

WEST AUSTRALIAN SLEEP DISORDERS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (Inc)

Annual Report 2001/2002

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the West Australian Sleep Disorders Research Institute (the "Institute") for the financial year 2001/2002, the second year of its operation.

The Institute is a not-for-profit organisation devoted to improving knowledge and understanding of sleep-related disorders through clinical, teaching and research activities.

In last year's report I outlined a number of measures taken in the first year of the Institute's operations to establish it on a firm legal and financial footing and to provide systems and infrastructure to ensure its efficient management. The second year of operation has been one of consolidation. The demand for clinical services has continued to grow unabated, stretching our resources and challenging our ability to cope in a timely manner with patients referred for investigations. Our research program continues to be highly productive with the publication of important new findings from each of our three research teams (see separate research program report). Our commitment to teaching has seen our undergraduate and postgraduate educational programs continue, with study days for first year medical and dental students, elective placement of fifth year medical students, and postgraduate education of nursing and medical staff.

Towards the end of the year Dr K E Finucane retired from clinical practice. As its founding father, his contribution to the development of Sleep Medicine in Western Australia has been outstanding. I am pleased that he is to continue his involvement with the Institute through his research commitments and contribution to clinical meetings.

Key Achievements

- High research output by Institute staff including publication of 25 papers in international peer-reviewed journals and numerous presentations at national and international meetings.
- Completion of over 2000 overnight sleep studies of patients with sleep-disordered breathing.
- Implementation of the OASIS accounting and patient management system with resultant increased efficiency of patient tracking, booking and accounting and integration of these functions with generation of correspondence.
- Improved financial reporting including implement of QUICKBOOKS software to improve communication with the Institute's accountants.
- Addition and equipping of a ninth bed for research and clinical purposes.
- Purchase of a new digital video system for beds 8 and 9.
- Purchase of an additional transcutaneous carbon dioxide monitor.

- Completion of refurbishing of the monitor room (central table) and office (office chairs).
- Negotiation of an educational institute license with Microsoft, allowing discounted purchase of their proprietary software.
- Implementation of a new file server, including SQL software to improve efficiency of data processing.
- Specific commitment to the respiratory care of patients with motor neurone disease, a growth area in the Institute's clinical services.
- Increased efficiency in office procedures resulting in progressive reduction in bad debt.
- Major painting and re-decoration work to offices and waiting room.
- Preparation for Accreditation of the Sleep Service, culminating in formal submission of Accreditation documentation to the Thoracic Society of Australia & New Zealand/Australasian Sleep Association process.

The Year Ahead

Again significant challenges confront the Institute in providing a timely service to patients in the face of burgeoning demand. A range of new ways of coping with this problem will need to be explored, including increased use of domestic studies and of split night studies. The cost of delivering services will significantly increase over the new year, with significant increases in salaries for all staff categories. It is anticipated that this increase will substantially exceed the likely increase in the Health Insurance Commission schedule fee for these services, necessitating a break in the nexus with them.

The research program is destined for another vigorous year. The Institute's investment in this activity is likely to be rewarded with further additions to the Institute's admirable track record of publications and presentations.

The Service looks forward to completion of the Accreditation process in the coming year.

The Institute's staff remain its major strength. Across all areas of the Institute's activity their efficiency, courtesy, conscientiousness and expertise is evident. It is a great pleasure to acknowledge their contribution here.

D R HILLMAN, MBBS, FANZCA
Medical Director and Chairman