

Strengthening and expanding a network of professional organisations in Asia & Pacific: why now and why is this so critical?

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What do we mean by professional organisations?

- ▶ Colleges, Specialist Societies, Associations
- ▶ Comprising one or more professional groups, or professionals interested in a specific aspect of practice
- ▶ Formal or informal, but identifiable and recognised
- ▶ May be an organisation with a specific workforce role or craft group
- ▶ May be funded or fully voluntary
- ▶ Provides support in some format to its members or the profession

What do we not mean as a professional organisation?

- ▶ A community organisation comprising people living with or affected by a condition, although some staff or members of such an organisation who provide a service, may be members of a professional organisation
- ▶ A for profit company or government which provides a training service, but there may be groups of workers within these organisations which provide a professional support role. A Journal Club at a hospital for example.

Workforce development

- ▶ There have been many words used to describe the transfer of skills from one individual to another
- ▶ As the response to HIV took shape internationally a need for a bigger health workforce was identified
- ▶ Scale-up became the mantra
- ▶ Large programs of training were rolled out in many communities and tools were provided to assist in the administration of antiretroviral drugs
- ▶ Many of these programs experienced difficulties

Train the trainer

- ▶ Another common approach and term in health promotion and used a lot in the HIV response
- ▶ Take a group of health care workers who have no experience in HIV, teach them how to perform HIV tests and give results.
- ▶ Given them copies of the training package, and a DVD, and
- ▶ send them back to their workplace and tell them to train the other staff.
- ▶ This is often doomed to failure.

Fly in fly out technical expertise

- ▶ Responses in some settings are not directly transferable to another setting
- ▶ One of the WHO training packages tried to address this by having a dedicated process of establishing the level of the facility in which people were working.
- ▶ What it did not ask was:
 - ▶ Does anyone know how to use the equipment
 - ▶ Does any of the equipment work
 - ▶ Is the power still connected/reliable
 - ▶ Do you have the consumables you need

Local people are best placed to train and teach.



- ▶ Local staff know what they have to work with
- ▶ This can be very confronting:
 - ▶ Understanding the limitations
 - ▶ Adjusting standards and
 - ▶ Compromising
- ▶ Some people are not born teachers and they have to learn those skills.
- ▶ But learning to teach is rewarding and can be rewarded professionally.

The formation of ashm



- ▶ A number of specialists working in the HIV area were on the way home from an international AIDS meeting
- ▶ They said we need an organisation which can help us learn and give us a reasoned and reasonable voice to speak to government
- ▶ The seed was sown and the organisation started. Over time it has become broader and interested in more issues.

Multiple organisations



- ▶ As a specialist society ASHM has focused on the diseases, HIV, sexually transmissible infection and viral hepatitis.
- ▶ The Colleges have craft groups have concentrated on an organ system and trained the specialists, HIV, or viral hepatitis or STIs being one area of their organ system focus.
- ▶ We work closely with the Chapter of Sexual Health Physicians, the Gastroenterology Society, the Australian Society for Infectious Diseases, the nurses' Associations in Hepatology and HIV and Sexual Health.

Regional Societies Network



- ▶ ASHM has tried to tread lightly and to walk with our professional colleagues in the Asia and Pacific regions.
- ▶ At the conference last year a meeting of professional societies wanted to reach out to other societies and like minded groups.
- ▶ We are now actively involved in progressing that work.
- ▶ Assembly of professional societies in Bangkok 15 – 17 January 2016, adjacent the HIV-NAT symposium.

1st Assembly of the Regional Societies Network on HIV, Viral Hepatitis & Sexual Health
Strengthening Collaboration & Capacity in Asia Pacific
 15-17 January 2016 | Bangkok

This Assembly is back to back with HIV-NAT Symposium

Dr Mark Boyd, President of ASHM's Board and Prof Dr Praptham Phiangphak, The Thai Red Cross AIDS Research Centre, Bangkok, Thailand invite you to attend the 1st Assembly of the Regional Societies Network on HIV, Viral Hepatitis & Sexual Health.

This meeting of regional professional societies and agencies working in HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health will:

- showcase what is working well and how this has been achieved
- review country priorities for professional development

Why important?



- ▶ Australia and New Zealand are small countries in the international development space.
- ▶ The region has burgeoning HIV, viral hepatitis and STI epidemics.
- ▶ There is not a strong HIV multidisciplinary clinical organisation in the region.
- ▶ There is a strong viral hepatitis clinical organisation, APASL, but it is not prevention oriented, and we would like to learn from this.
- ▶ There is a clinical STI network in IUSTI-AP but it is not well linked with the HIV response.
- ▶ We are exploring new professional groups

Why now?



- ▶ There has been a very real contraction of aid and development spending in Australia and internationally.
- ▶ Dramatically impacted the capacity of Australian organisations to do funded work in the region.
- ▶ We could just stay home, but members have told us repeatedly they want to play a role in the region and they are willing to volunteer.
- ▶ There is unlikely to be investment in viral hepatitis and sexual health regionally like there was in HIV.

Regional Network and Assembly



- ▶ There has tended to be a focus on resource limited settings and countries with whom we have run programs.
- ▶ The Network is now reaching out to middle and higher income countries in the hope that this will introduce greater capacity into the Network.
- ▶ The Assembly will be an opportunity to:
 - ▶ showcase what is working,
 - ▶ show how professional groups can play a role, and
 - ▶ provide an opportunity for the exchange of ideas.



Asia and Pacific Regional Professional Societies Network (RPSN) in HIV viral hepatitis and sexual health

- Linking like minded clinicians
- Information exchange
- Capacity development in leadership and governance
- Training and professional development
- Guidelines development
- Clinical, research, management and laboratory mentoring
- Facilitating access to expert speakers
- Facilitating access to regional scholarship programs
- Free to join – <http://www.ashm.org.au/programs/international/regional-societies>



ashm provides secretariat support to the Network

RPSN Organisational Members



- ▶ Angsamerah Institution
- ▶ Australasian Society for HIV, viral hepatitis & sexual health medicine (ASHM)
- ▶ IDDI
- ▶ International Union of Sexually Transmitted Infections, Asia Pacific – IUSTI-AP
- ▶ Oceania Society for Sexual Health and HIV Medicine (OSSHHM)
- ▶ Papua New Guinea Sexual Health Society (PNGSHS)
- ▶ Philippines
- ▶ Sri Lanka College of Venereologists (Sexual Health and HIV Medicine)
- ▶ Timor Leste
- ▶ Vietnam Clinical HIV/AIDS Society (VCHAS)

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adjacent the HIV-NAT
International Symposium on HIV Medicine



www.regionalsocietiesassembly.com
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