



# EpiGram

The Newsletter of the Epidemiology Chapter of the ACVSc

Volume 09 - 10/2, June 2010

## President's Report

*Barbara Moloney*

Science Week is rapidly approaching, with the usual excellent standard of Pre-Conference Workshop and Scientific Session. The Science Week organising committee, headed by Chris Morley, has done an outstanding job in preparation for this year's offering, which includes a day on human-animal health interface, a full day joint session with the Wildlife Chapter, and the final day on epi tools and study reports. For the first time, the College Scientific Sessions will be commencing at 9.00 am on Thursday 1 July, following a Plenary Session on the Roles and Rewards of being a College Examiner. Also for the first time the Chapter will be using the Gallery Rooms on

the first floor of the Gold Coast International Hotel, which means we have more space and vision not obstructed by the large pillars as was in the Moreton Room. Feedback on the change of venue after the meeting would be useful.

There are still some spaces in the Pre-Conference Workshop being lead by Professor Mark Elwood of the British Columbia Cancer Agency (Canada) — Making Sense of Science: Critical Appraisal and Evidence Synthesis. Full course details and the registration form can be found on the College Website at [http://acvsc.org.au/info/latest\\_news/default.asp?t=1&i=36](http://acvsc.org.au/info/latest_news/default.asp?t=1&i=36).

I look forward to catching up with many of you at Science Week.

## National epidemiology teaching group meeting

*Bruce Gummow*

The second meeting of the National Epidemiology Teaching (NET) Group will be held at the Gold Coast International Hotel (South Stradbroke Room) at 2 pm on the Wednesday 30 June 2010 in conjunction with Science Week. The main focus of the meeting will be to discuss the teaching content of veterinary epidemiology in current undergraduate curricula of Australian and New Zealand veterinary schools. Feedback will be given on what the European and United Kingdom standards are for under-

graduate teaching of epidemiology and what the results of a recent survey of Australian veterinarians on the topic were. It is hoped the meeting will begin to generate minimum guidelines for the teaching of epidemiology in Australia.

The meeting is not exclusive and any veterinarian that has an interest in what should be taught in epidemiology in Australia is welcome to attend the meeting. Please RSVP to Bruce Gummow ([bruce.gummow@jcu.edu.au](mailto:bruce.gummow@jcu.edu.au)). We are particularly keen to get the inputs of non-academic veterinarians applying the subject at the coal face.

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## 2010 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 2008 Annual General Meeting of the Epidemiology Chapter of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists will be held during College Science Week at the Gold Coast International Hotel, Surfers Paradise, on Saturday 3 July 2010, 1:00 pm, in Gallery Room Two.

Lunch will be served from 12:30 pm, down the corridor also on the first floor, and not in the meeting room as has been done previously. Attendees arriving for the meeting by 12:55 pm will be eligible for entry in a lucky door prize — a bottle of premium New Zealand wine. Items currently on the

agenda include election of office bearers and review of Epidemiology Chapter Membership and Fellowship guidelines. Important office bearer positions that will be vacant are:

Vice President  
 Science Week Coordinator (includes Workshop)  
 Head Examiner (Membership)  
 Student Prize Coordinator

Please consider nominations for these and any other office bearer positions.

## AGM minutes 2008 – 2009

3 July 2009

Moreton Room, Gold Coast International Hotel, Surfers Paradise

Chairman: Lee Skerratt

Minutes: Barbara Moloney

### Present

David Buckley, Ristan Greer, Jenny-Ann Toribio, Michael Ward, Brendan Cowled, Peter Black, Ian Langstaff, Jon Happold, Emma Rooke, Hume Field, Sandy Mackenzie, Patrick Kluver, Iain McLaren, Katie Reid, Tracey Bradley, Baden Pearse, David Pitt, Allison Crook, Roger Morris, Nigel Perkins, Robert Sanson, Jim Kerr, Barry Robinson, Lee Skerratt, Barbara Moloney, Tamsin Barnes, Karen Skelton (observer)

### Apologies

Jill Millan, David Jordan, David Kennedy, Evan Sergeant, Angus Cameron, Ben Madin, Peter Mansell, John Morton, Jaimie Frazer, Jenny Weston, Karen Bailey, Jackie Benschop, Cameron Bell.

### Agenda

The proposed meeting agenda was approved.

### Previous minutes

Confirmation of 2007 – 2008 Annual General Meeting minutes: moved Nigel Perkins, seconded Peter

Black. Motion carried. No issues arising from the 2007 – 2008 AGM minutes.

### President's report

Lee Skerratt presented the report as previously circulated.

### Treasurer's report

David Buckley presented the Treasurer's Report. Baden Pearse moved and Roger Morris seconded that the President's and Treasurer's reports be accepted. Motion carried. Lee Skerratt commented that the Chapter was doing well, with membership increasing and finances at almost \$62,000, and proposed that the membership fees for the chapter be kept at the current level, and that the chapter considers increasing the contribution to the Student Prizes. David Buckley moved that membership fees remain the same as the previous financial year, seconded Robert Sanson. Motion carried.

