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The Voice of Australia

Tamara Lorensen BSc Grad Dip ^a

^a SNR Australian Chapter

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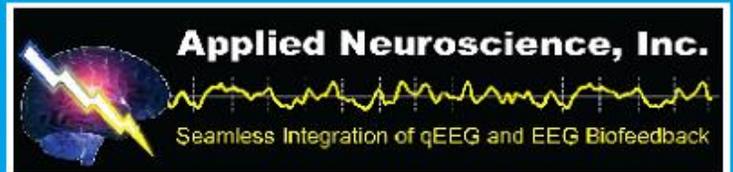
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EDITORIALS



The Voice of Australia

July 1999 was indeed a very big year in the development of the field of EEG Neurotherapy and QEEG in Australia. It was the year of our inaugural meeting. A colleague and I approached the then SNR President, Dr. Dan Chartier, at a Future Health meeting in California in February 1999. Quite rapidly, and with a good deal of enthusiasm, a conference was organized. What started was the first chapter of SNR based outside the USA, something that demonstrates the close ties between our countries.

I served as President-Elect for the first two-year term and then as President in 2000. In Australia we have two-year terms, which we find to be useful for the Board in terms of continuity since we just don't have the number of members to deal with shorter terms. A consequence of changes and developments has resulted in my managing SNR Australia for four years.

SNR Australia was developed with some very specific goals and a philosophy in mind. As President I have clung to these fervently and these reflect the culture of the parent body. In line with SNR USA, our

major role was to develop an annual conference with a theme of good will and the coming together of friends in a common field. The focus has been on sharing academic advancements and the presentation of scientific papers, as well as the clinical aspects and practical experiences of members discussing case work. Every year a different international speaker attends. Importantly, we have a major social event at the conference which has been a dinner cruise each year.

Another goal has been an attempt to be innovative in developing the organization. This has resulted in some unique additions to the conference programs. One addition has been presentations by the medical community on the nutritional and environmental medicine perspectives of human functioning. This year a new dimension has been securing a marketing and business executive to present information to clinicians about developing their neurotherapy practices. These additions are providing excellent outcomes: (a) broader areas of education, which have been welcomed by members, (b) the opportunity for the Society to become known by those outside the field, and (c) the opportunity to gain the respect of other health or professional industries we invite to present.

Organizational development has proven to be a challenge. The biggest hurdle has been the fact that we are a large country with a small population. The Board consists of five members who have managed to organize four conferences, incorporate the society, manage the development of the membership, commence a newsletter, and operate on a particularly tight budget despite literally living from one end of the country to the other.

It is pleasing to look back on these achievements and I wish the incoming President, Rosemary Boon, all the best as we recognize there is still much more to do in development.

One of the most important elements in the continuity of the Society has been the support received from the SNR USA body. While grants have formed the basis of the practical support, we have also received a sense of community and friendship. Without any doubt the lead set by the USA body has had the strongest influence in how the SNR Australia has grown.

Australians have also seen significant development of the *Journal of Neurotherapy* as a masthead of peer review publications. It is a clear indication of the growth of the industry and the higher quality of research that is now being conducted. Australians see that it has been the work of the Editor, David Trudeau that has brought the journal forward in maturity.

Those who are able to conceptualize an overarching view of the growth of this industry should take into account some of the more controversial issues that will arise. These issues may involve accredited training for standardization, ethics, licensure, and best practices. Here in Australia there are moves to form a College of Physiological Psychology as a branch of the Australian Psychological Society. If this is successful, it will set minimum standards for training, practice and professional development.

Issues may surround QEEG in terms of its more common use as an evaluation by practitioners, its development as a research instrument and its value in contributing to our understanding of neural biologic functioning. The leading researchers to date have made phenomenal contributions, but a holistic agreement in methodologies still eludes the field. While I believe it would be useful for us to remind ourselves that other medical and health industries are no different, continued striving for standardization should occur.

Issues may also surround the various neurotherapy modalities. Some colleagues I have spoken with are confident that it will grow as a result of being consumer driven, others are adamant that neurotherapy must establish a place in the mainstream scientific literature. At present there is no study I am aware of that has examined facets of practice, levels of training, skills, abilities or knowledge of practitioners.

The globalisation of the SNR will contribute to a greater ability for members to communicate. This will provide an opportunity for a wide range of contributions on a global scale from article submission to the JNT to the ability of member nations to contribute at the Board of Directors level. This move will provide a foundation on which to address some of the issues discussed above by perhaps providing a forum for the development of clear theoretical foundations for why a particular neurotherapy protocol might be used. Globalization will also have an impact on the greater understanding between countries of unique local issues. Two such issues are the difference between countries in the health care systems and the ability to receive funding for studies. Growth of the industry entails not only growth of the organization but also growth in the production and marketing of devices and instruments available to both practitioners and the public. The outcomes of this in the long-term could be quite disastrous if devices are not thoroughly tested and evaluated prior to release. In Australia I am aware of some interest in this and it invites the development of a position paper.

Clearly, foresight is an essential component facing the SNR of the future. In closing, I would like to take this opportunity as the departing

President to acknowledge and thank the people who have been involved in supporting and developing SNR Australia. The list is long and most fortunately for me, these acquaintances have developed into friendships.

Thanks to the Australian Board: Rosemary Boon, Tony Franklin, Moshe Perl and Greg Ireland whose integrity and commitment have remained through roller-coaster development. Thanks to our friends in the USA: Jay Gunkelman, Dan Chartier, Lynda Kirk, Barry Sterman, Darlene Nelson, Michael & Lynda Thomson, Hank Weeks, Bob Gurnee, David Trudeau, Bob Thatcher, Joe Horvat and the current and past SNR USA Boards. These people have contributed in unique ways to SNR development, and provided me with unreserved and sincere assistance, counsel, and support.

*Tamara Lorensen, BSc Grad Dip
President, SNR Australian Chapter*