



New Zealand  
Association of  
Counsellors

Te Roopu Kaiwhiriwhiri o Aotearoa

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2020 – 2021



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# National Reports

## President's Report

**Christine MacFarlane**

*National President*

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa,

I acknowledge the 3,055 members of NZAC Te Roopu Kaiwhiriwhiri o Aotearoa and the work you continue to provide to clients over the past year under increasingly stressful circumstances. We are very aware of the overwhelming rise in people seeking help for psychological distress with a wide range of presenting issues, often complex and chronic in presentation. I feel privileged to have been in the role of President for the Association for the past 2 years.

This year has continued to challenge us, and National Executive have worked together in some difficult circumstances to address issues along the way. I am pleased to welcome four Executive members to the team Sarah Maindonald returning as Regional Representative for Canterbury, West Coast, Nelson, Marlborough and Aoraki; Eugene Davis as Kaitumutumu, Jeanine Lumsden as Secretary and Marion Boyd as Treasurer. We are very fortunate to have a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience within the National Executive team. This year we have worked hard to be responsive to our members' feedback, the public requests for counselling, stakeholder engagement and workforce strategy.

The impact of COVID has meant our lives and work are forever changed; as counsellors supporting others and navigating our own journey can be tough. As I reflect on the past year as President, I am aware of how much work we have accomplished.

April 2020, continued to be challenging globally; here in Aotearoa, we were in lockdown level 4. This meant learning to work remotely, supporting clients via telephone and online platforms, managing our own stressors and wellbeing. Our National Office moved quickly into working from home, navigating the change with a positive attitude and flexibility. As we did not have an Executive Director employed, Te Ahi Kaa and I stepped into this role to manage staff and national operations. Sue Allomes, Maria Reynolds and Cathy Readhead stepped in as the Financial sub-group and competently managed the finances. This group worked closely with NZAC book-keeping company 3rd Arm and our accountant Ian Orr to provide up-to-date financial statements and complete the 2020 end of year accounts. We were fortunate to have such a dedicated and hard-working team looking after our finances. It was also helpful to have the new website provide the Annual Practising Certificates online, ensuring members could download their APC as our staff could not work from the office to send out printed APCs. Although the change to the website and online system was problematic with members needing to upskill learning how to log on and complete their APC and CPD online, it is an advantage to NZAC.

Sue Webb and the Ethics Secretaries – Abi and Paule were responsive to the changing levels of lockdown, providing clear direction for members on how to provide counselling in COVID. I acknowledge the hard work, time and expertise the Ethics team provided. We became very proficient at zoom meetings and quickly became adept at online and/or telephone counselling. With the rapid changes due to COVID lockdowns, some members reviewed their situation and decided to retire earlier than anticipated. This was an unanticipated situation where people throughout Aotearoa started looking at what kind of life they wanted to live, increasing the demand for counselling. We completed a member survey looking at the impact of COVID on counselling services

and NZAC counsellors.

NZAC published a policy on 'Conversion Therapy', making a clear stand that NZAC does not condone or support interventions, such as 'conversion practices', that aim to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Niccy Fraser, the former CPD coordinator and I worked hard through April and May to provide guides for members to complete their online CPD plan and reflections. The guides were written as well as video screencasts. As we continued on this journey, Niccy and I started compiling a list of changes we wanted to make to the CPD and APC online process; the feedback we received from members was valuable to this project. I learnt how to make Screencasts, upload videos, create a webinar and edit the website. This was a steep learning curve, and I am incredibly grateful to Niccy for all her support, good humour, passion for CPD, and unwavering dedication to NZAC. Without her, this process would have been much more demanding.

Gay Puketapu- Andrews (Te Ahi Kaa) and I met with the Ministry of Health (MoH) key people – Jo Chiplin, Arran Culver and Carla Na Nagara via zoom. This was the first of a line of meetings that have strengthened our relationship with the MoH. The first steps were for MoH to develop a deeper understanding of the counselling profession and for NZAC to understand the state regulation (registration) standpoint of the MoH.

We resumed the recruitment process looking for a new Executive Director. Lockdown had stalled this process. The employment sub-group worked through a process to be able to interview candidates in early June.

During May, we ran an online media campaign focusing on two groups.

People who were actively seeking out counselling services via Google Search

People who needed counselling services (via relevant keywords) via digital display ads on Stuff & NZ Herald.

The Key Highlights:

- The ads were presented 729,766 times, driving 3,128 click-throughs and 2,956 sessions on the website.
- 588 unique people who visited the website due to the paid promotion clicked on the *search for a Counsellor*.
- Overall, Google Search Ads were the strongest channel delivering the highest number of click-throughs (76%) and website sessions (78%). Since this audience was seeking counselling services actively, they were more receptive to the ads.
- 80% of the website sessions from the paid promotion were generated from mobile phones (which means we have to ensure the website is mobile friendly).
- Stuff delivered the highest number of impressions (ad views).

In June, the Executive Employment sub-group were in Wellington interviewing for the Executive Director Role. I acknowledge the work of Te Aranga Hakiwai, Sue Allomes, Gay Puketapu-Andrews, who worked together with me in this recruitment process. During this time, Gay and I continued to support National Office staff through the various levels of lockdown, making arrangements for a mixture of at home and /or office-based working. Jo McNab, one of our office administrators, went on Parental Leave at the end of June. We missed her friendly presence but wished her well in the mothering journey. This vacancy led to another recruitment process. The impact of COVID on job loss was evident to us when advertising for a contract administrator, we received over 200 applications to sift through.

In July, we were excited to announce the appointment of a new Executive Director, Linda Allen, due

to start at the end of the month. The offer of handover from Antony McFelin was gratefully accepted. Antony has been generous in his time, knowledge, and dedication to NZAC to ensure the new Executive Director was supported into stepping into the role. Orientation for Linda was over July, August and September. NZAC staff, National Executive, Convenors and Committees, PR Company and other stakeholders began developing a working relationship with Linda assisting her in becoming more familiar with the Association and the role of Executive Director.

The School Guidance Advisory group met in July; we invited representatives from PPTA, NZ Educational Institute, NZ Principals Federation, Te Akatea Principals Association, NZ Pasifika Principals' Association. This initial meeting started a working group that continued over the next few months to work collaboratively on lobbying the Government to increase funding for more counsellors in Secondary schools and for counsellors to be in Primary and Intermediate schools. The group provided a passionate voice focused on growing students wellbeing and committed to ensuring access to counselling is available across the education sector.

NZAC 2020 AGM event He Ngaru Hou was held in Wellington on the first week of August. It was exciting to have many members register for the event; we had 120 attend on Friday night with keynote speaker Veronica Tawhai, followed by a buffet dinner and AGM on Saturday with keynote speaker Judge Andrew Becroft. We also had our first Zoom link for an AGM and had 41 members joined us.

The Government announcement of funding counselling for Primary and Intermediate students plus an increase in counsellors for Secondary schools was a positive outcome after many years of advocating for increased access to counselling. Then Minister Tracey Martin announced funding of \$75.8 million over 4 years for increased access to counselling in schools. This is \$31.8 million over 4 years to increase School Guidance Counsellors in secondary schools. This amounted to an extra 90 FTE for counsellors in high schools. The remainder, \$43.9 million, providing counselling to Intermediate and Primary schools; this is to be outsourced to Community Services/NGOs to provide the counselling. This is the first step in the move towards an appropriate ratio of counsellor to students in schools. NZAC continues to be very involved with the Ministry of Education in the development of this contract.

I represented NZAC on the Abortion Sector Solutions Working Group with 25 other sector representatives having input into the service standards for the new abortion services legislation. This was a significant change, with counselling services required to be offered to all people accessing abortion services being written into the legislation.

As a follow-up in February to the sector meeting, I met with Sarah Jones, Principal Advisor, Regulatory Assurance, Health System Improvement and Innovation, Ministry of Health. This meeting was about the provision of counselling for the new Abortion Services. A Clinical Services group is being initiated with representatives from NZAC, working on developing the counselling framework for this new service provision.

National Executive decided not to complete the audit of 10% of member's CPD.

The rationale for this decision included:

The primary aim is to maintain and increase the engagement of the members in the CPD process, aligning with the NZAC self-regulation framework to ensure continuous quality improvement. The combination of a new website, new online CPD and APC process on top of the increased stress due to COVID-19 has meant many of our members are facing and continuing to navigate unprecedented difficulties and stress. In the spirit of the CPD process, which is supportive and educative, we decided it would be beneficial to give members one more year to learn the new online CPD system confidently before they may be chosen by random selection for audit.

During Mental Health Awareness Week, we ran another digital online campaign.

- The campaign delivered 757,930 impressions (the number of times the ad was presented to the target audience) which is 42% more than the estimated impressions at the time of booking.
- This resulted in 473 click-throughs to the website, resulting in 460 sessions on the website. A session is qualified as people who spend at least 30 seconds on the website or read more than one page on the website.
- Mobile device delivered the highest number of impressions (63.47%), and therefore the mobile creatives were the best performing creatives.

In terms of the targeting:

- The value and bargain shoppers (52%) followed by the job seekers (34%) audiences were the strongest performers.
- Keyword targeting (Counselling, Psychiatry, Mindfulness, Depression, Mental Health and Anxiety) worked very well, delivering high-quality traffic.
- The campaign performed well in the morning and early afternoon hours as opposed to the evening/late night hours, as anticipated earlier.

We welcome three new Executive members to our September meeting - Sarah Maindonald returning as Regional Representative for Canterbury, West Coast, Nelson, Marlborough and Aoraki, Eugene Davis as Kaitumutumu, Jeanine Lumsden as National Secretary.

Te Ahi Kaa and I continued to meet regularly through the year with Combined Counsellors Associations of New Zealand (NZ Christian Counsellors, Career Development Counsellors NZ, Psychodrama Counsellors ANZ, Creative Art Therapies ANZ). These meetings are pivotal in sharing information about our profession and working together to promote counselling with Stakeholders. We also continue to meet with the Ministry of Health to develop a stronger relationship. The Counselling profession workforce became the focus of the Ministry of Health, and we signed a Memorandum of Understanding. This agreement is for sharing data with the MoH to track the changes in the counselling workforce as they are doing with other health professions.

In November, we commenced a project to review and develop the website. Siān Andrews-Warmuth has been contracted to work on this project. Siān is working closely with me as I lead this project. Siān started with focus groups from National Office staff and committees who gave feedback on further development. We are incredibly fortunate to have Siān who is a clear, focused and creative thinker. The Agile process Siān has introduced enables the changes to be communicated to Gecco with ease and preciseness. We have a timeline of website priorities that are continuing to be actioned. This project will carry on over the next year, enhancing the website functionality and design. The changes to the website have been in CPD and APC area, as well as finally adding a search button.

We welcomed Marion Boyd as our National Treasurer at the Executive meeting in November. NZAC has been without a Treasurer for over 2 years. Marion is based in Christchurch and comes with a wealth of knowledge and skill base.

National Executive completed Briefing Papers for the Incoming Ministers of Justice, Education, and Health. These were sent to appropriate Ministers and opposition party spokespeople with the NZAC Counselling Changes Lives document.

Te Tiriti Audit report was completed by Te Ata Kura Educators; Veronica Tawhai and John James Carberry. We were fortunate to have Veronica and John James present the report to the National Executive at Hikoikoi Marae in February. This has been a significant project, and we are excited about where this will lead us. As an Association, we can now develop a plan to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi in both systems and practice. Te Ahi Kaa, Kaitumutumu and the Māori Roopu will advise the National Executive on progressing this essential work. The remits at this AGM respond to the

inconsistencies within the NZAC Constitution highlighted in the Te Tiriti audit.

NZAC advertised for a new role Professional Development Manager. This is an exciting project that has been in progress for the past 18 months. The role's focus is to initiate and expand professional development opportunities for counsellors and other related professionals.

Niccy Fraser was employed in this role. We are fortunate to have Niccy with her experience of NZAC Continuing Professional Development competencies and processes and CPD auditing knowledge. She brings her long time history and expertise of being in the Counselling Education field. Niccy is passionate and enthusiastic in her approach and works collaboratively and inclusively. Our focus initially is to get a good understanding of NZAC members PD needs and our stakeholders and clients' needs for the counselling profession. We will be looking at current requirements as well as developing a Professional Development Strategy plan for NZAC. Our PD work strategy will include local, regional and national as well as online events.

Te Ahi Kaa and I continued to meet with the Ministry of Health. This is part of our developing relationship between health and counselling. It has been positive to provide more information to the Ministry on the counselling profession and, in particular, NZAC. Alongside this work, our Working Party on State Regulation (HPCA Act) and Self-Regulation have completed a report which was tabled at the National Executive Meeting in February 2021. We will be developing documents to update the membership on the current context of state regulation and voluntary or self-regulation.

These meetings with the Ministry of Health have led to a project being initiated by the Ministry. An external person will be contracted by the Ministry to review the counselling profession – this involves reviewing and auditing all counselling associations (NZ Christian Counsellors, Career Development Counsellors NZ, Psychodrama Counsellors ANZ, Creative Art Therapies ANZ).

