New Zealand Country Report for the ASPOA meeting in Korea.

The Federation of New Zealand Ostomy Societies Inc started the process of doing a complete rewrite of our constitution to bring it into the 21st century! However as the Govt body tasked with controlling incorporated societies in NZ is also in the process of setting out new guide lines as to what needs to be shown in a society’s constitution we have decided to wait until this process has been completed in order to ensure that ours is in accordance with the latest requirements.

On the weekend of World Ostomy Day, many societies in New Zealand celebrated this event with a range of activities and the Federation is looking to encourage this as an annual event rather than a three yearly one in the hope that the societies will be able to use it as means of attracting new members.

 We continue to have surplus Ostomy product being collected, sorted and sent overseas to countries in the ASPOA region with one shipment being sent to the Philippines in October and at the time of writing this report, expect to have 2 pallets of surplus product on the way to Uzbekistan and Mongolia. We are grateful for the assistance from two private individuals along with funding from the ACSA Australia Fund which covered the costs incurred with shipping.

At the Federations AGM during August in Wellington we also held a training seminar for Secretaries and Treasurers as we had felt that many people in NZ societies who took on these tasks had in fact very little if any training to do the jobs.

We are in the process of putting in place a project to assist the spouse and family of new Ostomates as we have found that this is an area that has been neglected in the past and are publishing a booklet that can be used by family members, helpers in nursing homes etc.

The Executive of the NZ Federation (and also the ASPOA Executive) have started using Skype conference calls to make sure that things are always on track and to share ideas. This is a good use of technology and I am sure that in time all societies may be able to copy this. We are using these Skype calls as an additional aid to go along with the normal 2 face to face meetings that we have each year, one at the beginning of March and the other on the weekend of the Federations AGM in early August.

The Federation still produces the NZ Ostomate Magazine 3 times a year which we try to get to all Ostomates in NZ free of charge. This is not always possible as not all NZ Ostomates are in societies and as we have a privacy act in NZ it is really almost impossible to get the details of those that are not in societies. This is something that all charitable sector organisations in NZ find to be a problem.

The training of Stomal Therapy nurses has come to the fore in NZ as we have now no national training system in place at all and the only training given is about 20 minutes when a new nurse is doing her general training. The Federation is very concerned about this state of affairs, for some time our nurses had been able to do STN training by distance learning from a college in Australia however the cost of this course has more than doubled which has put it far out of the reach of everyone. We are putting proposals before the NZ health dept. to try and get training restarted in NZ in the near future as many of our nurses are heading towards retirement age and we need new younger nurses with the correct training.

The Federation has decided to try and get a leaflet printed outlining just what and Ostomy is and who we are as a support organisation and to show people that there is support out there and how to find it. We hope to be able to get this leaflet distributed along with our Ostomy supplies each month and hope that this will encourage Ostomates who are not already in a society to join one and give support to others.

We are very lucky in NZ that not only are our supplies free of charge and paid for by the Govt but we also have a very good level of support from the supply companies working in NZ. Many societies have a company rep attend their meetings and show the latest products and this is very good value.

One major thing that has taken place is the combining with Australia in setting up the Convatec Great Comebacks Program in both New Zealand and Australia to recognise Ostomates who have been through the mill and have rebuilt their lives and gone on to do more with their lives. The award for the 2016 year will have been decided on and handed out in March in Brisbane 2017. At the time of writing there had been almost 30 stories handed in to be listed for this program and I hope that this program will eventually be extended throughout the ASPOA region in due course, this is a tremendous boost for the recognition of Ostomates within the region and we are very much indebted to Convatec for the sponsorship that they have put into this program.

Richard McNair

President. FNZOS. Inc