

PRESIDENTS REPORT

YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2022

The ongoing objective of the Deafness Council is to pursue and promote issues that will improve the quality of life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. To that end, the Council has met 8 times this year. It was pleasing to see a growing involvement of individuals and organizations in the Council's activities.

For the first time Council meetings had been held in a manner that enabled members to attend via Microsoft Teams.

PATRON

The Council are privileged to have Harvey Coates AO, a noted Paediatric Otolaryngologist, as our Patron.

STAN PERRON CHARITABLE FOUNDATION/DEAFNESS COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP

Haydn Buss is the Scholarship recipient for this year. Haydn contracted pneumococcal meningitis at the age of 13 months resulting in a profound hearing loss. Haydn has graduated from Shenton College and is attending Curtin University to study engineering.

We thank the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation for their support. Due to COVID restrictions a formal presentation of the Scholarship will be held later in the year.

HEARING AWARENESS WEEK/WORLD HEARING DAY

Since 1979 the Council, during Hearing Awareness Week (HAW), has conducted events to focus the public's attention on the issues relative to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. In recent years it has been agreed to use World Hearing Day (March 3rd) for this purpose.

This year the Council conducted a Webinar entitled "You Can Ask That" where we asked a range of people with a hearing loss to share their experience of meeting this challenge. The Webinar then provided the opportunity for people to ask questions of experts in the field who gave unbiased advice and information about what people can do for themselves or their loved ones. The Webinar has been made available on the Council's web site.

We thank Lotterywest for their support of this event and for all those who shared their stories and advice.

DR HARRY BLACKMORE AWARD

Leanne Potter is the recipient of the Award for this year. Leanne has been a dedicated Teacher of the Deaf for 38 years. Leanne has also lent her talents, energy and passion to many other areas affiliated with services to people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. For many years Leanne worked alongside Dr Blackmore. The formal presentation of the award will be made later this year.

AUSKICK GAME

Our proposal to have Deaf and Hard of Hearing students participate in an Auskick game at an AFL game had to be shelved due to COVID restrictions. An approach has been made to the organisers of the forthcoming Festival of Football, which involves English Premier League clubs, to involve these students in part of their local activities.

CAPTIONING OF EMERGENCY SERVICES ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Council continues to lobby State and Federal Governments to caption all their public television announcements and to open caption with, Auslan interpreters included, all emergency services announcements. It is pleasing to see that in most cases all Federal and State government advertisements are closed captioned. The Premier recently announced that the government had “made the decision to provide open captions for future Covid-19 television advertisements related to public health or emergency information”. The Council welcomes this decision.

HEARING SERVICES PROGRAM REVIEW

The Federal Governments Review of the Hearing Services Program was released in August 2021. The Council welcomes the Review and is supportive of the recommendations. Little action has been taken on the report’s recommendations given the election early this year and the incoming government still considering their response to the report.

NATIONAL HEARING HEALTH ROADMAP

The Council has continued to support the implementation of the Roadmap’s recommendations. As with other programs, the Roadmaps recommendations are being reviewed by the recently elected government.

FUNDING FOR ADULT COCHLEAR EAR IMPLANTS

The Council has continued to communicate with the Minister for Health seeking further information on the level of funding provided by the state government for adult cochlear

ear implants. A meeting is now being proposed with Health Department officials to further discuss this matter

EDUCATIONAL AUSLAN INTERPRETERS

To address the lack of educational Auslan interpreters the Council, together with the Association of Teachers of the Deaf, the Council has met with the Minister for Disability Services and Access Plus. The State Government has now provided funding support to Access Plus to provide interpreting courses to increase the number of qualified interpreters.

SUPPORT

We have again received wonderful support from our donors who we thank for their generosity.

The support of the many volunteers within the Council and associated organizations is also very much appreciated. We thank them all, most sincerely.

DEAFNESS FORUM

The Deafness Council is a member of the Deafness Forum and continues to contribute on a regular basis to submissions made by the Forum on behalf of issues affecting Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

AUDITOR

Our auditors Shakespeare Partners have closed their audit practice. The Council thank Shakespeare Partners for their audit service over many years. Under the recently amended legislation relating to incorporated associations it is no longer necessary for the Council to have its accounts audited.

BARRY MACKINNON
PRESIDENT