The focus is to look at issues and options:

- State regulation or self-regulation
- HPCA Act or another type of accreditation such as like dapaanz.
- How do we ensure and show we are providing safe counselling practice to the public.
- How does the Ministry of Health monitor this to provide contracts which include counsellors?

At the time of writing this report, the timeline and scope of this project are still in progress. We will provide updates when a plan and timeline is finalised, what this will look like and how NZAC will be involved.

In late February 2021, the Executive Director and I met with Clare O'Connor, Senior Advisor, Operations and Jo-ann Vivian, Principal Advisor for Community Services. This was a reconvening of regular meetings between the Ministry of Justice and NZAC.

I also met with two Policy Advisors from the Civil Law and Human Rights part of the Ministry of Justice. This discussion was focused on Conversion Practices (which has been known as Conversion Therapy). The focus was on what does Conversion Practices look like to inform the detail within the legislation. The new legislation is currently being written, and NZAC was asked to discuss what should be written into the legislation.

The Ministry of Education rolling out of counselling services for Primary and Intermediate students has been a significant project collaborating closely with NZAC. The Ministry contracted NZAC to write the service framework for counsellors working for NGOs in the Primary and Intermediate school environment. This is the beginning of developing a safe, ethical, whanau centred counselling service in schools working collaboratively with education to ensure the best counselling services for tamariki.

National Executive members Alexandra Smith and Sarah Maindonald have led a skilled, knowledgeable and experienced team of NZAC members to develop these service specifications.

I want to acknowledge this group of NZAC members who spent 3 days working together in Wellington and via zoom and continue to provide feedback and editing of this document. We are very fortunate to have such experienced and knowledgeable members who, at very short notice, were available for this vital workshop: Sarah Maindonald, Alexandra Smith, Deb Fraser, Sue Webb, Toia Chase, Eugene Davis, Kamaia Renata, Nigel Pizzini, Miriama Tolo, and Paul Flanagan. Thank you for all your passion and commitment

I am delighted with the Ministry of Education and NZAC collaboration on this project and the value of our expertise.

The past year has seen an increase in media contacts. Significantly many TV interviews with TV One, TV 3, AM Show, and NewsHub. We also have had an increase in the number of print and radio reporters seeking comment from NZAC, including:

Stuff, New Zealand Herald, Christchurch Press, Timaru Herald, Bay of Plenty Times, Consumer Magazine, Health Central, Radio New Zealand, Newstalk ZB, Taranaki Daily News, Magic Talk Radio, Whakatane Beacon.

We have also been contacted several times this year by National Party Opposition Spokesperson for Mental Health Matt Doocey, who consulted NZAC on the National Party Mental Health strategy and policy. Mr Doocey has repeatedly challenged the current Government and the Collation Government on the lack of funding for counselling and underuse of the counselling profession.

As I end the second year of being in the role as President of NZAC, I look back over the past year with a sense of achievement and pride. Working together with Gay Puketapu-Andrews as Te Ahi Kaa and the National Executive members, we have travelled through a very challenging period. I have been personally and professionally stretched with the amount of work required in the role of President. The support I have received from many of you in the Association is encouraging and enabled me to continue to be a voice for counsellors. I am thankful to all the members on committees, advisory and working groups, the convenors of committees, and especially our National Office staff, who continue to work for the Association with such generosity and care.

I also thank my whanau, supervisor and friends who have been incredibly supportive and caring of me over the past year. They cope with the constant intrusion of NZAC into our lives, challenge and encourage me to take time out, give me critical and positive feedback. My daughter Moana comes to the AGM to support our work, my mum Viv who provides such a wise voice, my son Toby who has been a steady sounding board. I am so very fortunate to have such Aroha in my world.

As always, it is the co-chair relationship with Te Ahi Kaa, Gay Puketapu-Andrews, who, with such generosity, care and strength, makes this possible.

No reira

Tēnā koutou,

Tēnā koutou,

Tēnā koutou katoa

*Christine Macfarlane*  
President





*National Executive Committee November 2020*

# Te Ahi Kaa Report

## Gay Puketapu-Andrews raua ko Eugene Davis

### *Te Ahi Kaa me Te Kaitumutumu*

Mauri ora ki te rangi  
Mauri ora ki te whenua  
Me hoki nga mahara ki a ratou kua takotohia te ara hei hikoi ma tatou nga uri  
Ki nga tini aitua, haere ra, moe mai ra, okioki atu  
Hoki mai te wairua o a tatou tipuna i runga i a tatou katoa  
Ko tatou e tau nei i te ao hurihuri nei  
Maranga ake i roto i a tatou kotahitanga

E te marea,

COVID-19 and the subsequent 'rahui o te motu whanui' meant the cancelling of the National Māori Roopu Hui in April 2020. We didn't really understand the impact of this virus at the time but felt it would be safer for our whanau to hold off on gathering at that time. However, with the access to Zoom technology, we were able to hui online as national Māori Roopu representatives to plan for the PD and AGM meetings that were held in August. There was a very welcome and significant attendance from our roopu at these events, which was especially important, as we were farewelling the outgoing Te Kaitumutumu; Te Aranga Hakiwai and welcoming the newly elected, Eugene Davis, as well as farewelling the previous Executive Officer, Antony McFelin and welcoming Linda Allen.

Roopu members from around Aoteroa gathered for another well attended hui at Hikoikoi in December 2020. The kaupapa for the hui was self care in recognition that we had all had a very challenging year with the COVID-19 rahui and the impact this had on our whanau personally and professionally. Hui attendees shared korero regarding various ways to attend to self care and offered some practices of this, including poetry, mahi a tinana, korikori, and waiata. We were also very appreciative of one of our local members organising a number of Rongoa practitioners to be available at our hui to offer Romiromi and Mirimiri, which many attendees were able to benefit from. Further to our hui kaupapa we attended to business items as Māori members of NZAC, including updates from our Committee representatives. These are roles that we understand are particularly important for our Māori Roopu and the Te Tiriti relationship being developed within our Association.

It was with great anticipation that the National Executive invited Ronnie Tawhai and John James of Te Ata Kura Educators to present the Te Tiriti Audit report to our first meeting of the year. This took place at Hikoikoi, Petone on February 26th and 27th 2021. The Executive were impressed by the mahi achieved in this report and the recommendations that it includes. Many of these relate to consistencies that are currently in our documentation, as well as changes that could be made to strengthen Te Tiriti relationship within our policies and processes. The first action regarding these is in the form of constitutional remits for this year's AGM.

Another very significant outcome that has recently come to fruition is the purposely built structure to hold our taonga, Nga Kete Matauranga, being completed. The Executive were able to welcome Na Te Kete Taumata named by our kuia, Rangi Davis, during our May 2021 Executive meeting with the appropriate tikanga. The creator, Dave Hakaraia carried in the Na Te Kete Taumata accompanied by Te Ahi Kaa with Executive members providing waiata alongside Te Herekiele, Mana Whenua who provided Whaikorero and karakia.

Although the Taumata is installed at the National Office, the design is such that we can take the structure apart for portability and have it for Nga Kete at all NZAC national gatherings. We are so pleased to be able to honour Nga Kete in the way we feel is appropriate to whakamana the wairua of these taonga.



Na runga i te manaakitanga,

*Gay Puketapu-Andrews raua ko Eugene Davis*  
Te Ahi Kaa me Te Kaitumutumu

# Treasurer's Report

**Marion Boyd**

*Treasurer*

I am pleased to present these Annual accounts. They demonstrate prudent financial management in this past difficult year.

I took on the position of Treasurer in November 2020 with an already established budget that was prepared prior to the pandemic. It was also at a time when there was transition between the previous Executive Officer and the new Executive Director. In February our Executive Director became unable to continue on her role. This has meant that we have needed to call on the services of past Executive Director, Antony McFelin to assist with preparation of these Annual accounts for NZAC. We wish to acknowledge and thank Antony for his continued support of NZAC over the last year. His knowledge and experience has been beneficial to the association, we are fortunate to have his time and skills available to us.

The 2021 financial accounts show a small deficit, considering the challenges the organisation faced recruitment, staffing and the increased expenditure in specific projects this is positive outcome. Two projects that were meant to be funded from reserves were actually completed within this budget, leaving reserves at the same level as in the 2019/2020 financial accounts.

The National Executive approved a Marketing project in 2019 budget, this was to come from the reserves account. We had two media campaigns in 2020 – one during Lockdown and one coinciding with Mental Health Awareness week. Due to a change in priorities some of this project budget was moved to focus on improving the website responding to feedback from members and increasing functionality.

Also in this budget year was the employment of a Professional Development Manager in January 2021, this too was budgeted to come from Reserves.

The other higher expenditure was the 2020 AGM where we subsidised members to attend a networking dinner on the night prior to the AGM, and we invited two keynote speakers, increasing our normal AGM costs.

In 2020 we did not have a Professional Development day which would usually create income for the association.

It was also a time that the new online accounting and software system was fully integrated. Difficulties arose with the Information Technology and expenses were occurred in resolving these issues. This is reflected in the National Office section of the accounts. Gecco, Stripe fees, and bank fees all increased significantly due to all invoicing now going through the website and Xero. Although this looks as if we are spending more in this area, overall and over long term this will work out to be less costly to the association as we are not employing an in-house financial person.

A striking variance is in the National Māori budget. This is generally because the pandemic meant that the two, now usual, hui did not go ahead. However, the involvement of Te Ahi Kaa, Kaitumutumu and the National Māori Roopu in every other level of the association has continued to occur.

*Marion Boyd*

Treasurer

Financial Statement  
**See Separate Financial Report**

# Executive Portfolio Reports

## ACC Portfolio **Jenny Manuera** *Portfolio Manager*

He mihi nui Ki a Koutou, E Nga Kai Whiriwhiri O Aotearoa

### **Mental Health Sector Liaison Meetings**

Regular Mental Health Sector Liaison Meetings continued throughout 2020, mainly via Zoom meetings, with representation from NZAC. However, at the March meeting, ACC advised that the meetings will be put on hold and asked the attendees for their thoughts on other ways for ACC to engage with the sector.

During the meetings, one of the topics for conversation was around the lack of clarity amongst Case Owners and their use of Psychological Services codes. ACC agreed to do a follow-up on how the communication could be improved. The ACC policy group also worked with other agencies to address the barriers for people that have difficulties accessing telehealth.

### **Group Therapy Remuneration**

ACC reduced the required number of ACC clients in a group from six to four and confirmed that some of the payment for this can be used for administration purposes.

### **Kaupapa Māori Pathway**

ACC counsellors can now request Rongoa Māori for their clients, as long as a clear rationale is provided for this.

Kōrero around improving the existing ISSC pathway for Māori clients and developing a new Kaupapa Māori contract for Sensitive claims continues. The two areas of focus for ISSC services are; how does ACC engage to bring more Māori providers on board, and how can ACC ensure that barriers to Māori accessing services are reduced.

### **Find Support Website**

There have been updates to the Find Support website, which is hopefully providing clear and easy to understand information for ACC clients.

### **Assisted Recovery and Support Teams**

The Assisted Recovery and Support Teams are now in place and have been assigned clients who ACC consider to be stable and progressing well, or who do not require or desire much contact with ACC. Currently, when a change to a team is considered for a client, the Recovery Partner is to advise that client's provider, and the expectation is that the provider will speak to client to ensure that they understand what this change will mean and are comfortable with this change to the team approach to their claim. Not all ACC clients are making this change.

### **Department of Corrections**

ACC have been working with the Department of Corrections on improvements that can be made for clients on release from Corrections facilities, including how to keep track of clients once released to enable the continuation of service delivery.

Requests for improvements have come from providers, who have had difficulties continuing to see their clients, or delays in seeing their clients, or not having suitable rooms available at Corrections facilities.

There has also been a lack of information given to providers when clients are transferred or released into the community, and along with that a lack of ability for clients to access social work services. Active Liaison is a piece of work being undertaken in respect to utilizing this in MDT cross-agency work, as it is not always easy to work in collaboration with other organisations and agencies. ACC and Corrections have been working on an information sharing MOU.

It is important to note that 2 hours of the 10 hours can be requested for the lead provider to liaise with the Supported assessor, to determine if there are any supported assessment needs for a client at that stage. There is also potentially more funding for clients with particularly complex issues requiring high levels of liaison if a rationale for more hours is provided. In terms of Cultural Advice, this has changed now to adding in Support to the client. By this, I mean that the client can access the Cultural advisor with the Counsellor now, within the session.

ACC has requested Suppliers to put in place values with what works best for Māori and Pacifica people within the Cultural Capability Principles of working with Māori and Pacifica for their providers.

### **Payments to Providers**

There is an ongoing concern around equity of pay rates for those providing services to ACC. As people who are Level 6 and Diploma have commented on the low rate. They feel that their experience of doing this work for a long time is not considered. It is important to note, that the new provisional counselling level, may have levels 7 or 8 and yet do not have the amount of experience than others have.

So we will recommend on our next meeting with ACC to strongly consider these pay levels and experience.

