

WEST AUSTRALIAN SLEEP DISORDERS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (Inc)

Annual Report 2000/2001

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the West Australian Sleep Disorders Research Institute (the "Institute") for the financial year 2000/2001, the first year of its operation.

The Institute was founded in September 2000 as a non-profit organization devoted to improving knowledge and understanding of sleep-related disorders through clinical, teaching and research activities.

Key Achievements Over The Last Year

1. Establishment of the Institute as a legal (incorporated association) and tax exempt entity.
2. Negotiating a service level agreement with Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and a lease with the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre.
3. Introducing new fiduciary arrangements with the Hospital whereby the Institute pays expenses incurred by the Hospital on the Institute's behalf on invoice rather than by direct debit from a Hospital administered account.
4. Re-equipping the sleep laboratory with a state-of-the-art data acquisition system (Compumedics E series/Siesta) with additional capacity to acquire data in the Hospital's Respiratory Failure Unit.
5. Developing the Institute's information technology capabilities such that polysomnographic data is accessible from all parts of the unit, including clinician's desks, along with laboratory and other information available through the Hospital corporate network.
6. Refurnishing the monitoring room of the sleep laboratory to improve ergonomics and efficiency.
7. Fostering a high quality research programme which continues to attract competitive external funding from national research funding agencies, to publish in prestigious international journals, and to participate in collaborative projects with interstate and international centres.
8. Establishment of two research beds in the sleep laboratory which are sequestered from day-to-day clinical need to allow research to proceed without competition for resources from clinical needs.
9. Development of a teaching programme for first year physiology (medical/dental) students and provision of elective terms for 5th year students.

10. Participation by Institute members in a wide range of other teaching and media activities to disseminate knowledge of sleep disorders to medical specialists, general practitioners and the lay public.
11. Supporting a very busy clinical programme to diagnose and treat sleep disorders in West Australians.
12. Refining office procedures to increase levels of efficiency and service, including acquisition of new accounting and patient management software.
13. Institution of new accounting and audit procedures to improve management of the Institute's financial affairs.
14. Negotiation with the Health Department of WA of a fund to support the purchase of equipment to treat sleep apnoea for the financially disadvantaged to complement existing funding provided by the Disabilities Services Commission to support purchase of equipment by the long-term disabled.

The year has seen further success in the research activities of WASDRI members, with publication in high impact journals, presentations at national and international meetings, and award of grants from national funding bodies against strong competition. The infrastructure (facilities and equipment) acquired and developed over the course of the year have increased the capacity of the Institute to continue to produce high quality research outputs.

The Year Ahead

An operating profit of \$72,086 was made in the 2000/01 year on total revenues of \$1,819,737. Next year will seriously challenge this margin with rising staff costs through new salary award increases and increasing staff seniority. Strategies to cope will include consideration of price increases for sales of appliances, increase in fees for medical services beyond those provided in the increasingly inadequate schedule fee, further vigorous pursuit of bad debt, cessation of credit provision for appliances, careful inventory management and efficiencies in the use of staff.

Waiting lists for clinical services are growing due to a state-wide under-provision for the investigation and management of sleep disorders. The Institute will continue to help address this problem through further expansion of its clinical role. Amongst considerations here is the possibility, as yet unexplored, of providing out-reach services to remote areas using portable technologies, such as the Siesta polysomnography system, to which the Institute now has access. Such activities would require direct subsidy from the West Australian Department of Health.

The Institute is in the process of preparing for accreditation of its clinical facility by the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand and Australasian Sleep Association. This is an essential opportunity for external review of its operation, and for maintenance of its status as a training facility for advanced trainees in sleep disorders medicine. As part of the preparation for this event, staff will concentrate on refining procedures and ensuring a high level of documentation of business, clinical and research activity.

Our Major Asset

The success of the Institute is primarily dependent on the input of its staff. I wish to acknowledge here the wonderful contributions of all staff members – office, technological, research and medical – to the work of the Institute. We have been extraordinarily fortunate to have such high calibre, well-motivated people working across all parts of our organisation.

Details of the Institute's financial position, patient throughput and other performance data, and research activities are attached to this report.

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Medical Director and Chairman