

BALINT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (BSA)
AGM 9TH AUGUST 2011 7.30pm

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is my pleasure to present the President's report for the Balint Society of Australia for the 2010 / 2011 year.

I believe it is reasonable to say that the BSA Board has had a quite different year in terms of its work in 2010/2011. Most of the time of the Board in the past 12 months, both at regular Board meetings and also at the twice yearly weekend retreats, has been spent in discussion about the structures, functions and future directions of the Society.

The most significant areas of work the Board has covered are the development of a new constitution as a basis for our work as the BSA, and also of an accreditation process for leadership training within the BSA.

The new constitution, which is based on the Model Rules of Incorporated Associations (Vic), has been modified to suit the purposes of the BSA. As must be the case in such situations, much thought and discussion was focused on the details of this document to try to ensure both its present and future relevance to the Society and its members.

The other main work of developing formal accreditation pathways for leadership training has been considered important by the Board in order to ensure ongoing consistency and excellence of the leadership skills available within the BSA. A subcommittee has been established by the Board to develop a framework for the training of new Balint leaders and this small group has accomplished much in establishing the framework.

While on this point of leadership within the BSA, it is important to note that eleven experienced Balint leaders have been 'grandfathered' as accredited leaders during the past 12 months. The names and contact details of these leaders are available on the BSA website. We congratulate these people on their achievements and thank them for their demonstrated skill and commitment to Balint work to date.

An Intensive was organised and held in Melbourne in May 2011. It was fully subscribed with participants from across Australia and New Zealand and for the first time at a BSA Intensive the small group leaders were all from our own organisation. It was a successful and enjoyable event overall and, I believe, assisted in increasing a sense of solidarity within our own Society, and certainly between the two countries.

One of the two motions proposed at this year's AGM is to alter the name of the Balint Society of Australia to the Balint Society of Australia and New Zealand. Following on from successful Intensives in which BSA members from both Australia and New Zealand have collaborated, and also due to the extensive work done by several BSA members notably John Barton and Mark Davis, the ties between the countries are strong in the BSA. There are significant numbers of New Zealand members in the

BSA (approximately 1/3), and Dr Mark Davis from Wellington NZ is now on the Board. The Board has therefore recommended that the name of our Society be altered to reflect and support our countries' ongoing collaboration in Balint work.

The BSA continues to be a member organisation of the International Balint Federation and to participate in various activities run through the IBF. Delegates from the BSA attended a Leaders' Conference in Copenhagen in April this year. A number of BSA members participate in one or more of the many Balint events hosted by other IBF member countries. The biennial IBF conference is to be held in Philadelphia, USA, in September and several BSA members will be attending.

Also there continues to be interesting feedback from a number of BSA members who create Balint activity in new and different ways both within Australia and NZ and around the globe. It is always interesting to learn of new developments in these areas and to appreciate the energies of those involved. The BSA Board is aware that the skills and work of its members are essential to the ongoing work of the Society.

The Board has worked well together during the year and I express my gratitude and appreciation to this group of people who are all devoted, hard-working and enterprising. It is interesting to bounce ideas around amongst the various Board members and in most instances the final decisions are more complete and sound as a consequence. I thank the Board for their generous support and understanding in my first year as President.

Very special thanks must go to John Barton who has tendered his resignation this year after many years of service to the BSA Board, several as its President. John's contribution has been enormous. He has been almost tireless with his interest in and support of Balint work and its Board, and towards anyone who seeks his assistance or advice.

John's patience, warmth, wisdom and inspirational ideas have been invaluable as many will attest. His work in establishing Balint networks in NZ has been fundamental, and he assures us his work in this area in particular will continue. As a Board we offer our great thanks and gratitude and, although we regret his decision to resign, do wish him a more restful time than he has had in recent years.

Finally I would like to discuss some proposed directions for the Balint Society for the forthcoming year. As a Board we are hoping that an Intensive will be able to be held annually so we are planning for an Intensive in 2012. The Board has as stated earlier been very involved in its internal work for 2010/11, but now that most of our aims in this regard have been accomplished we anticipate directing more of our energies outwards as a Society in 2011/12. Holding scientific meetings is an area of activity we are keen to renew, expecting to host these in several regions during the year. It is hoped that our connections as a Society with relevant educational organisations and institutions can be extended and strengthened, and that our networks with interested groups will continue to grow. This is all with the aim of developing the work, the Balint method, that we all value.

Sally Manuell