Ngā mihi

*Jenny Manuera, Miriama Tolo, Te Ahi Kaa Gay Puketapu*  
ACC Portfolio Manager



## Family Court Portfolio

### **Miriama Tolo, Maria Reynolds, Gay Puketapu-Andrews**

*Portfolio Managers*

This past year has been a year of change and reflection re the Family Court Portfolio, with COVID still a key player in New Zealand it has been a tiring and introspective year.

Going back a couple of years the Family Court Portfolio members were committed to ensure the voice of the NZAC membership was heard and that our clients were fully represented by our submission and our work with the Review Panel.

After a much awaited 'fix' to the 'failed', as quoted by Hon Andrew Little, 2014 Family court Reforms, the first change came in the shape of a bill arising from the report of the Independent Panel, Te Korowai Ture a Whanau. The Family Court (Supporting Children in Court) Legislation Bill was put forward as the next step. The Bill amends the Care of Children Act (CoCA) and the Family Dispute Resolution Act to establish children's participation as a guiding principle.

"At the most basic level, this Bill will require lawyer for the child to explain to their client – the child - the court proceedings and what is happening throughout in a way that is understood by the particular child," Andrew Little said.

It has been a drawn-out process with the change to support children throughout the court proceedings based on the assumption that all children are able to understand the counsel for child explaining to them the court process. This falls short of helping any child who is unable to understand their lawyer, and assumes that the legal profession is able to communicate appropriately with their child client. The Family Court portfolio members look forward to the next steps in change.

Recently, we the Family Court Portfolio members, have been working on and completed a briefing paper (BIM) which will be sent out to the relevant Ministers for Justice, promoting and informing them of the services NZAC Counsellors provide, and the recommendations that we would like them to consider. These will be sent alongside the Counselling Changes Lives briefing paper, as background for the Ministers.

In the year ahead we will continue to look to inform members of changes to the now noted 'failed' 2014 Family Court Reforms. We also look to promote our NZAC Counsellors as professional registered practitioners who are able to work alongside and with their clients within the Family Court and Justice system.

*Miriama Tolo, Maria Reynolds, Gay Puketapu-Andrews*  
Family Court Portfolio Manager

## Research and Journal Portfolio

### **Alexandra Smith**

*Portfolio Manager*

In the 2020 Issue 1 editorial, Dr Peter Bray and Dr Janet May stated “Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari, he toa takitini - Success is not the work of one, but the work of many”. And so there are many people to thank.

Before my role as liaison Executive Member for the Journal, I had no idea of the truth of this statement. The Journal is a complex production involving a large number of people in so many different roles giving generously of their time and skills.

Peter and Janet welcomed Dr Paul Flanagan to the editorial team during last year. We thank the three editors for their many hours of work to ensure a high-quality academic journal is produced. The editors presently have fortnightly Zoom meetings preparing for the 2021 Journals.

Of course there would be no Journal without contributors and we acknowledge their generosity and diligence in making their research available. Counsellor Educators working in tertiary institutions are an important link in encouraging researchers to submit their work for publication.

Thank you also to the large team of 17 counsellor reviewers who critically examine the research and many of whom also support the editors with collegial advice.

Susan Brierly is unable to continue with the technical editing. Her professionalism and attention to detail will be missed. Nicky Dyer, the design editor for the 2020 (Issue 2) publication, was wonderful to work with and really appreciated by the editorial team. Mike Swift prints the Journals, posts the printed copies to those who have ordered and paid for them and is always very supportive and helpful. Thanks also goes to Sharon-Lee A’Court at National Office who loads the Journal articles onto the website.

Finally a message from the Editors. “If you are out there and you have research you could publish .... Why don’t you? Please be in touch.”

*Alexandra Smith*

Research and Journal Portfolio Manager

# School Guidance Counsellor Portfolio

## Alexandra Smith and Sarah Maindonald

### *Portfolio Holders*

**He mihi maioha ki a koutou ngā kaiwhiriwhiri kei te kura, ngā kaiwhiriwhiri katoa.**

#### **Staffing Ratios for Counselling in Schools**

NZAC has continued to lobby for safe staffing ratios in schools.

The demand for counselling is at crisis point with ratios in some schools as high as 1 counsellor to 1035 students (1:1035) We argued that the ratio should be no more than 1:400 and recommended that NZ needed to work towards adopting the American School Counselling Association's recommendation of 1:250. The lowering of ratios is vital to support students adequately and to relieve counsellors' increasingly complex and heavy workloads. Waiting lists are becoming longer and wait times for external mental health and social services are growing longer, compromising the safety of students. Counsellor burnout and compassion fatigue is becoming more common and finding and retaining skilled and experienced staff is getting harder.

The Ministry of Education's planned roll-out of counselling in primary and intermediate schools for Term 2, 2021 was welcomed by counsellors, schools and many parents, the culmination of many years lobbying! Significant issues need to be addressed, however, so that this school counselling staffing is professional, equitable, effective, and sustainable. SGC NZAC representatives participated in a working group with the Ministry of Education, NZEI Te Riu Roa, PPTA-Te Wehengarua, NZ Principals Federation, Te Akatea –NZ Māori Principals' Association, and a Principal of the Pacific Advance Secondary School to promote this roll out. NZAC has had further representation on the team reviewing the GET's applications submitted to the Ministry of Education as potential providers for counselling in schools.

#### **Briefing to Incoming Ministers (BIM)**

A BIM was painstakingly produced to give some succinct and influential messages to incoming parliamentary ministers with solid research data. Thanks to our President and the PR Company for their mahi in collaboration with the SGC Portfolio. Thanks too for the input from the SGC Advisory Group. The BIM articulates many of the challenges and issues facing counselling in schools. This was sent to the Education Minister along with the NZAC document 'Counsellors Change Lives'.

#### **PPTA/NZAC Collaboration**

We continue to work with PPTA who have been supporting us in the background doing some important lobbying with Teachers' Council updating criteria (now on the Teacher's Council website).

We are working to identify empowering training pathways where all counsellors in schools can be protected in terms of salaries and conditions.

#### **School Counselling Advisory Group (SGC Advisory Group)**

Thanks to Matt Judd and Carla King who have put themselves forward to join the current hardworking team of Gaye Evans- Love, Averil Pierce, Vicki Wihongi, and Titihuia Rewita.

He mihi nui ki a koutou katoa.

The SGC Advisory Group Workplan includes:

- Examining the document 'Te Pakiaka Tangata: Strengthening Student Wellbeing for Success', which needs to be updated in consultation with the Ministry of Education.

- Reworking the 3 NZAC pamphlets on counselling for secondary pupils and younger children and information for parents on 'when your child comes to counselling'. The pamphlets are over 20 years old and need be more culturally responsive and inclusive of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Updating the 2015 PPTA/NZAC Appointments kit which is sent to Principals when a school counselling job is advertised.
- The SGC Advisory Group will meet again on November 16th, the day before **Mauri Ora 2021, the National Conference for School Counsellors**, which begins at the Harbourside Function Centre in Wellington. The programme looks fantastic. Make sure you register!!!!

**Other kaupapa:**

We field many calls and enquiries from school counsellors, NZAC Supervisors, as well as School Principals. Examples include schools that are not supporting their counsellor's Supervision; the appointment of people with no counselling qualifications to act as counsellors; the employment of school counsellors on a very basic hourly rate with no holiday pay; equitable pay and conditions; the lack of robust policy for counselling in some schools to ensure safety and wellbeing of young people and their counsellors; and questions relating to 'where have all the School Guidance Counsellors gone?'.

We look forward to a busy and challenging year ahead!

Kia kaha koutou! He mahi miharo tō koutou mahi!

*Alexandra Smith and Sarah Maindonald*  
School Guidance Counsellor Portfolio Holders

# National Committee Reports

## Continuing Professional Development Audit Team

**Niccy Fraser**

*CPD Audit Convenor (Previous)*

2020-2021 has been a turbulent year as NZAC members and the rest of the world have experienced and adjusted to our first global pandemic.

Happily, the CPD audit team comprising Georgina Wilkinson, Chris White, Vicki Eaves, and John Winslade has remained a stable team across the last 3 years. This stability is really important in providing consistency for the NZAC audit process supporting quality CPD standards for NZAC. Sadly, the audit team CPD convenor left, January 2021, to begin the new role as Professional Development manager.



During the lock downs in Aotearoa, between March 2020 and August, this was an opportunity for NZAC members to continue learning how to meet new requirements to put their CPD and APCs online. This has been a huge learning curve for our association. Extra IT member support was provided by national office staff, NZAC president, and the CPD audit convenor across March-June 2020. Members were able to email or call or use Facebook for CPD online enquiries. NZAC president developed several new online CPD guides including screen shots. CPD audit convenor and NZAC president cohosted the first NZAC webinar to guide CPD online process. This initiative was met with mainly member enthusiasm and positive feedback.

It has been a significant step forward, moving NZAC members into completing their CPD online. It is pleasing that NZAC is now in line with other professional associations and ensures that CPD is completed.

### **Refining CPD online system**

NZAC continues to refine and improve our CPD online system. Members have expressed concern re their privacy and information. This is currently being addressed with a review of NZAC privacy standards which will include CPD.

A part time contractor, Siân Andrews-Warmuth, has been employed to collect user stories on the

NZAC website, including CPD to analyse and trouble shoot 'pain points' for members.

Several improvements have been made to CPD online:

- Members can now change their own supervisors.
- Members can now download their CPD.

The 'difficult to use' supervisor search bar remains a problem and is a barrier to some members completing their CPD. Some members continue to struggle with understanding which CPD period they should complete. (We have been 'playing catch up since we initially began placing CPD online. It will now become easier as we go forward.) Overall, members are becoming more confident with using the new online system and it is gratifying, seeing them helping each other on the NZAC face book group.

### **CPD Audit 2020**

The 2020 was cancelled for the following reasons:

- NZAC didn't want to create extra stress for members who were already stressed with adjusting to living and working with the global pandemic.
- In consideration that members were still learning the new CPD online system.
- NZAC didn't want members to have to be assessed as not meeting audit requirements because of incorrect CPD online submissions.
- NZAC's decision was in line with other professional associations.
- Many members had a hugely increased workload in 2020.

Some members misunderstood and believed that the CPD audit cancellation meant they were not required to complete any CPD during 2020 COVID-19 year. Other members took advantage of 2020 as a real time for completing online CPD during lock downs.

### **Vacant CPD Audit role**

This role has been vacant since 15/01/21 and has been advertised. NZAC president has been filling in. Previous CPD Audit convenor has provided extra IT support for members 17/05/21-4/06/21 as they have met the deadline of 31 May for their online CPD.

There have been many enquiries from provisional members about their CPD requirements. This area needs an information pack developed to be distributed for membership.

### **CPD Audit team meeting 2020**

This was held in Tauranga with team members fully appreciating being hosted by one team members. The CPD audit team trialled a paper free audit process and quickly discovered the difficulties due to IT problems and the time constraints. Additionally, 2/7 member audit submissions had been incorrectly completed and therefore could not be used as a practice CPD online audit. Conclusion reached that it was unrealistic to entirely transition, and it would be completed in stages, using a mix of screen and paper. As one team member said

"This is like building a ship and trying to sail it at the same time".

As per NZAC members' request, the audit team developed a CPD audit submission feedback form to provide members with more feedback on their audited CPD submissions. We trialled using it and concluded this extra step in the audit process cost too much time and was therefore unrealistic. Other professional memberships don't provide audit feedback.

### **CPD submission and annual practicing certificates aligned**

Members must complete both their APC and CPD with their supervisors providing sign off by 31 May 2021. This is a significant step which brings NZAC into line with other professional associations. This is a quality assurance process which ensures that all members are completing their CPD in collaboration with their supervisors. Many members see this as a positive step, and many have also used this new requirement to review quality of their supervisory relationships.

Niccy Fraser and CPD Audit team

*Ex CPD audit convenor*

## Counsellor Education Committee

### Margaret Agee

#### *Convenor*

In 2020 we were sorry to receive the resignation of Nan Blanchard, whose contribution to the work of the committee had been highly valued by us all.

Committee members currently include Margaret Agee (Convenor), Raewyn Laurenson, Judi Miller, Huhana Pene (Roopu representative), and Maria Reynolds (National Executive Liaison). We are currently seeking two additional members, including a further Roopu representative.

#### **Programme assessment and accreditation:**

The process of assessment and accreditation has continued. In early 2021, the following programme received accreditation:

WelTec/ Whitireia, Bachelor of Counselling and Addiction Practice

Master's degree programmes at four universities and bachelor's degree programmes at eight tertiary institutions have now been accredited, as listed on the NZAC website.

#### **Programme changes and staffing:**

As a matter of policy, information about changes to programmes and programme staffing is being obtained annually, including notifying the committee immediately if there are changes in the Programme Leader role.

#### **COVID-19 and counsellor education programmes:**

As indicated in last year's annual report, counsellor educators and students were very appreciative of the modification of requirements so that applicants for membership could include online and telephone delivery of counselling during this time. Experience over the past year has led to greater on-going acknowledgment and use of these modes of delivery, while recognising the central importance of face-to-face counselling.

