsychXchange attracted 1,768 employment advertisements and 406 classifieds during 2014-15, attracting nearly 2 million page views.

Upgraded APS Advantage member discount program

The APS Advantage program was upgraded to include new partnerships including Footprint Books and Member Benefits Australia alongside existing partnerships with One Path, AMP, Wiley and AON.

Empowering students and early career members

Students and early career psychologists comprise almost one-third of the APS membership. The APS continued to focus on supporting these members in the early stages of their psychology journeys.

Psych Student HQ

This dedicated section of the APS website continued to provide resources, events (including student mentoring initiatives, conference volunteering information, and study information sessions), FAQs, and news for those studying psychology.

Early career resource hub

The early career resource hub was recently launched online, bringing together a suite of valuable resources and career development initiatives aimed at engaging, connecting and supporting members at this formative time in their careers.

Student and early career voice to the APS Board

A dedicated student engagement advisory group to the APS Board ensured that the needs of student members were highlighted and addressed, and a similar advisory group for early career psychologists is in the process of being established.

Student O-Week campaign

In early 2015 the APS undertook a student O-Week campaign to introduce the APS to students across Australian universities.

APS student facebook page

The APS student Facebook page attracted 3,680 'likes' and provided an important source of information and networking for students.

Continuing professional development and support



In 2015, the APS Institute continued to offer members and other allied health professionals around Australia a range of high quality continuing professional development (CPD) including:

- 13 self-paced online *eLearning courses* across a range of topics
- 64 *national workshops* delivered around Australia by experts on high demand professional topics
- 18 *national webinars* with expert facilitators on topical issues relevant to psychologists
- Psychology Board of Australia-approved full supervisor training consisting of: *Full training = 2 online courses + 10 2-day workshops; 11 Masterclasses.*
- 3 *APS Practice Certificate programs* in *Disaster Support, Sleep Psychology, and Services for Older Adults.*

During the year, the inaugural members of the APS Institute Board of Studies were appointed and commenced their important work.

Presentation of six prominent conferences

Six prominent conferences were presented including the APS Annual Conference and the conferences of the APS Clinical, Neuropsychology, Counselling, Forensic and Health Colleges, providing members with high quality CPD focused on the latest developments in practice and research in psychology.

Member Groups CPD events

A total of 448 Member Groups CPD events on a vast array of psychological topics were presented by the 213 constituent APS groups throughout Australia comprising Branches, Colleges and Interest Groups. These local and focused CPD workshops and seminars were attended by 12,585 delegates during 2014-15.

Upgraded APS Events Calendar

Since the launch of the upgraded APS Events Calendar in early 2015, 350 events have been listed and the Events Calendar has received 768,453 page views, cementing its position as the premier site for psychology events in Australia.

Access to scientific literature online

Online access to scientific literature was facilitated for members through arrangements with Proquest for Proquest Psychology Journals and MEDLINE. This provided members with online access to full text publications and other resources to support their CPD needs.

Peer consultation networks

APS peer consultation networks were facilitated through the APS Member Group Member Directories, with 3,263 members across the 40 Branches in Australia indicating their interest to be involved.

Peer reviewed APS journals

The stable of peer-reviewed APS journals continued to provide members with both national and international high quality articles in areas of interest. Three prominent APS journals continued to attract international standing and high impact factors:

- Australian Journal of Psychology – 0.719;
- Australian Psychologist – 0.753; and
- Clinical Psychologist – 0.933.

Online supervisor registers

Three online supervisor registers enabled members seeking formal supervision arrangements to easily access appropriately qualified APS psychologists with:

- 2,567 members listed on the APS College Supervisors Directory;
- 2,936 members listed as being available to provide supervision for provisional psychologists; and
- 151 members listed on the School Psychologist Supervisor Register.

Online CPD logging tool

The online CPD logging tool continued to be widely used by members to log their completed CPD and track their individual progress towards meeting their CPD requirements. Members selected for random audit by the Psychology Board of Australia used the report feature of the logging tool to generate detailed CPD logs for submission.

Facilitating high standards of education and practice

APS Awards

The APS honoured excellence in psychology with eleven distinguished and early career psychologists receiving awards for valued contributions to the science, education and practice of psychology.

The APS Prize for the top student in accredited fourth year psychology programs in Australian higher education institutions was awarded to 39 students.

The APS Bendi Lango bursary

To support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their postgraduate professional psychology studies, the 2014 Bendi Lango bursary was awarded to an Indigenous student undertaking a Master of Psychology (Clinical) at the University of Melbourne.

Course development and approval

Approval of postgraduate professional psychology courses was undertaken by APS College Course approval assessors for 38 programs across Australia.

APS is a member of APAC and APS nominees sit on the Board.

Promotion of psychology and support for community wellbeing

The 'We Are Psychology' campaign

The 'We are psychology' promotion campaign aims to increase public recognition and awareness of psychology in Australia while showcasing the diversity of skills of APS psychologists. The campaign has commenced with production of a promotional video portraying psychology's relevance to everyday life, as well as the launch of a new website informing the public about psychology and psychological services across a range of areas.



APS Workplace Excellence Awards

Established in conjunction with the APS College of Organisational Psychologists, the inaugural APS Workplace Excellence Awards attracted entries from companies all over Australia. Twenty-three companies qualified as finalists across seven categories with the awards presented at a Gala Dinner.

Psychology Week (PW)

APS members across Australia reached out to their communities through more than 579 different events during PW 2015. The APS Stress and Wellbeing in Australia survey was conducted for the fifth consecutive year, measuring the stress and wellbeing of Australians, and the impact of social media on stress and wellbeing as well as examining the phenomenon of FOMO (fear of missing out).

