

President's Message



I am delighted with the numerous congratulatory messages that I have received with the launching of the first Journal issue in April 1995. Thank you to sponsors, consumers and contributors for your support. Response to the Journal has been good, and I anticipate that this will continue along with growth, development and interest.

The AICA executive, on behalf of the association, has had a very busy and productive year, not the least of which was being instrumental in meeting the associations major objective of producing this Journal. The constitution is now completed, printed and distributed, and the information brochure dealing with 'Who Are We' was distributed at conference in May. We are pleased to have representation on and contribution to, working groups of Standards Australia and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). We must continue to vigorously promote AICA to maintain a high profile and bring to the attention to all health care professionals and the public, that AICA is an available and valuable resource organisation.

The International Federation of Infection Control (IFIC), recently invited AICA to nominate a member to the board of IFIC. The executive nominated the current standing AICA president, however, as there has not been any board meetings since nomination I have no further information at present. Looking to the future, as you are all aware, the biggest event planned to

take place in the Southern Hemisphere, is the Olympic Games to be held in Sydney in the year 2000. The Infection Control Association of NSW Inc. has the foresight to propose that an International Infection Control Conference be held in Sydney to coincide with the games. What an excellent proposal NSW, and an exciting idea for AICA as there has never been an International Infection Control Conference held in the Southern Hemisphere. As a follow up to this, I have approached the IFIC with the proposal that this be a joint AICAVIFIC venture. Meantime planning must begin and the wonderful Darling Harbour complex has been identified as the probable venue. As soon as relevant information comes to hand it will be disseminated.

It is of some concern to myself and the executive, reading and hearing comments recently made by other health care professionals in relation to Universal Precautions and its role in preventing the transmission of blood borne pathogens. In response AICA executive released a media statement highlighting the need for better understanding of both the terminology and its application by all health care givers.

Universal Precautions is a concept. This terminology is often loosely applied, giving rise to a wide variation of practice. It is important that individual practice methods be planned to address issues of additional risk. Universal precautions is based on the

concept that the body fluids of all persons are potentially infectious. If the risk of contact with any persons body fluid is likely, then assessment and application of safe work practice requirements is essential. Requirements are task oriented, and assessment of level of personal protective attire and approach to the task at hand, will be made based on the understanding of disease transmission. Adoption of safe work practice means all of these guidelines are followed and may include in some instances, modification of previously accepted work practices.

Representing AICA as president for 1994-95 has been rewarding both professionally and personally, providing me with many exciting and stimulating challenges throughout these times of change and advancement. My two years in office are at a close and I am now standing down, it has been a pleasure representing AICA and I pledge my continued support. To the incoming president I extend a very warm welcome and wish you a most successful term of office. To all AICA members and contributors please keep those journal articles coming and help us to ensure the continued success of the Journal.

Alison Pyper
President AICA

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