Counsellor educators have been under significant pressure throughout the entire year in terms of adjusting programme delivery in the COVID-19 environment and managing a higher proportion of this online; preparing and overseeing students undertaking online delivery of counselling; the more limited range of practicums available; and the pastoral care of students. Additionally, at the beginning of 2021, counsellor educators have reported notable increases in the number of applicants accepted into programmes, with variable levels in the provision of comparable staffing, generating further pressures.

#### **Changes to proposed plans for the year:**

Because of the pressures counsellor educators were still under late in 2020, and in consultation with them, the committee cancelled the Counsellor Educators' Day and the one-day Research Conference that was to have been held at EIT on December 4th and 5th.

Instead, a mid-year meeting with counsellor educators is planned for 2021, with the possibility of a further meeting later in the year.



**Monitoring and engaging with developments in the tertiary sector:**

The committee has recently begun discussions with Te Pūkenga (New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology) about streamlining counsellor education throughout the country for the programmes offered through polytechnics. It is planned that this policy of streamlining will be implemented in each vocational/ professional sector. The importance of being involved in these discussions cannot be under-estimated, to ensure that the NZAC Counsellor Education Standards will be considered and adhered to, and the value of the NZAC accreditation process recognised. We plan to engage counsellor educators in the discussions at the mid-year meeting.

*Margaret Agee*

Counsellor Education Committee Convenor

## Ethics Committee

**Susan B. Webb**

*Convenor*

The Ethics Committee's tasks are to develop the Code of Ethics as necessary, provide education and guidance on ethical practice, process complaints received about members, answer queries on ethics and advise the Executive on ethical matters.

### **Workload**

The amount of work coming into the Ethics Office in relation to complaints has remained much the same as last year. During 2020-21, 62 complaints have been worked on, as compared with 60 during 2019-20, and 69 during 2018-19. Forty-one cases were closed by March 31st, leaving 21 cases open at the start of the 2021-22 financial year. Forty-two new complaints came in during this year, an increase on 35 last year. There were no hearings held, although one is now in the preparation stages and there is the possibility of two others to come. Nine closed cases involved RETs (Regional Ethics Teams), a reduction on last year's 17, while ten cases involved Convenor (or deputised Convenor) Communications, a similar number to last year, and Initial Assessment Groups (IAGs) recommended 'no further action' in six cases, one of which had been handled to the Ethics Committee's satisfaction by another association. Sixteen complaints were initiated but complainants did not then provide informed consent, being therefore closed and deleted.

At 31st March 2021 three cases had been open for more than a year: one awaiting action from the Human Rights Review Tribunal, relating to a privacy concern; one awaiting the report from an investigation by the Health and Disability Commission; and one, which is in the planning stages of going to hearing. Of the closed complaints, 15 had commenced in the 2019-20 year. Fourteen complaint enquiries, as opposed to 12 last year, were about non-members and therefore could not be pursued.

There is a small but worrisome trend of counsellors finding it difficult to self-reflect, when faced with a complaint, and expressing outrage that the Ethics Committee might think there may be anything they might take responsibility for. Those of us who work with complaints are very aware of how easy it is for any of us to find ourselves in receipt of a complaint and that the ideal is to learn something from the experience that will improve our future practice. Unfortunately, defensiveness usually based on fear, hurt and shame, can get in the way of counsellors making the good use of the experience.

A total of 169 general queries were received, 61 of which were forwarded from National Office or National Executive members. There continues to be a steady increase in these, with a total of 139 in 2019-20, 110 in 2018-19 and 95 in 2017-18. The Committee continues to work at publishing answers to frequently asked questions on the Practice and Ethics section in the members' website and the Office uses categorised and anonymised responses to draw from, when formulating answers to new queries. There were no new privacy requests this year; 35 queries regarding potential complaints, eleven of which became full complaints; and correspondence after case closure was required in four cases.

Those members applying to renew their membership, who alert the Association to court cases or complaints against them outside of the Association, are referred to the Ethics Committee. We received 28 such notifications, although many of these resulted from a misunderstanding of the question and related to complaints that had actually been made to NZAC. This year none of the notifications were serious enough for us to allocate them NZAC complaint numbers, which then enable us to follow and monitor processes elsewhere or supplement actions taken elsewhere.

At present we are short of Regional Ethics Team members across the country, and are hoping shortly

to recruit more.

### **The nature of complaints**

All complaints closed during the year have been sorted according to the type of practice context in which they occurred and also to the key concerns raised, excluding those for which there was no informed consent. Of the 25 cases closed that involved Committee activity, nine of the counsellors were in private practice, with a further six providing funded counselling for example through ACC, the Family Court or employee assistance provisions. Six worked in agency settings, two in schools, one was employed by a workplace, and one was in Health.

At the initial assessment stage, behaviours alleged by complainants are identified and linked to the Code of Ethics, with the aim to name up to three potential elements. These may not in fact turn out to be breaches on a counsellor's part, however knowing what complainants are likely to complain about, and which areas of work seem to present the most risk, can be helpful to counsellors. This year respect, confidentiality, and multiple relationships were again the most frequent, each figuring in eight complaints. Integrity featured in seven and contracting in six. Even-handedness, responsible caring, and avoiding harm were identified in five complaints each, and competence and documentation in four. Referral issues appeared in three, relationships with colleagues and boundaries in two, and partnership, ending counselling, and access to notes in one each. Respect is one of our core values and it would seem likely that many other difficulties could have been resolvable if complainants had felt respected. Multiple relationships, where counsellors had been blind to the risks they were running or the likely harm to a client, continue to feature prominently. 'Taking sides' with a client against a partner or parent is also a common problem.

### **Other Committee activities**

COVID 19 continued to have an impact on Ethics work through 2020, with additional input on guidelines for counselling under the changing conditions, and counselling in school contexts requiring special attention due to the different arrangements in place for schools. While there was a lull in complaints during and immediately after lockdown, numbers climbed back to earlier levels relatively quickly afterwards.

The revisions to both Regional Ethics Team and Hearing Guidelines were accepted by National Executive. These made no major changes to existing processes, but clarified and enhanced information and updated materials as necessary. It seems likely that in the coming year the Ethics Committee will be recommending a change to the information provided by the Respondent to a Complaint, so that Complainants, if they so wish, will have the right to see and respond to the Respondent counsellor's factual account of what took place. This is in line with a recent High Court ruling in relation to the natural justice rights of the Complainant, which, while of less weight than those of the Respondent, nonetheless need to be taken into account in our process.

Further work has been undertaken on providing articles for the Practice and Ethics section in the Members only part of the website. We choose the topics for these on the basis of both the queries and the complaints that come into the Office. We now have five articles uploaded: website guidelines; writing letters and reports for clients; two on contingency planning around interruptions to practice; and a step by step format for addressing ethical issues. My grateful thanks go to the Ethics Committee members who have worked together on these. Further articles are also being addressed, such as on multiple relationships and on counselling children.

Paule Poulin, Ethics Secretary, and I attended privacy training in preparation for the changes to the Privacy Act and came away concerned that more of those involved in working for the Association needed increased familiarity with privacy issues. As a result, additional training has been taking place.

In October, we sadly said goodbye to Ethics Secretary Abi Buchhalter, who left to move to a full-time counselling role. Abi and Paule had formed a really strong team and had carried the Ethics Office through the lockdown and its consequences with commitment, good sense and resourcefulness. As I

write, we have not yet replaced Abi and Paule has needed to hold the fort alone, which is not easy. We have been lucky to have such dedication and co-operation and hope it will be possible for a new team to form soon.

### **Conclusion**

Thanks, as always, for the support, collegiality, positivity, and hard work done by the Committee and RET members. Thanks also to the Ethics Secretaries who need highly diverse skills and, at times, nerves of steel and the patience of saints to manage a complex and at times intense workload; to Alexandra Smith, our National Executive portfolio holder who has engaged enthusiastically with the Committee's work; and finally thanks to our legal adviser, Jo. This is, as ever, a very rewarding committee to convene.

*Susan B. Webb*

Ethics Committee Convenor

# Membership Committee

## Val Boag and Robyn McGill

*Convenors*

### **Assessment Team**

The Assessment Team are now meeting twice a year at Mercure Hotel in Wellington with Val Boag leading the team of John Hibbs, Toia Chase, Mark Pope, Nickei Falconer, Verona Nicolson, Virginia Maskill, and Sonya McKirdy.

The 2020 August round included a mix of paper and online upgrade applications as we began the transition to processing applications online. A number of applications were distributed amongst the team prior to August for assessment online. The plan was to review what was working well and to discuss any issues when we met. However due to COVID-19 lockdowns the August meeting was cancelled and we were forced to complete the assessment process remotely. Generally, the team managed this relatively well. However, most missed the collegial support and meaningful discussions that we have when in the same room.

The Team met together at the Mercure Hotel Wellington in January 2021 for three days. Having assessed some online applications remotely, being together was an opportunity to discuss any variances in opinions and approaches and refine the assessment process.

The time also included a training day facilitated by Robyn McGill which was extremely helpful in establishing an agreed purpose and a consistent standard in assessing upgrade applications.

It was also an opportunity to connect with Linda Allen and Siân Andrews-Warmuth who facilitated a session focussed on the Assessment Team's experiences of any technical difficulties they have had in processing applications.

There are still some technical challenges with the website for some Applicants. However, the annual review of Application Packs by the Membership Committee has significantly reduced issues of clarity and comprehensibility and in turn increased the likelihood of a successful application.

Provisional Applications are also processed online as they are received into NZAC office.

The team have agreed the best process for the next assessment round be of similar format. i.e. Initially processing some of the applications remotely and bring those requiring further discussion and assessment within the team, to the Wellington meeting.

### **Membership Committee**

The Committee met 3 times in Wellington and once by Zoom last year. The team remains unchanged except for the sad loss of Eugene Davis. We acknowledge the considerable mahi Eugene contributed and wish him well in his new position as Kai Tumutumu and in his role on the Supervision Committee.

Toia Chase, Rōpu Representative from the Assessment Team, Val Boag, Assessment Team Leader, Debbie North, Membership Manager ex-officio, Robyn McGill, Convenor with Sheryl Smith as Executive Liaison make up the team.

### **Provisional Membership Counselling Hours**

COVID presented some unique challenges for Counsellor Educators guiding their students through their placement requirements. Face to face counselling is an invaluable learning experience but when this was no longer possible, the Committee agreed to tele and e-counselling under the careful guidance and supervision of the Educators. This does raise a bigger question needing discussion, what is counselling? when increasingly many organisations are using on-line platforms to deliver counselling services.

### **Application Packs**

The Committee totally supports the move to on-line membership processes. However, until the Application Packs are perfect and glitch-free, copies are available to be downloaded to paper on the website and accepted as valid applications.

### **Changes to 2021 Application Packs**

Overseas qualified counsellors applying to NZAC have been able to practice in Aotearoa as a Provisional Member for a minimum of 18 months without declaring their knowledge, or lack of knowledge, of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the impact of colonisation. This has been of concern and so a Cultural Consultation requirement has been introduced. In fact, this was an omission from all Provisional Membership Applications so now all Applicants except those from NZAC Accredited Programmes will now complete a Cultural Consultation section.

Another omission from all Packs was that while Applicants agree to work within the NZAC Code of Ethics there was no mention of ethics in their Declaration. This has now been added.

All application packs had a Police Vetting Form to complete. However, the form was obsolete and despite requests for the current form it seemed to be unobtainable. Therefore, it has been replaced by the Ministry of Justice 'Request your own Criminal Record' form which is available free of charge.

NZAC has recognised that tele and e-counselling are part of many counsellors practice and therefore has been included in the criteria for all membership applications.

The introduction of a 5 year counselling practice required before a new Supervisors can start offering supervision to members has also been added to the application packs.

### **Combined Committees Policy**

The Membership Committee proposed a 'Combined Committees Consultation Process' Policy which was discussed with other Committees at the November Combined Committees Hui. It was agreed that when introducing or changing any Policy and all committees will endorse the Policy before presenting to Executive, thus enabling Executive to step back from operational matters and keep clear boundaries between the roles of governance and operations.

### **Clean Copies of Membership Documents**

The Committees annual review of membership documents has been a frustrating exercise as the documents have had many years of additions, deletions and editing making the documents very difficult to manage. During 2021 all documents will be retyped by give clean copies.

Val and I are fortunate to lead great teams of people who are dedicated and passionate about membership processes. We appreciate you all and thank Debbie, our Membership Manager for her on-going mahi.

*Val Boag and Robyn McGill*

Membership Committee Convenors

# Supervision Committee

## NZAC Supervision Committee

### Our Mihi

To the NZAC Māori Rōpū, the National Executive, administrative staff, those gathered for the 2021 Annual General Meeting, and all members across nga motu, greetings from members of the NZAC Supervision Committee. Nga mihi aroha, nga mihi nui hoki kia koutou katoa, tena koutou katoa.