### Income

Item	Amount
Interest	\$2,307.95
Pre-conference workshop	\$9,666.18
Science Week	\$5,652.00
Chapter subscriptions	\$2,982.44
Total	\$20,608.57

## Expenditure

Item	Amount
Science week	\$3,961.90
Projector purchase	\$1,149.00
Bank charges	\$0.00
Epigram	\$0.00
Student prizes	\$1,126.30
Pre-conference workshop	\$5,868.39
Chris Baldock prize	\$1,000.00
Conference proceedings	\$804.61
Total	\$13,910.20

## Reconciliation

Balance at 1 January 2008:

Item	Amount
Cheque account	\$14,888.11
Passbook	\$32,416.05
Term deposit	\$7,968.68
Total	\$55,272.84

Item	Amount
Carried forward	\$55,272.84
Plus income above	\$20,608.57
Less expenditure	-\$13,910.20
Total	\$61,971.21

Balance at 1 January 2009:

Item	Amount
Cheque account	\$19,355.12
Max-I Direct account	\$34,364.99
Term deposit	\$8,251.10
Uncashed cheques	-\$200.00
Total	\$61,771.21

2008 was a very successful year for the Chapter, with the accounts showing a profit of \$6,698.37. This was achieved in a year when the Chapter spent \$1149.00 on a data projector, which will hopefully reduce costs incurred for hire of equipment for workshops in the future. The Chapter executive have been trying to find equitable ways to return some of the accumulated funds to the members, perhaps by providing reduced rates for Pre-Conference workshops, or sponsoring international speakers for Science Week programs. The quality of the programs run by the Chapter is indicated by the fact that we continue to increase our reserves, largely due to income received from Pre-Conference workshops and Science week participation.

On the basis of this excellent financial result, I propose that we hold Chapter membership fees at the

same level as last year. No increase would appear to be necessary, given the state of the accounts at present.

## Examiner's report

Robert Sanson presented the Examiner's report (see EpiGram 09-10/1). Robert was pleased to announce that there were 21 new candidates and one written supplementary for Epidemiology Membership. Of these, 19 passed outright, one failed, and two supplementaries were offered, one each for written and oral. Examiners for 2009 were Robert Sanson, Barbara Moloney, Katie Reid and Hume Field, and thanks were extended to these people for their substantial efforts. Some issues for mentors and the chapter included specific areas where candidates struggled (e.g. incorrect interpretation of an odds ratio for a case-control study). Highlighted that examinations are looking for proof of knowledge. Some disappointment in the handling of the question on critical review of the literature (Paper 2, Question 3).

Current examiners will continue, but will need an extra 2 reserve examiners as backup if there are very large number of candidates again. Acceptance of examiner's report nominated by Nigel Perkins, seconded by Ristan Greer. Discussion on supplementary examination issues was brought forward.

The College has directed that supplementary exams must be offered in the following year. Because of the need for supplementary exams next year and the large number of potential new candidates, it was proposed (Tracey Bradley) that the Chapter reverts to having examinations annually. Seconded Pat Kluver. Motion carried.

Actions: Head examiner to seek College approval to have examinations held annually rather than every second year. College has subsequently approved. Head examiner to provide written report for next Epigram.

## Scientific convenor's report

Ian Langstaff noted that the Workshop and Scientific sessions were again very successful. There were 40 attendees at the workshop on Introductory Molecular Techniques. A 1.5 day session was combined with the Australian Biosecurity CRC, and profits shared with that organisation. Dr Joanne Edmonston from the CRC presented sessions on Understanding Molecular Techniques, and Dr Petra Mullner described aspects of her PhD thesis on *Campylobacter* as application of the techniques. Action: Ian Langstaff to provide a written copy of the report for the minutes.

## Student prize convenor's report

Iain McLaren presented the Student prize convenor's report (see EpiGram 09-10/1). This included the survey of veterinary schools with the possibility of extension of the prize to the three new schools. Iain also presented some suggestions on changes to the format of the student prize including: (1) retaining the current format (\$100 + framed certificate), (2) increase above to \$200. (3) have students write an essay to compete for the prize, which would be opportunity to present at Science Week with travel and registration paid by the Chapter, or (4) journal subscription.

Tracey Bradley moved that the report be accepted, seconded Roger Morris. Motion carried. Member discussion that the option to have extra assessment of an essay was not feasible. The low value of the prize may be a deterrent for stimulating interest from veterinary schools. Iain McLaren moved that the prize be extended to the three new veterinary schools (James Cook, Charles Sturt and Adelaide). Seconded Katie Reid. Motion carried. Peter Black moved that the second option in the report, increasing the value of the prize from \$100 to \$200. Seconded Roger Morris, motion carried.

