



Australian Association for  
Infant Mental Health

Victorian Branch  
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## AAIMHI (Vic) President's Report AAIMH (National) AGM 2018

**AAIMH National Conference 2017: The Infant, the State, Ethics and the Law**  
23-26 November 2017, Melbourne University



The Organising Committee, taking their lead from membership feedback, agreed on a conference vision to *provide a well-paced conference experience where delegates felt nourished, challenged and inspired in their work serving infants and families*. The focus was on celebrating the richness of Australian-grown infant mental health practice to build a sense of community across the membership maintaining a commitment to 'break-even' rather than focusing on making a profit. Feedback from many of the 300 delegates suggested that the conference succeeded in achieving this vision and the conference made a small financial profit.

To represent the multidisciplinary composition of AAIMHI's membership, the committee represented a broad range of disciplines and a mix of age and experience, so that earlier-in-career members had a chance to take on leadership roles with help and support of more senior colleagues. The Committee worked hard to ensure that every stream of the program had representatives and leaders from several different parts of Australia to maintain a truly 'national' IMH celebratory spirit. The program was bookended by Indigenous contributions, with the Artist-in-residence Robyn Latham active throughout. Countless volunteers from Victoria and across Australia generously contributed in a variety of ways toward making the conference a success.

The Committee was fortunate to work with Gina Samuels, Jamie Blyth and the team at *The Production House Events*. This creative and dedicated team listened well to the committee's vision and gave their all to ensure that this vision was realised - and more - and ensured adherence to the financial bottom line.

What generally worked well was: the poster format, accompanied by brief presentations; the Artist-in-residence added something special; the library was well received; many delegates said how much they enjoyed all being together and not streamed into parallel sessions; the quality food was enjoyed by all. Learnings for next time included: perhaps not attempting to tackle so many heavy themes in one conference! Providing more time for discussion from the audience and revisiting the need for a conference dinner.

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WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR  
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

## Professional Development Events

1. Saturday August 12th 2017: Supporting Infants and their Families Day and Night  
Presenters: Helen Cunningham, Jacque O'Brien & Kerri McEgan.
2. Tuesday 27th February 2018: Dyadic & Triadic Psychotherapies  
Presenter: Miri Keren M.D
3. Saturday 21st April 2018: The Baby in Perinatal Mental Health Units  
Presenters: Christine Hoyne & Vivian Lee; Monique Rosenbauer.
4. Saturday 3rd September 2018: Reflections on the 2018 WAIMH Congress in Rome  
Presenters: Jenny Re, Catherine McQueen, Kathryn Alexander and Porpovai Kassianan.
5. Saturday 13th October 2018: 2018 Ann Morgan Prize: Winning Recipient Nola Henry.  
(Including formal acknowledgement of Ann Morgan's contribution and recent OAM award).

Attendee Feedback from 2018 Ann Morgan Prize: *"Everyone with whom I spoke was very moved and engrossed in Nola's piece "Ibrahim's Song" it was about an 8-month-old boy in a paediatric ward, in a hospital on the border of Myanmar. The relationship which developed between Nola, the child, and his mother and grandmother was exquisitely portrayed...Fabulous questions from the audience and this was followed by a lovely morning tea."*

## Philanthropy

The Committee invited applications for scholarship attendance to the AAIMHI National Conference. Rather than offering part scholarships to a smaller number, the Committee offered all of applicants 'part scholarships', with the exception of one recipient working in a developing Country. Recipients were offered the opportunity to register for part or all of the conference and the Committee would pay half the amount. Nine recipients from a range of local community, family violence, health, aboriginal controlled and early education contexts took up this opportunity. In past years, recipients have shared their conference experiences for the AAIMH Newsletter. Other avenues for this feedback will need consideration in future.

## Communications & Advocacy

Many Committee and general AAIMHI (Vic) members provided input into the following initiatives: *Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Perinatal Services, Family Violence & Maternal Child Health Nurse projects (MERTIL), Mental Health Awareness Week* and *Royal Australasian College of Physicians Early Childhood Position Statement* with AAIMHI (National). The 2017 Ann Morgan Prize Winning Entry 2017 was published in the state-wide *DHHS Victoria Child Protection Good Practice resource* as part of practitioner education for intervening with high risk infants.

## AAIMHI (Vic) Branch Committee, National Conference 2017 Organising Committee, Sub-Committees and Committee Family & Friends

Thank you to all of the dedicated members of the AAIMHI (Vic) 2017-18 Committee and to all those who have contributed in the Conference and Sub-Committee roles in 2017-18 in their voluntary time on behalf of infants and our membership: *Meredith Banks, Michele Meehan, Brigid Jordan, Candice Franich-Ray, Jessica Little, Tamera Clancy, Kathy Eyre, Peter Tyler, Christine Hoyne, Sue Morse & Campbell Paul; and Nichola Coombs, Julie Stone, Sue Denmead, Robyn Ball, Sarah Jones, Kerry Judd, Christine Hill and Matthew Roberts.* Thanks to all of our colleagues across Australia who volunteered their time to make the National Conference a success. A big thanks to Committee members' families and friends for their contributions and encouragement.

## Honouring the significant Committee contributions of Julie Stone and Candice Franich-Ray

Two significant figures in the life of AAIMHI (Vic) Committee over the past decade departed the Committee in 2017/18. Julie Stone and Candice Franich-Ray have been highly respected and valued contributors to the Committee in a variety of roles. Both have given generously of their intellect, passion and care. The Committee sent with them our heartfelt gratitude and best wishes for all of their future endeavours.

*Emma Toone*

*President AAIMHI (Vic) 2017-118*