### Our Kaupapa

The Supervision Committee's kaupapa is twofold – to promote professional supervision and supervision education among NZAC members, and to make policy recommendations relating to supervision to the National Executive. There are currently only five members on the Committee, including one representative from the Māori Rōpū, and one Executive member acting as liaison. We have had two resignations in past months, our convenor Te Ruru at the end of 2020 and Placid Te Aoerere Briggs-Murdoch for health reasons early in 2021. We are grateful for the wisdom, generosity, and experience they each brought to our committee and the legacy of collaboration and compassion they leave with us. We wish Placid strength and hope for her journey ahead.

One vacant position on the committee has been filled by Monique Dalrymple. We welcome the knowledge and experience she brings. We were looking forward to meeting Monique kanohi ki te kanohi at our May 2021 meeting. However, due to extenuating circumstances we have made the decision to postpone this meeting. It may be that we reschedule this as a Zoom meeting at a slightly later date. We will still hold our scheduled meeting on October 16th 2021.

### Our Mahi

Our members are scattered across Aotearoa and we usually come together twice a year for a full day meeting. Therefore, much of the committee's work is carried out through email exchanges or Zoom meetings. This requires close attention and considerable time from committee members to ensure prompt responses to members queries and requests from other committees and the Executive Officer. In 2020, due to the COVID lockdown, one of our full day meetings was conducted solely via Zoom. Though this was a challenge it was well-navigated and still proved productive. The other was postponed from October to November due to Auckland's Level 3 status at that time.

During the 2020/21 all enquiries were given due consideration and answered in a timely manner. We have noticed an understandable flurry of inquiries since January 2021 requesting an exemption from the (now) 5-year membership requirement to supervise NZAC members. It has been noted that the supervision policy has not yet been adjusted on the NZAC website in line with this change. This has been brought to the attention of Head Office who will address this as soon as possible. We carefully consider each application for exemption based on its merits and according to the template developed. Enquiries ranged across the following areas:

- Provision of supervision
- Supervision education
- Requests for recommendation for formal supervision qualifications
- Queries regarding NZAC accredited supervision qualifications
- Requests for exemption from the 3 (now 5) year NZAC membership requirement
- Signing off on CPD and APC
- Navigating ethical expectations of NZAC with expectations of employers



Regular reports have been provided for each Executive meeting during the year and for the NZAC AGM. Besides those reports, other projects and achievements include the publication of “Titiro Mai” No.2 in Korero Awhina – an easy to digest version of our ‘Information for Current and Prospective Supervisors’ document. A template was developed to assess exemption applications. A Portfolio plan for sharing committee tasks was also developed and a Convenor handbook drafted in response to a lack of documentation regarding role descriptions.

Placid Te Aoerere Briggs-Murdoch and Te Ruru attended the 2020 Combined Committees meeting, providing a summary of achievements and discussing the upgrade to 5 years NZAC membership to supervise members. They also raised questions about provisional NZAC members being rushed into ISSC contracts with ACC and discussed whether recommendations to ACC are needed.

### **Our Hui**

In addition to these achievements, the Supervision Committee met twice during the 2020/21 year. At its May 9 Zoom meeting the committee focused on refining and ratifying the content of the Position paper for NZAC Executive. NZAC President Christine MacFarlane joined us for the start of our meeting to answer questions giving us the opportunity to acknowledge her work in relation to online CPD and the extra challenges posed by COVID 19 lockdown. We sadly farewelled Mike Williams after being a member of the Supervision committee since its inception.

The November 2020 meeting provided an opportunity to review and reflect on our Kaupapa as a committee and look towards a new way to structure the committee roles. We welcomed Eugene to his role as Executive Liaison member and had the opportunity to farewell Alexandra in person as she moved out of that role. We thank her for her wise and thoughtful contributions. The new Portfolio style of working was agreed upon and roles divided. We thanked Te Ruru for his outstanding leadership and for developing this and the Convenor handbook to guide our committee as we move into uncharted waters.

### **Our Poroporoaki**

The committee moves forward into the 2021/22 membership year with enthusiasm for the work alongside the knowledge that more members are needed to share the workload and maintain an energetic committee. The many changes to the membership of our committee over the past two years has been unsettling. We are grateful for the support and collaboration of other working committees, and the resources provided by the Executive and its very able administrative staff. To ensure that the work of the committee continues at its highest potential, expressions of interest for a position as members of the NZAC Supervision Committee need to be circulated among the membership as soon after the 2021 AGM as possible. Our work for the coming year will focus on a review of supervision policy and continuing to respond to inquiries from members and other committees and Executive as they arise.

I roto i te kotahitanga,

*Gail Allan (Māori Rōpū and Co-Convenor), Eugene Davis (Exec. Liaison and Māori Rōpū),  
Fia Turner (Pasifika representative), Naarah Simpson (Co-Convenor), Monique Dalrymple*



*Supervision Committee November 2020*

# Branch Reports

## Te Tai Tokerau Branch

### **Jane Massey**

#### *Chairperson*

Ko London te maunga  
Ko Thames te awa  
Ko Ngati Irirangi te iwi  
Ko Jane Massey toku ingoa

The Branch AGM 2020 was held on 19 June 2020 via a Zoom meeting online owing to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

Branch Officers were elected:

- Chair: Jane Massey
- Secretary: Gillian Ireland
- Treasurer: Karen Gilmore

Regional representative roles were accepted:

- National Exec: Alexandra Smith
- Ethics committee: Andrea Black
- Membership interview panel: Josie Scott

Thanks to our officers and representatives, and to our membership, and despite the restrictions of the pandemic, our branch has achieved three workshops and meetings in the remainder of the financial year.

*21st August 2020 at 6 Allen Bell Drive Kaitaia*

#### **Tihei-wa Mauri Ora – a framework for Ethical Practice**

The presentation and workshop was led by Teina Piripi MNZAC.

Teina Piripi and Vivienne Body, two wahine Māori counsellors working in iwi social services in the Far North, developed this indigenous kaupapa Māori counselling resource based in Te Ao Māori.

This workshop gave an overview of Tihei-wa Mauri Ora: Indigenous Resources and other Mana enhancing applications, focusing on Te Tiriti o Waitangi Partnerships in practice. It included a focus on Mana enhancing applications relating to: Supervision/Puawananga, Motivational interviewing and Narrative traditions.

*13th November 2020 at St Johns Church (Golden Church) on Kamo Road*

#### **Working with Rainbow communities**

The workshop was hosted by Tommy Hamilton (Provisional NZAC).

Tommy Hamilton is a narrative therapist who is a contract counsellor at 'OUTLine NZ', the national Rainbow organisation focused on the mental health of rainbow communities. He works across all rainbow identities and experiences, whānau and with other health professionals. He was previously the Executive Director of Rainbow Youth from 2009- 2013. Currently he is a volunteer counsellor at OUTline NZ and the volunteer coordinator at Body Positive. Tommy also works as a lecturer at Unitec in the area of collaborative practice.

This workshop was an invitation to discuss the types of practice and key frameworks used in his work

with trans, intersex, non-binary, MVPFAFF and takatāpui clients. The workshop invited discussion and practice examples, with some key updates on current gender affirming practices.

*12 March 2021 at the 'St John' Rooms in Kerikeri*

### **Exploring intersex and sex characteristic diverse experiences in Aotearoa**

The workshop was hosted by Tommy Hamilton. The workshop included a pre-recorded interview with Mani Mitchell, the Executive Director of ITANZ.

Mani was unable to attend in person because of the COVID-19 lockdown in the Auckland region.

Mani Mitchell is a Clinical Supervisor, Educator, Change Agent, Private practice consultant, and Gender variance specialist. Mani offered perspectives and histories of stories that inform and grow counsellors and health professionals understanding of the lifespan experiences of intersex and sex characteristic diverse people.

We have had several requests from members who would like to join the branch workshops and meetings via Zoom. This will provide some challenges, as our usual venues do not provide tech equipment or support.

I would like to thank the branch members for giving me the opportunity of being in the role of Chair during the past two years.

*Jane Massey*

NZAC Te Tai Tokerau Chair

## Auckland Branch

### Kathryn Barclay

*Chairperson*

I am proud to again present the Branch Annual Report and to reflect on a very different year for our branch, association, and our country as we operated during the global pandemic.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the branch committee members, whose support and camaraderie helped me to lead the branch as we navigated through the challenging time.

#### **Branch AGM**

This was an unusual AGM and definitely a first for us as it was held via Zoom on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May. The lockdown had forced us into this new style of meeting and our April branch meeting had given us the opportunity to experiment with the technology. While I had been unsure how the meeting would go, I was delighted that it seemed to go really well. It was attended by 42 people, and it was great to have a number of provisional members join us.

The existing office holders and committee members were re-elected. Cathy Readhead, Carol White, Jenny Manuera, Elaine Jacobsen, Angelika Chisholm, Averill Waters, Claire Ferguson, Jane Tyrer along with myself form the committee and we are all very committed to the work of the branch. We were delighted that a nomination came from the floor and Natalie Kim Callard joined the committee.

The main item discussed during the meeting was questions about the CPD audit process and the meeting voted for a letter requesting clarification to be sent to National Executive.

#### **Resignation from Committee**

We were sad to recently receive Cathy Readhead's resignation from the committee. Cathy has been on the committee for over 14 years and in that time has had many roles at both branch and national level. She was the editor of our Branch newsletter, the National newsletter, and also served as the National Secretary. We are grateful she is going to continue in her role on the Professional Development Committee.

#### **Finances**

Elaine Jacobsen has continued to do excellent work in the role of Treasurer. During the year we had restricted branch events due to lockdowns so there was less expenditure on room hire and meetings this year. The branch continues to sustain a healthy financial position so the committee decided to make more funding available and increase sponsorship to the upcoming National AGM and Māori Roopu Meetings.

#### **National AGM**

The branch sponsored a number of the committee and branch members to attend this in Wellington. It was great that it was able to go ahead, and we all appreciated the social aspects of the dinner on the Friday evening. Many will have enjoyed reading the accounts of peoples' experiences in the newsletter.

#### **Newsletter and Advertising – Jane Tyrer**

The Auckland branch produces a fortnightly advertising email and a monthly newsletter. These emails go out to just over 1,000 Auckland members. The role of the newsletter is to support the life, professional development, and networking of Auckland branch members.

If you are looking for ways to be more involved in the Auckland Branch, or to connect with other members, we encourage you to read the newsletters and attend some of the advertised events.

#### **Professional Development**

This year saw fewer events than in the past due to COVID restrictions. However, we began to think

outside the restraints and held some online PD sessions. Many of these were around topics relevant to practicing in the online and in COVID environment. In response to need, a number were especially aimed at provisional members to attend events leading up to applying for membership.

Towards the end of the year as we moved into level 1, a number of events were run.

- **Welcome to NZAC** meeting for beginning counsellors had a large number attend.
- **PD Event - Kathryn Dalziel** - This event provided information about the privacy act changes and the implications for us as counsellors. This event was subsidised by the branch to keep the cost down. Kathryn generously allowed us to distribute the PowerPoints to members who were not able to be there via a link in the newsletter.
- **Branch End of Year Celebration** - This was a lovely informal evening where a small group gathered together and enjoyed a time of socialising. The activity we invited people to participate in was adding ideas to what were the 'Silver Linings' from 2020. Despite the year of challenges, there were valuable conversations about the Silver Linings we all were able to find.

### **Area meetings and special interest groups**

In 2020 these meetings were limited but operated when they could.

In 2021 Shore area group is the only one currently operating and continued to be facilitated by Carol-Anne Begbie.

#### Special Interest Groups

- The Supervisors Interest Group is facilitated by Richard Charmley and Kathryn Barclay. It only met a few times face to face in 2020. In 2021 it changed the meeting time and format.
- Trauma Special Interest meeting is monthly and is facilitated by Angelika Chisholm and Philippa van Kuilenburg.
- Narrative Interest Group - Co Conveners Sasha Pilkington, Jane Tyrer and Carol White meet monthly.

The dates for these groups are now set for the year ahead and can be viewed in the 'Branch at a Glance' monthly newsletter to make planning easier for people.

A big thank you to all the co-ordinators of our area and interest groups, for without you these groups would not exist.

### **Auckland Representative on National Executive**

Jenny Manuera is our current Representative She has held this position since 2016 and has one more year left of this three-year term. I would like to thank Jenny for the huge amount of time and energy she dedicated to Auckland Branch, in wider service to NZAC, and to the counselling profession.

### **Contributions to the wider work of NZAC**

Not only do our members do a lot of work here in Auckland but many contribute to the wider work of the association in a range of areas. Without Auckland members so generously giving of their time NZAC would not be as rich an organisation as it is.

We can be proud of the work of our branch and the contribution we make to the association.

*Kathryn Barclay*

NZAC Auckland Chair



*Auckland Committee Christmas 2020*

## Waikato Branch

### Clare Baker and Susanna Wilford

*Co-Secretaries*

Welcome to the Chairperson's Report on behalf of our team and in lieu of an elected chairperson. Jenny Snowdon has been our acting chairperson this year, Susanna Wilford and I have shared the secretary role, and Suzanne O'Shaughnessy has been our treasurer. Our regional representative is Maria Reynolds, along with steadfast support from Michelle Atger, Kou Kunishige, and Philip Coyle, whose contributions have been invaluable. We also want to acknowledge and include Life Members, Kathie Crocket and Alastair Crocket.