## CHEESE report

No report tabled but it was noted that there was one successful Fellowship candidate — Annette O'SConnor from Iowa State University.

## General Business

### Actions arising from 2007 – 2008 AGM

David Buckley reported on a proposal for a memorial to Diana Pinch, recognising her contribution to the Epidemiology Chapter and the Northern Territory. Her partner, Andrew Moss suggested that an ongoing memorial would be preferable. David Buckley and Jill Millan proposed the following: (1) encouragement of epidemiology in the Northern Territory — refund of examination fees for outstanding exam performance by a student from the Northern Territory, or (2) one of the student prizes be named the Diana Pinch Memorial Prize. Diana was an alumnus of Murdoch University.

Pat Kløver moved that the Chapter establish the undergraduate Prize for Murdoch University as the ACVSc Diana Pinch Memorial Award as recognition of her contributions to animal health in the Northern Territory and the Epidemiology Chapter. Seconded David Buckley, motion carried.

Members agreed that the head examiner should respond in consultation with members to the article in the last epigram on the future of veterinary epidemiology training in Australia by Roger Paskin (DPI Victoria). Action: head examiner to reply to Roger Paskin. Done (see Epigram 08-09/1).

## Other issues from previous minutes carried over

The issue of timing of supplementary examinations was discussed.

Postgraduate training and membership and fellowship guidelines. Need for review and updating and aligning with College policy. Need for more fellows. Meeting of epidemiologists from veterinary schools and examiners and CEC committee members from the Epidemiology Chapter was held prior to Science Week. There was insufficient time to discuss outcomes from this meeting. These will be reported in the next Epigram.

## Announcements

Proposed One Medicine forum at the Pan-Pacific Veterinary Conference (May 2010, Brisbane). By Michael Ward.

Enrolments for the VPHMgt/VPH Program at University of Sydney are now currently open for Semester 2 2009. By Michael Ward.

Special thanks go to long standing retiring committee members, David Buckley as treasurer, Jamie Frazer as Epigram editor and David Jordan as a CHEESE committee member and Ian Lanstaff as Science Week Convenor. Thanks to Lee Skerratt for his work as president over the past year. Best wishes were extended to the incoming and ongoing committee members.

## Election of office bearers

President: Barbara Moloney

Vice president: Ian Langstaff

Treasurer: Tamsin Barnes

State representatives:

Queensland: Ristan Greer  
Northern Territory: Katie Reid  
South Australia: Jack Van Wijk  
Victoria: Tracey Bradley  
Western Australia: Ben Madin  
New South Wales: David Jordan  
Tasmania: Kim Barrett  
ACT: Jill Millan  
New Zealand: Caleb King

Epigram Editor: Caleb King

Membership Examiners:

Robert Sanson  
Katie Reid  
Barbara Moloney  
Hume Field

Reserve Membership Examiners:

Peter Mansell  
Ristan Greer  
Lee Skerratt

Science Week Co-ordinator:

Chris Morley

Student Prize Co-ordinator:

Iain McLaren

CHEESE Committee:

Michael Ward  
Tracey Bradley  
John Morton

The next Annual General Meeting will be held during Science Week 2010. Barb Moloney to organise date, time, and place with the Science Week Co-ordinator.

## Contacts

### President

Barb Moloney  
Email: barbara.moloney@industry.nsw.gov.au

### Vice president

Ian Langstaff  
Email: ilangstaff@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

### Treasurer

Tamsin Barnes  
Email: t.barnes@uq.edu.au

### Science week program co-ordinator

Chris Morley  
Email: (chris.morley@maf.govt.nz)

### EpiGram editor

Caleb King  
Email: calebsteph@extra.co.nz

### Student Prize Co-ordinator

Iain McLaren  
Email: iain.mclaren@dpi.vic.gov.au

### Head Examiner (Membership)

Robert Sanson  
Email: sansonr@asurequality.com

### CHEESE Committee (CEC)

Michael Ward m.ward@usyd.edu.au  
John Morton j.morton@uq.edu.au  
Tracey Bradley tracey.bradley@dpi.vic.gov.au

## State representatives

### Queensland

Ristan Greer

Email: r.greer@iinet.net.au

### Northern Territory

Katie Reid  
Email: kbde@bigpond.net.au

### Victoria

Tracey Bradley  
Email: tracey.bradley@dpi.vic.gov.au

### South Australia

Jack van Wijk  
vanwijk.jack@saugov.sa.gov.au

### Western Australia

Ben Madin  
Email: ben@ausvet.com.au

### New South Wales

David Jordan  
Email: david.jordan@industry.nsw.gov.au

### Tasmania

Kim Barrett  
Email: kabarrett@bigpond.com

### Australian Capital Territory

Jill Millan  
Email: jill.millan@affa.gov.au

### New Zealand

Caleb King  
Email: calebsteph@extra.co.nz