Key findings found that Australians are faring worse than in 2011, when the survey began, with higher levels of stress, distress and anxiety and depression symptoms and lower overall wellbeing. Social media and FOMO results indicated that one in two adolescents and one in four adults experience FOMO with heavy users of social media experiencing more FOMO.

The survey findings led the media campaign with the social media and FOMO findings proving a strong angle for the media with significant coverage across print, radio, TV and online in high profile media outlets.

Support for Indigenous issues

The APS remained active on Indigenous issues in 2015 including:

- Committing to the establishment of a new Indigenous Advisory Group to the APS Board to advise the Board on Indigenous issues
- Contributing as a major industry partner to the Australian Indigenous Psychology Education Project (AIPEP)
- Providing the Secretariat for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Advisory Group, on behalf of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association.

Forced adoption practitioner training

The APS was awarded the tender by the Department of Health to develop resources and national online training for health professionals working with people affected by forced adoption. The APS project team has commenced training and resource development, informed by comprehensive consultation, with the online training to be available in early 2016.

Submissions to public inquiries

Nineteen submissions to various public inquiries were prepared, primarily in the areas of family violence, refugee and asylum seeker issues, climate change and disasters, issues impacting on women and older people with disabilities, and the mental health and wellbeing impact of income inequality and changes to welfare policies.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

An expert group of members to inform the APS response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was established and a series of submissions and representations was made focusing on redress and civil litigation for survivors of child sexual abuse in institutions.

Promotion through the media

Promotion of psychology and the APS through the media generated more than 3,200 media items in many of the leading Australian news outlets on topics including access to mental health services, Indigenous wellbeing, refugees and sexual abuse. The APS also facilitated 325 media referrals to APS 'topic experts' across a range of areas affecting community wellbeing.



The APS is a major project partner in KidsMatter which is being implemented in over 2,800 primary schools and 380 early childhood services throughout Australia. With additional funding, KidsMatter continues to assist schools and early childhood services to enhance children's mental health and resilience and recognise and support children who are experiencing difficulties, including providing appropriate referral when required.

MindMatters

The MindMatters mental health initiative for Australian secondary schools underwent significant redevelopment and the APS was funded to write the revised content. The APS project team updated all online information on mental health prevention and made it more engaging for secondary school students.

ATAPS training

The Children's Mental Health Services Professional Development Training and Suicide Prevention Training for ATAPS practitioners, which was developed by the APS with Department of Health funding, was extended to enable further subsidised training places and continuation of the Clinical Support Service through the APS.

Disaster response

Support and resources were provided to APS Branches and communities in response to major disasters including the Martin Place siege, the cyclone in central Queensland, bushfires in South Australia, cyclones in the Northern Territory, the cyclone in Vanuatu and the Nepal earthquake.

Advocacy for psychology

Psychology practice and education

National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services

The APS provided significant proactive input to the National Mental Health Commission's Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services including meetings with National Mental Health Commissioners and officers, Ministers and advisors and senior bureaucrats, to highlight the vital role of psychological knowledge and treatment within Australia's mental health system. The Better Access initiative came under significant scrutiny by the Review and the APS has continued to vigorously advocate for funding psychological services to the Government.

Pre-budget submission

The APS prepared a pre-Budget submission that argued for an emphasis on early intervention in primary health care, including improved access to psychological services for people with a mental illness who reside outside capital cities, as well as for children and families and older Australians, plus psychological support for behavioural change in chronic disease prevention and management.

Psychology Board of Australia

Regular advocacy was undertaken with the Psychology Board of Australia through representation and submissions that in particular addressed the draft guidelines for the 4+2 internship program and the provisional registration standard. The APS provided an extensive submission to the independent review of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

Submissions on key topics

The APS prepared more than 40 submissions to a large range of Senate Inquiries, government reviews and taskforces.

Strategic partnerships and representation

Strategic partnerships with influential entities such as Mental Health Australia and Allied Health Professions Australia enabled the APS to be involved in coordinated advocacy efforts to inform government decisions in mental health and primary health service delivery. Psychology was also represented on over 40 influential committees on government policy development.

State and Territory-based advocacy

State and Territory-based advocacy was undertaken in collaboration with various APS Committees to provide input on a range of local issues including Queensland mental health, WA workers' compensation, NSW suicide management, NSW end-of-life care for people with mental illness, and the Victorian Government Royal Commission into Family Violence.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The roll-out of the NDIS continued to be monitored to identify challenges and opportunities to improve access to psychological services and thus increase the quality of life for people with disability. Feedback was given to the NDIS evaluation team, submissions were provided to the NDIS on its capacity building and quality frameworks, and psychology was represented on various working parties.

Psychology education and training

Advocacy for psychology education and training involved making representations to government about the limited availability of postgraduate placements, and the loss of diversity in postgraduate courses, as well as the funding of psychological research. The APS also developed a submission to include psychology in the national secondary school curriculum and is a partner in conducting a summit in December 2015 on training for the psychology profession.

APS Member Groups at work throughout Australia

The large array of Committees of the APS Branches, State Sections, Colleges and Interest Groups worked hard to meet the local and national needs of APS members across Australia during 2014-15.

448 CPD events

950 approx Member Group Committee Update emails

90 approx Member Group Chairs and Convenors Forums

77 Member Group Awards

APS member contributions – essential to the APS

Many APS members provided their knowledge, expertise and time to inform APS policy and activities in a range of ways including contributing across 13 different APS Board Advisory Groups and Committees, six APS Reference Groups, eight APS Committees and Working Groups, three APS Division Forums and as Editors on six APS journals.