Our year began in the middle of the COVID lockdown, our last AGM being held via Zoom. No chairperson was elected at that time, so we wish to sincerely thank committee member, Jenny Snowdon, for stepping up as acting chair to guide us through the year. Jenny's experience, knowledge, and wisdom have been invaluable to the team.

Susanna Wilford and I have shared the role of secretary as a way for me to learn the ropes and to share some of the workload. Susanna also publishes our bi-monthly newsletter with the help of committee member, Kou Kunishige. We welcome new members who might like to attend meetings or hold elected positions.

#### **Financial**

The Waikato Branch continues to be financially secure. I wish to acknowledge the work of Suzanne O'Shaughnessy, our Treasurer.

#### **Branch Newsletters**

We are very grateful to committee members Susanna Wilford and Kou Kunishige for producing our bi-monthly newsletter, through which we endeavour to bring you relevant and interesting articles as well as details of upcoming professional development opportunities and the schedule of our branch activities. We very much welcome articles from members.

#### **Support for members**

The committee is committed to supporting and acknowledging members wherever we can. This year we have maintained a close connection with Māori Roopu of counsellors and where possible collaborating together for our collegial conversation events. The Branch continues to support meetings of groups in Thames and this year supported an inaugural meeting of a group in Taupo, who we would like to continue to support. Also, we continue to have a close connection with the School Guidance Counsellor network through Philip Coyle's connection with this group. We acknowledge these groups for their commitment; to those they work with, to each other, and to the profession.

#### **Collegial events**

Planned conversations for learning and meeting each other were held throughout the year covering a wide range of themes:

- **Self-Care** with Philip Coyle and Chris Bryant.
- **Ikemoke Tamaki-Takarei** presentation on Kingitanga, colonisation, and poukai.
- **Branch Christmas Gathering** last year was held at Royale Indian and there was only a small group in attendance. However, the company was outstanding and the food was delicious.
- **Movie night:** an open invitation was extended to view the movie 'Still Life'.
- **Haerenga Turangawaewae:** Members were invited to attend a guided tour of Turangawaewae marae, the regatta, and celebrations.



### **The year ahead for Waikato Branch**

The committee have already mapped out some events for the year ahead including an exciting Matariki experience at the Hamilton Observatory in June as well as a presentation by lawyer Kathryn Dalziel on the NZ 2020 Privacy Act changes and how they pertain to counsellors in July.

We look forward to meeting members, provisional members, student affiliates, and practitioners from other associated professions at future gatherings.

Waiho i te toipoto, kua i te toiroa

Let us keep close together not far apart

*Clare Baker and Susanna Wilford*

Co-Secretaries

**Tauranga Moana Branch**  
**Donald McMenamin and Toni Hohneck**  
*Co-Chairs*

The NZAC Tauranga Moana committee for 2020/2021 comprises Donald McMenamin and Toni Hohneck (Co-Chairpersons), Sue Ferguson (Secretary, Advertising and Newsletter), Sharmila Pathak (Treasurer), Naarah Simpson (Students), Michelle Shepherd (Waihi), and Paul Barr (Whakatane). Maria Reynolds continues to support the group from the National Team.

Our regular schedule of meetings has continued well up until the close of all meetings in the country. Meetings with members have been held in Waihi, Tauranga, and Whakatane. These meetings are based around a short presentation by a member followed by conversation on that topic among those attending. Most recently one of our Waihi members, Tina Phillips, gave a rich presentation using oobleck (cornflower and water) to explore solidity and fluidity in our practice as counsellors. The previous meeting was enriched with presentations on Grief Services by Janet Baird, and a moving account by Rachael Phillips of a family responding to suicide.

On behalf of our student members, Naarah Simpson met with BTI students to discuss membership processes. Naarah is available for student and provisional member inquiries.

Each year we offer two Saturday Morning PD sessions. In 2020 Eugene Davis taught richly on supporting tane Māori and their communities. This year, the first of our twice-yearly PD Saturday Morning speakers is James Arkwright exploring narrative metaphors in counselling.

The Zoom meetings held in 2020 were well attended and we are continuing to adapt our meetings to accommodate our widespread rohe.

We have advertised to members to explore interest in a series of three evening meetings based around a particular modality. Our hope is to meet across three weeks to explore together ideas and practices from a chosen counselling modality.

*Donald McMenamin and Toni Hohneck*  
NZAC Tauranga Co-Chairs

## Gisborne Branch

### **Vicki Murray**

#### *Chairperson*

Our branch meets bi-monthly. Over the past twelve months we have tried to focus on opportunities for collegial networking and strengthening ties with our sister branch in Hawkes Bay and with our colleagues down at National Office. Ethics and technology have also been recurring threads in our meetings.

We have all had to become more familiar and comfortable with using technology. Many of us began using telehealth platforms for the first time to support our clients. Our branch AGM during lockdown was held entirely via Zoom (Zui), and we now offer access via computer for all branch meetings so that those at home, in Wairoa, or up the East Coast can join in.

In early April 2020 we organised an additional branch meeting to discuss the functionality of the then-new NZAC website. Sheryl Smith, our Regional Representative, and Mandy Pentecost, our previous Regional Rep, 'Zui-ed' in to join us and provided guidance and reassurance for the move from being paper-based to filing all of our required NZAC documentation online.

I attended the National AGM in August via Zoom, and while I enjoyed listening in from home and not having to spend the time travelling down to Wellington, I did miss having opportunities for personal contact.

Discussions around ethics have also been a bit of a theme this past year. At our June meeting Sue Webb, NZAC Ethics Committee Convenor, Zui-ed in and outlined the most common ethics queries that she and her team at National Office receive from our membership.

Ethics were further canvassed when the Gisborne and Hawkes Bay branches held a combined PD and networking day in February of this year. We met together halfway, in Wairoa, and were fortunate to be hosted by the staff of Enabled (formerly Wairoa Youth Services Trust). Our morning PD session on gambling addiction was led by Te Rangihaeata Gambling Recovery Service from Hastings, and in the afternoon Sue Webb led an entertaining workshop on multiple relationships. Our two branches intend to hold further combined events and are currently discussing an informal retreat weekend at Morere Hot Springs, from 25 – 27 June.

The need to retreat, restore, and attend to our own self-care emerged as a paramount concern this year, and at our meetings, as part of whakawhanaungatanga, we have started checking in on each other's wellbeing. As with most working in our sector, workloads continue to increase. Each year we express interest in doing something locally for the public for Mental Health Awareness Week, but we continue to find it difficult to follow through due to individual time constraints. Wait times for clients to access support from our local agencies continued to grow throughout the past twelve months from an average of around 2-3 weeks out to 2-3 months. We look forward to providing input into the very timely survey of nationwide counsellor capability.

Somehow, we also managed to fit in two social events. In mid-July 2020 members and partners gathered for a Thai meal, and we rounded out last year with another meal and drinks together just before Christmas. It is always a refreshing change to meet socially rather than the way we usually do via a more structured meeting space.

Despite being one of the smallest, the Gisborne Branch of NZAC continues to grow in membership numbers and is indeed in good heart. While one of our most respected and long-standing members, Gill Fraser, retired last year, we also welcomed to our fold two new student members and one new provisional member.

Lastly, and certainly not least, I must express my gratitude to long-time branch stalwart Elizabeth Florance, who is standing down as our Secretary, and also to Mike Payne our current branch Treasurer. Without their continued support, and good humour, our meetings and branch activities could not have continued. I encourage all NZAC student, provisional, and full members to participate in sustaining and to tautoko their local branches.

*Vicki Murray*  
NZAC Gisborne Chair

**Hawkes Bay Branch**  
**Sharon Jenkinson**  
*Chairperson and Acting Secretary*

Tēna koutou katoa

At the conclusion of the AGM 2020, the Branch did not have a Chairperson or Secretary elected. It was agreed that another meeting would be held to see if the Branch would continue or close. On 7 July a meeting was held that all members were invited to, 5 attended with 3 apologies. The implications of the Branch closing were enough for me to agree to be re-elected as Chairperson and Secretary with the new committee agreeing that the Secretary role would be shared. Given that the Chairperson can only hold that position for 3 years there is no option for me to continue in this capacity, and ultimately the membership will decide where to from here. I invite each of us to consider what losing our local branch might look like moving forward, individually and collectively.

Fulfilling the roles the past 12 months continued to be met with the how do I balance the needs of supporting a family member with ongoing chronic health conditions, and the impact that this has on our family, my work and then amongst other things NZAC. A committee is a team effort and I would like to thank the present committee, and members that have been involved for their support for me personally and the Branch. Sonia Paul represented our Branch at the national AGM, we have had 4 committee meetings since the last AGM and Sheryl Smith our regional rep, Vicki Murray from Gisborne and myself have met a couple of times to organise a shared Professional Development Day in Wairoa. 6 members from HB Branch attended. A huge thank you to Sue Webb who presented an ethics piece. Also my colleague Cath Healey who is an NZAC member, presented on Gambling as an addiction, the related harm and what support Te Rangihaeata as an organisation can offer.

Reflection continues to be a part of my life personally and professionally. Then reflection leads to what next and what will that look like. Looking back, the last year has continued to be influenced by hospitals, scheduled and unscheduled admissions and surgeries. This has meant two disappointments with not being able to attend last year's national AGM, and a combined Professional Development day with Gisborne in February. I am incredibly grateful for the support I have received at work to provide support for whaiora if needed whilst I have been away, from my supervisor and NZAC peers, as this has enabled me to be where I felt I most needed to be. Looking forward, through our ongoing connection and feedback with Palmerston Hospital DHB, they are changing their process re supporting families upon diagnosis and possible treatment options in the area we have been involved in. The End of Life Choice Act becomes available in November, and at some point in the future I envisage myself supporting families through this process.

It is my hope that our local Branch will continue. That the next Chairperson can bring energy and focus which I feel I have lacked at times over the last 2 years. Thank you to the committee members who have organised events and contributed to the Branch during that time.

*Sharon Jenkinson*  
Chairperson and Acting Secretary

**Taranaki Branch**  
**Janice Vermeulen**  
*Chairperson*

We started this past year with five people on our committee; Gwenyth Richards (Secretary), Janet Francesco (Finances), Sandi Cummings, Margaret Smith, and myself. At the start of 2021, I shifted to Wanaka to take up a new position as Head of Guidance at Mt Aspiring College and will be stepping down from the Committee in June 2021. I wish to sincerely thank Janet and Gwenyth for taking the lead in the Taranaki branch; it is very much appreciated.

2020 has been a year that we shall not forget; a year of COVID-19, lockdowns, levels, and social distancing. This was also the year where we were able to spend time reflecting and thinking about well-being and keeping ourselves safe. This was also the year, for many people, that life was not that good, that days came with anxiety, depression, hurt, being afraid, of not knowing what to do or where to go.

During 2020 we continued to offer a variety of meeting opportunities to our members, including learning and socializing while networking together. It has been great to have a steady number of members attend professional development opportunities that we have offered, and to welcome visitors and people new to Taranaki to these meetings. In August our meeting focused on working with sexual violence counselling and the structure and topic of ACC engagement with clients as a counsellor. Our presenters were Patrick Coyle and Margaret Smith. In October, Jamie Allen came to share in the work that is happening at the Taranaki Retreat and the journey that led to the opening of the Retreat to support those clients struggling with suicide ideation. During December 2020 and February 2021 we networked together celebrating a year filled with challenges and hope and a start to a new year. Michelle Doorbar presented at our meeting in April discussing counselling in the area of addictions and substance use.

I wish to thank the committee for their dedication, effort, and time they have spent in supporting our Association in Taranaki. It has been an honour to work with the Taranaki NZAC members for the past few years. Taranaki is home for me, and I do intend to return one day.

Ngā mihi mahana

*Janice Vermeulen*  
NZAC Taranaki Chair

## Whanganui Branch

**Rob Torr**

*Chairperson*

It is a privilege to be a part of the NZAC Whanganui Branch. There is always something new to learn every month. The meetings always take place on the first Thursday of the month and members meet regardless of the number of members who attend. I am privileged to have very competent members who fill in for me when I am not available. As an Educator and a counsellor, I am also involved in the Post Primary Teachers Association and this has meant that I have missed a few meetings over the year. This being the case, I am still representing the interests of teaching counsellors on many different forums within PPTA. The numbers of NZAC members attending our meetings have diminished over the years. I attribute this to retiring members and the increase in workload throughout this region. Those that have attended have enjoyed each other's company and contributions. The position of Chairperson is challenging and stimulating. There is a vast array of experience and expertise which members of this Branch bring to share at the meetings. As we work, listen, discuss, and fellowship together, we grow and become a stronger community of counsellors.

In 2020 I did not attend the Annual NZAC Continuing Professional Development Day and conference. This was mainly because I as the chairperson was not impressed by the undercurrents which were not dealt with at previous conferences. Now this is a personal reflection and not one of the Branch, however, I am looking forward to attending the conference in 2020 as I have found the workshops are of great value. There has been a forward push from Executive for the professional learning cycle (CPD) in 2020. I am pleased to see that in 2020 due to the Professional Learning Cycle (CPD) being online, and COVID-19, that more time was given to get online and complete the learning cycle process.

