Editorial

**THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF AMBULANCE PROFESSIONALS
Who and What Is ACAP?**

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“What is a Professional College? It is a learned society, democratic in election and administration, which has as its primary term of reference both the development and maintenance of best practice benchmarks of professional practice: at the same time acts as stakeholder in terms of quality of training, outreach, potential research and the monitoring of standards”: **Professor John Pearn** (The launch of ACAP– August 2000)

About the College

The Australian College of Ambulance Professionals (ACAP) came into being in October 2000 following an overwhelming vote for organizational change by membership of the formerly constituted Institute of Ambulance Officers (Australia).

The Charter of the College in representing its 3000 plus ambulance personnel from within and outside conventional Ambulance Services is to be more inclusive and representative of the wider range of professionals engaged in the provision of pre-hospital health care.

ACAP is now a formally structured organization in a contemporary College model with a major focus on member services, the science and art of pre-hospital care, governance at a National Board and State Branch level, professional standards, Code of Ethics, history and heritage, and industry representation. The conduct of International/National conferences and State seminars ensures that members have an opportunity to benchmark against overseas standards and to increase their knowledge and professionalism in the field of pre-hospital health care.

Progression to Date

The focus on member and organizational accountability and standards of service delivery is currently being reviewed through either voluntary or compulsory registration of clinical care practitioners and contributors to the provision of ambulance services, as a matter of priority by the College.

The Constitution and Certified Rules have been re-engineered to meet the needs of the membership in functionality and performance. These two documents now inter-relate more effectively, and offer the National Board the ability to provide accountable decision making on behalf of the membership.

The streamlining and modernization of corporate governance for State Branches and the Board is an extremely important aspect of the development of ACAP. Consequently, the College is benchmarking against relevant national and international organizations to establish appropriate practices in the process of change.

A particularly pleasing aspect of recent College development has been the appointment, as Director on the ACAP Board, of Bill Elsy, an experienced and professional marketing consultant and President of the Australian Marketing Institute. Bill is providing leadership in membership recognition within the community and importantly, is assisting the Board with recruitment practices to gain new members and improve merchandising and marketing techniques. ACAP is currently conducting a national industry membership drive and will shortly be distributing application promotional material to all ambulance employees as well as those involved in supporting the environment of pre-hospital health care.

An exciting concept within the College, is the establishment of a number of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) aimed at providing a national “scientific and professional” agenda for the different member professions of the now more inclusive College. This concept will offer members a unique professional recognition, and member relevant development program, with associated member services.

Welcome to the eJournal

The College has formed a number of effective and exciting affiliations in recent times. However, none have been more eagerly awaited than the development of a web-based peer reviewed journal with Monash University Centre for Ambulance and Paramedic Studies (MUCAPS). This partnership offers our members the opportunity to publish work in our own international eJournal, the *Journal of Emergency Primary Health Care*.

ACAP is extremely proud to be involved in this partnership with MUCAPS and acknowledges the support of the University in conjunction with the efforts of College members to bring to fruition, the final development phase of the project. The *Journal of Emergency Primary Health Care* will now become our scientific medium to the ‘art and science of the ambulance profession’ and will supplement the education and development of the membership and researchers from kindred organizations.

Conclusion

I congratulate all who have contributed to the establishment of the eJournal on a job well done. It seems a long time ago that the concept first surfaced, but those involved have persevered steadfastly to achieve their goal.

The *Journal of Emergency Primary Health Care* is now established at www.jephc.com and I urge members of the College to utilize this facility through research and contribution on a regular basis. In the interests of wider knowledge and greater professionalism within the industry, please ensure that you inform your colleagues of the existence of the eJournal, memorize the eJournal’s title and website, and use it regularly for the furtherance of your own professional development.