I believe that although we did not meet as many times in this last year, the times we did meet were full of stories, and contributions made by members. Everyone had something to take away and place in their own counselling baskets. The business side of the meeting does take up time; however, the guest speakers, teaching from fellow counsellors, and the richness of fellowship allowed each one of us to grow.

As the Branch Chair in 2020-2021 I have reflected upon why members in this region do not attend monthly meetings. I am not the only one who has reflected on this, and so there is an opportunity for change to reinvigorate members by members in 2021.

This Branch does have an extensive array of skills, backgrounds, and specialities which people bring to the Branch meetings, and therefore it is so great to meet regularly. Meetings in 2020 – 2021 were mostly on the first Thursday of every month and started at approximately 5.15pm. To the members who did attend, and brought with them their laughter, friendship, specialness and yes, their specialist areas, I thank you. You have contributed in such a beautiful way to this Branch. It has also been great to see some new faces at branch meetings throughout the year. In 2021 this Branch will keep on meeting; however, it might be in a different format and way, depending on the vision of the members.

So, what has been happening in our Branch in the 2020-2021 period?

In March at the AGM portfolios were not filled. We did not fill the job of Secretary or Treasurer. I would like to thank those who helped with the Secretary role, as I know this is not one of my strengths. The Treasurer's role was not filled and so we co-opted a non NZAC members Mrs Torr (snr) to take on this role. The financial statements are complete for the AGM. I would like to thank Mrs Torr for her help over this year. She will be stepping down from the role post the 2021 AGM. Everyone has been paid. The capitation grant which we receive from NZAC has been used on meetings for members. The Whanganui branch over the 2020-2021 period has held most of its regular meetings at Family Works Whanganui.

Our programme over the last 12 months has consisted of a great social event, guest speakers, and membership input, and no meetings due to COVID-19. In October we once again enjoyed great food and fellowship at our annual mid-winter Christmas dinner. This was in October due to COVID-19 restrictions for a mid-winter get together. It is at these functions that we get to know the stories of life behind our wonderful members.

Our meetings have been enriched through the sharing of knowledge and skills by fellow counsellors. We have been enriched with presentations and discussions on different counselling modalities including drawing therapy, depression and building rapport, accessing help, and working with young students and teenagers. Thank you everyone for your participation and involvement.

The programme which was presented in 2020 was as follows:

February	Welcome back and planning for the 2020 year.
March	AGM including the election of officers.
April	Membership sharing of resources or a resource used in their practice.
May	COVID-19.
June	COVID-19.
July	Christ Church Community Centre – Sharing around lockdown experiences.
August	ICAMFS Team and SUPP Teams (youth AOD).
September	Drawing Therapy – Avril Spain.
October	Mid-Winter Christmas – social event for all members.
November	No meeting.
December	End of year drink at the Lion Red.

Some of the issues which were discussed over this year in general business included CPD, membership and provisional membership, ethics, the audit process, and supervision.

I would like to thank all the members who attend meetings at this Branch. Thank you, Cheryl, for your kind words of encouragement and wise words over the years. It has been a pleasure being the Chairperson over the last few years. As I stand down from this role as Chairperson, I would like to wish the committee and incoming Chairperson everything of the best with the changes and new directions of this branch in the future.

THANK YOU, Kia Kaha

*Rob Torr*  
NZAC Whanganui Chair



**Manawatu Branch**  
**Delwyn Crowther**  
*Chairperson*

Thank you for this opportunity to present to you the 2020-2021 Annual Chairperson's Report of the Manawatu Branch of the NZAC.

This past year has been one of endless change, with our constant travelling companions, flexibility, and optimism giving us the ability to stay afloat and enable us to navigate the course ahead. Our first zoom AGM on 22 July 2020 was enjoyed by a smaller group of attendees than usual, but proved to be easier than originally anticipated.

I am always thankful for the work of our local NZAC counselling community and the strength those involved bring to this demanding work. Interest groups in Trauma and a newer group looking at Anxiety have been well attended. The most recent initiative in the Manawatu has been the development of an independent group known as a Regional Counselling Workforce Development Strategic Group, which is made up of representatives from local NGO's, NZAC, NZCCA, and counsellors working in private practise. Kim Penny chairs this working group and monitors the progress towards its three objectives which all support increasing value to the counselling profession.

Our small Branch Committee members loyally meet to discuss relevant counselling matters along with ideas to inspire, encourage, and strengthen the counselling profession in Manawatu and the wider districts. We welcome some new members to the committee. Clive Bickerstaff with his level-headed approach adding solid, sensible suggestions into our discussions. Murray Thompson attends when he is able. More recently, we welcomed Trish Nicoll who stepped up and facilitated our most recent branch evening event; our Ako Hui -Self-Care on 22 March 2021. I also want to thank two committee members returning again for another term as it brings stability and experience, so my thanks to Joan Atley ,our dedicated treasurer, and Nadine Richardson, who passionately shares news and views through the newsletter and faithfully records our branch minutes.

After two false starts due to COVID and the imposed lock downs we were finally successful in running Manuera Life Development Services Limited workshop held at the Te Rangimarie Marae at Rangiotu on the 12 and 13 October 2020. 'Te Whariki Hou Workshop (Weaving new mat) - Working Effectively with Māori', facilitated by Jenny Manuera-Jones and Manuera Life Bicultural Co-Facilitator Wi Waikari-Mauhini. Jenny and Wi introduced the participants to working with Trauma using Māori Tikanga-Based Models of practice with a range of inter-active activities balanced with theory.

This was followed on 9 November with a hui to support those looking at moving from Provisional to Full Member of NZAC. This support group has met again several times to encourage those in their counselling journey, recognising that working through the process can feel like attempting to climb a mountain, so having others to do this with can help.

The 2020 year ended with our Christmas Event in the lovely setting of Wharerata on Thursday 12 December where we again enjoyed being together eating a delightful meal and being simulated with great conversations.

As we entered 2021 we have been cautious about plans but with the success of our Ako Hui on Self-Care on 22 March we have planned an LGBTQIA+ workshop with MALGRA on Saturday 15 May.

After three false starts we are also looking forward to running a three-day Supervision Workshop in June and a one-day Workshop on Loss and Complex Grief with Margaret Agee and Johann van den Berg from Auckland.

Finally, we have continued to embrace our theme, the ever-changing world, by inviting Niccy Fraser to join our last committee meeting via zoom. Niccy shared about herself and her new role of Professional Development Manager. We look forward to strengthening this relationship which has been made easier now that we are all so familiar with Zoom conversations. Let us also celebrate the good that has been developed out of the COVID experience and how it is also benefiting us.

*Delwyn Crowther*  
NZAC Manawatu Chair

# Wellington, Wairarapa, and Kapiti Branch

## Anita Edwards

### *Co-Chair*

Kia ora koutou.

I want to acknowledge the ongoing connection, support and care for the Branch by our **kuia and life members**.

Thank you to our hard working **committee members**. The harsh reality is that the engaged support is again sparse, and it is a struggle to maintain professional and timely email responses as well as keeping our branch alive and informed with our 'What's Up' newsletter. Thank you to Ann Nation, Suzana Sagadin, Sherine Mettini who formed our **Education sub group**.

### **Monthly Speakers**

We have a line-up of interesting and consistent monthly speakers and this is noticeably creating an increased level of attendance at our monthly meetings. Some of the topics over this time have included:

- Matua Tau Huirama ran an interactive te reo workshop session with a focus on how many things fit into these four domains: Mana Atua; Mana Whenua; Mana Tangata; Mana Wai Moana.
- Mari Cribb and Sandy Tustin presented 'A Day in the Life of a School Guidance Counsellor'.
- Brent Williams speaking about depression and his book 'Out of the Woods'.
- A Supervision Panel, including Winnie Duggan, Anne Horrill, and Amy McLaughlin with the support of Luana Murray in a session chaired by Jane Henson.
- A presentation on Eating Disorders with Old and Young People By Chris Smith, Reg. Clin. Psychologist & Raewyn Woodhouse, NZAC registered Counsellor

A huge thank you to **Miriama Tolo** who represents our branch at the **National level** as well as being involved with a number of sub committees at a National level. Miriama's portfolios are Family Court, ACC, and Allied Health (Counsellor related). Much of her behind-the-scenes mahi goes unnoticed but we really appreciate the connection and your consistent attendance at meetings to keep us informed.

### **COVID and Zoom**

As with everyone we became well versed in Zoom and had a number of successful meetings via Zoom in 2020. While this has continued to be a method people would like to use to access meetings, we have found that to successfully share in-person meetings requires specific technology and this is being looked into.

### **Geography**

Our region, like many in NZ, has some significant geographical challenges to connection. We have been attempting to shift at least one meeting a year to the Wairarapa. Our 2020 one was well attended, so we hope this will grow support and connections between the members. We were joined by Kapiti members as their committee disbanded. While we have made attempts to elicit what people would like in terms of shifting meetings around the region, we have had no useful data and will at present stick to our current format. We welcome new ideas and ways of holding our meetings and encourage our branch members to reach out, speak up and say what would be best for them.

### **Whats Next...**

**AGM:** Our upcoming AGM is May 17th at Johnsonville Community Centre where we will welcome **Ripeka Ellison and Danny Makomako for Puawananga kaitiakitanga** (cultural supervision)

### **Upcoming meeting topics:**

- Midwinter Feast and the use of humour and songs in counselling sessions.
- Counselling with angry clients.
- The frame in counselling.
- Marae event.
- Young women's sexuality issues in counselling.
- Reverie and the repression of feelings in counselling.

*Anita Edwards*

NZAC Wellington, Wairarapa, and Kapiti Co-Chair

## Nelson Branch

### Mark Peart

*Chairperson*

#### **COVID**

This year has been one that we will all remember with the COVID pandemic striking the whole world. I am aware that we have all heard about the effects of COVID on the world in many ways. It needs to be mentioned now as it has also largely impacted on our ability as a committee to organise PD events for our region. We saw the sudden boom in tele-counselling, phone counselling, Skype committee meetings, and instead of in person PD events, there has been huge increases in internet-based training and development.

COVID has directly halted our events due to lockdowns but also, with our main and generous free room hire, NMIT now cancels all external bookings at level 2 lockdown.

The impact on counsellors as a result of COVID has been immense, with overworking and a continual demand on counsellors' time. In our profession the idea of turning people away is so counter intuitive to the very nature of our work. Self-care has become a major topic within our industry.

This has been very strongly highlighted by NZAC and the decision to skip one annual CPD requirement; Christine our NZAC president also highlights these same challenges.

This year has also been especially sad with the passing of special people within the counselling community whom I believe Kathleen will mention in her report.

#### **Notable points and changes**

NMIT have decided to discontinue the MOU. They feel that we are too small to warrant such an agreement. However, NMIT assure us that we will still have access to the free use of the rooms they have available.

NMIT cancel all external bookings at level 2 lockdown.

#### **PD events**

Sadly, due to COVID, we only have 2 PD events to note. But a big thank you for the contribution to our community.

20 October 2020      Myffie James ~ Holistic pulsing workshop

Myffie and her colleague ran a wonderful hands-on workshop explaining the theory behind holistic pulsing while at the same time allowing all participants to have an experience as practitioners and protagonists of the technique.

24 November 2020      Cultural Supervision with Rangī

Around half a dozen members attended this first cultural supervision session since the COVID 19 outbreak. Rangī arranged for us to use the rooms at the Salvation Army headquarters. We explored the process of court referrals for Māori and the steps along this pathway of working with Māori clients. Rangī intends to keep this learning going throughout his cultural sessions.

**Thank you for the opportunity to be your Chairperson.**

It has been an incredible privilege and honour to be in the Nelson Chairperson role for the NZAC Nelson Branch.

As most of you will be aware, I am stepping down from this role. Life has become remarkably busy for me, and I fear I cannot give it my all.

I do wish to nominate Richard Wilkins for the role and am happy to co-Chair with him to become familiar with the role, although anyone stepping into this role would be held very well by all our lovely and supportive committee members and Nelson Counselling community in general.

Finally, thank you to each and all on the committee for your support and loyalty with me in my role as Chairperson.

Kia Kaha

*Mark Peart*  
NZAC Nelson Chair

## Marlborough Branch

### **Robyn McGill**

#### *Chairperson*

We have been and continue to experience extra-ordinary times, impacting on us all personally and professionally. Lots of us have been on a steep learning curve to be more proficient in using devices as a counselling tool when doing our mahi remotely and completing professional responsibilities with NZAC on-line.

During Lockdown the Branch could not meet monthly. It was a time to take great care and protect ourselves and our loved ones while also maintaining our professionalism with our clients. It was also important to safely reach out to others socially and professionally to avoid being isolated.

At a time when our Region did not have a Regional Representative, the President, our former Rep, reached out to the Regional Branch Chairs and facilitated a Zoom meeting in April. It was a generous and thoughtful measure from Chris, adding to her already very busy schedule and we were all appreciative. And of course it was great to connect with Canterbury Westland, Aoraki, and Nelson Tasman Chairs to see how they were managing with their Branches. We discussed the safety of various online platforms, the difficulties some School Counsellors were experiencing being asked to work on site when NZAC's position at Level 3 was no face-to-face counselling, the difficulties some counsellors are experiencing completing their RAPC and CPD online, and the symptoms of anxiety for clients and for ourselves and recognising the 'long tail' this will have as we go into future uncertainty.

The monthly May meeting was via Zoom with 11 members keen to catch-up and chat and finally in June we held the AGM. We were sad to lose Tineka Hesketh and welcomed Deborah Barton as the new Secretary.

The Branch was happy to support Louisa Wood and Tina Hesketh to attend the PD Day and AGM in Wellington in August and support the nomination of Sarah Maindonald as Regional Representative. Sarah came to Marlborough in September to meet with the members.

Again we were grateful to Carla Brownie for motivating the members to contribute to Mental Health Awareness Week in September. There was a library display including a folder with counsellor profiles and local newspaper articles, along with the annual C.A.R.E. Marlborough's art exhibition.

Marlborough members continue to be concerned about the difficulties experienced with the NMDHB and the PHO Funding policy and its lack of engagement with counsellors. The President directly addressed this with the Ministry of Health who was surprised to learn this as it is not happening in other parts of the motu.

Another visitor was Niccy Fraser, the new NZAC PD Manager, via Zoom in March 2021. Those in attendance thought the Zoom meeting was successful, they felt engaged and connected and it was in tune with the tone of our meetings.

Marlborough is a small Branch of about 30 members and usually about 20 attend the monthly meetings. The loyal members make a great contribution to the well-being of the Branch.

*Robyn McGill*

NZAC Marlborough Chair

## Canterbury/West Coast Branch

**Julia Field**

*Chairperson*

**Tēnā koutou katoa**, Greetings to all counsellors in our beautiful Ōtautahi (Canterbury) and Te Tai Poutini (West Coast) rohe

**Ka mihi nui ki a koutou katoa, kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui, ka whai te puāwaitanga mō tatou katoa**

Acknowledgements to all, remain strong and steadfast with a strong heart as we seek flourishing for all)

At our last AGM, held on May 28<sup>th</sup> 2020, we connected as a region by Zoom, due to Aotearoa New Zealand having gone into Level 4 lockdown on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The last eleven months, since I took over as Chair from outgoing Chairperson James Hutton, have had their fair share of celebrations, memories, and challenges, which I'm sure is the case for us all. Watching from the relative safety of Aotearoa New Zealand as the world experienced the devastating toll of the novel Coronavirus, we navigated new ways of connecting with whānau and our counselling clients, protecting our health and livelihoods, and supporting those around us.

I acknowledge with sincere appreciation the contributions made to our CWC Branch by Nancy Wu and Cate Walton, who stepped down from the committee during the year. I am sad to report that the previous Chairperson, James Hutton, is standing down from the committee at this AGM, as he is embarking on his Masters degree, and also has a busy life with young whānau and busy career. We are hugely sorry to see him depart but he goes with our love and deep appreciation. The remaining members of the committee are in good heart; Sarah Linehan (Secretary), Lesley Thorpe, Lynda Clegg, Kate Hamilton, and Christine Macey. We are fortunate to have Chris Stone serving as a seconded Treasurer, and Sarah Maindonald, who in her role as Regional Representative often joins us and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge. Our monthly committee planning hui are warm and collegial; as we meet to serve the Branch, we have also grown into our roles and have a high level of respect, trust, and enjoyment of each other as counsellors and colleagues. The energy and commitment of this rōpū as we meet at the end of a busy workday, juggling multiple whānau, professional and external commitments, is truly humbling. As a committee we strive to represent and support YOU, our student, provisional, and full members, by means of the newsletter (beautifully compiled by Sarah Linehan), our Colloquium hui, and advertising upcoming workshops and activities available to our membership.

Providing relevant and evidence-based professional learning opportunities to our members is one of the key purposes of our monthly Colloquium hui. Speakers over this period have provided us with fascinating, salient and entertaining material, and numbers attending each month range from 25 to 60. In the last twelve months we have heard from James Hutton (working with clients with Substance Abuse issues), Meredith Blampied (Nutrition and Mental Health), Elizabeth Hamilton (Dementia and Ageing), Heike McCahon (Emotionally Focused Therapy), Psychodrama (Marcel van der Weeden), Counselling Men (Karey Meisner), Counselling and the Law (Kathryn Dalziel), and Focusing Oriented Art Therapy (Pip Ranby). The kaupapa of networking and connecting *kanohi ki te kanohi* has really resonated as we have upskilled in Zoom, and we hope to be able to provide this consistently for our members who are located in more geographically remote spots.



As a branch committee, one of our best hopes for the coming year is to work in an authentically bi-cultural way under the *korowai* of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, and we are currently exploring how to progress this by means of cultural supervision to the committee on a regular basis. We also plan to continue to support the important *mahi* of our membership by being available to them, providing relevant, inspiring, and useful professional learning opportunities, and facilitating networking opportunities to connect together as counsellors for mutual friendship and understanding.

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

*Julia Field*

NZAC Canterbury/West Coast Chair

**Aoraki Branch**  
**Jo Blakemore**  
*Chairperson*

Wow what another year!

It's been a pleasure and privilege to occupy the role of Chair for another engaging and vibrant 12 months. I am encouraged and humbled by the continued engagement and attendance at branch meetings and members increasing ownership and use of the collective space.

I can't help but be reminded that this time last year we were in lockdown, with the world in the frighteningly uncertain throws of a life-threatening pandemic. It is a comfort to me that we were able to continue to connect with one another through Zoom and continue to 'meet' throughout that time. With some online cooking shows courtesy of Alan and some pyjama bottom moments from a few of us I think! There was something deeply connecting for me in those moments and without the branch and its members I know that my experience of lockdown would have been a more isolated, disconnected, and lonely one so THANK YOU all for your contributions to connection during that time, towards one another, and your communities.

As this (NZAC) year nears its end and reports are submitted there is time for reflection on the journey to date. This year, among other things, we have maintained connection, welcomed new members, survived the perils of zooming, witnessed an unprecedented global event, spent more time at home than perhaps we would even have thought possible/desirable, supported more colleagues in their membership upgrade, submitted feedback to the SCHDB via their engagement process, and delivered some stunning training!

Our monthly rotating meetings appear to be working on the whole, although in the last year this has been somewhat interrupted! Having changed the structure of the meetings the year before to allow for more conversation/less formality and sending out a regular monthly newsletter following each meeting, also appears to be going well. Feedback suggests that members are feeling more involved and connected as a result.

Having identified in 2019 that the branch would like more training we were able to make that happen this year and manage the COVID-19 restrictions and interruptions. Attendance at the training was also encouraging with Katherine Dalziel's session filling the room to its legal capacity!

On the note of the training day, I want to publicly share my huge appreciation and admiration for both Lou and Jo (G) for the extraordinary effort, dedication, commitment, time, and patience that they donated to the branch and its members to make the training possible and go so well.

THANK YOU!

Moving forward for the year to come, it has been identified by members of the branch that we would like to connect more with our School Guidance colleagues and that we would also like to build closer working relationships with Māori mental health services as well as the mental health team at the SCDHB. The details of how these goals might be achieved are yet to be confirmed and we are excited that as a branch we could collectively find ways to achieve them. Perhaps these are things to be added to the next annual planning session after the AGM?

2021 is shaping up to be an interesting and exciting year!

I would also like to thank Lou who has dedicated precious time, effort, and energy to the role of branch secretary for her second year in the role. It is no easy task, fielding emails, managing the newsletter, as well as no doubt countless other tasks that she makes work seamlessly in the background to make things possible. I remain grateful for her honesty, integrity, and capacity to

continue to manage my idiosyncrasies as chair with skill, grace, and humour. I very much hope that you will stay on in the role for another year.

Also, my thanks go out to Jo G. Her first year as our treasurer saw her faced with the biggest job ever faced by the Aoraki branch treasurer and she totally took it in her stride. Jo, your patience, willingness to give it a go, and your endless commitment to doing a really thorough job is truly precious to me. As a branch we could not have delivered the excellent training that we did this year without you. I sincerely hope that we have not inadvertently overcooked you in the first year; the lessons that have been learnt from the experience I hope will stand us in good stead should we ever decide to do it again! I very much hope that you will stay on in the role for another year.

I also want to acknowledge the ongoing commitment of Christine Macfarlane as a local branch member and NZAC President, who continues to keep us involved with things happening at a local level, such as the SCDHB engagement project this year. Thank you, Christine, for continuing to share your valuable time, knowledge, and expertise with the branch and its members.

Going forward I am happy to remain as Chair for the coming year unless someone else would like to be nominated for the role.

I have enjoyed being more involved with the branch; we are a vibrant and inspiring group of people who are also counsellors and I thoroughly believe that our continuing to connect in this way is vital to our wellbeing and our practice. Who knows we might even make new friends along the way!

Wishing you every peace and kindness

*Jo Blakemore*  
NZAC Aoraki Chair

**Otago Branch**  
**Ross Mackinnon**  
*Chairperson*

A lot has happened since our last AGM, considering the last time we met for an AGM we did it digitally; being able to meet as a branch in person shows just how far we have come as a country in these uncertain times.

COVID has changed a lot about the way we do things and has ensured that we focus more than ever on making our branch meetings and AGMs available digitally. There are limitations of course; often our speakers prefer not to be filmed which is why the occasional presenter has not been shared with you via YouTube and we have been limited in our ability to live stream events due to various internet issues. So, we still strongly suggest people come in person and take the opportunity to network with your colleagues. With this continued investment into digital ways of doing things, we are purchasing a dedicated video camera and tripod to ensure we are getting the best quality video.

While digital is certainly the way forward in a number of things, we have also experienced the sudden and not so smooth move to put our CPD process online. A large portion of our time this year has been spent assisting members with the various teething problems encountered when this came into effect. As part of this, we surveyed members around what their experience had been like. With their consent we then communicated this feedback to National Office to ensure not only that our members feedback was heard but also in the hopes that any fixes could be implemented in the future. We apologise to the members who gave up their time to give this feedback as we are saddened that we have had no response from Executive or National Office regarding this yet.

As we enter another year for our branch, I also acknowledge that a number of members of the committee are leaving their positions and moving on. I thank them for the time and energy that they have spent on bringing branch meetings together. Due to the high number of people leaving, we are left at a crossroads for our branch. We either find new members to join the committee or go into recess as a branch due to not having enough people to cover the required positions. If you feel that you could be one of these people, then please consider putting your name forward.

*Ross Mackinnon*  
NZAC Otago Chair

**Southland Branch**  
**Lois McMurdo**  
*Chairperson*

I am pleased to present my fifth report as Chairperson for the Southland Branch of the NZAC. It has been another busy, unusual, and challenging year.

Our scheduled meeting on 31st March 2020 was cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic when New Zealand went into lockdown on 25th March 2020. Our face-to-face counselling work has been temporarily halted in favour of working remotely from home. We have learned new skills to offer telephone counselling and on-line services. We have added a new COVID-19 vocabulary and continue to upskill and build resiliency not just within ourselves but in our clients.

On 30th June 2020 at our AGM and dinner meeting at the Buster Crabb Restaurant we welcomed Phoebe Crosbie as our new Branch Secretary and Penny Bray as Branch Treasurer. I am continuing in the Chairperson's role in the meantime.

A highlight for me was attending the NZAC National Conference Evening and AGM on the 7th and 8th of August 2020 in Wellington. I attended the Conference dinner where the keynote speaker was Veronica Tawhai. I also attended the AGM where the keynote speaker was Judge Andrew Beecroft, the Children's Commissioner. He spoke on 'What is your vision for NZ Children and Young People?' and he encouraged us to 'dream big.' Also knowing what issues NZ children are facing and 'What makes a good life?' Children stated them as; having basic needs met, having supportive family and friends, feeling safe, being healthy, experiencing positive education, being happy, and enjoying life was important. It was very thought provoking and challenging but also encouraging.

Another highlight was Life membership being bestowed on Beryl Allison from the Taranaki Branch. Due to ill health Beryl was unable to be there but she was described as an 'absolute delight and absolute nightmare to train'. A fierce warrior of social justice, big hearted, generous, with firm opinions, a staunch supporter of the Partnership model, a 'mover and a shaker'; all great qualities for us to aspire to.

On 3rd November 2020 at our end of year dinner meeting we discussed training opportunities again and the lack of new members attending branch meetings after gaining full membership amongst other things.

In the new year we discussed training possibilities again and decided to invite Teina Piripi to offer us some Counsellor training around the Te Tihei-Wa Mauri Ora- an indigenous resource we can use especially with Māori clients that encourages and uses a Māori cultural world view. On 16th March 2021 Teina Piripi will present her training to us via Zoom technology which we are looking forward to it.

Thank you.

*Lois McMurdo*  
NZAC Southland Chair