



# **President | Executive Officer's Report**

## **2014 - 2015**

### **russell family fetal alcohol disorders association**

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This year has been another exciting and busy year with many more people accessing the services of the rffada. There have been a number of events attended by rffada volunteers.

The rffada was offered \$2,000 from the FASD Information Network in the United States. This organisation is a family one and no funding is received by them. They pool certain resources from family members and donate to worthwhile FASD organisations.

We were able to have brochures and cards printed for the first time since the rffada commenced in 2007. We also purchased insurance to cover the board members and Executive Officer.

Additionally, the rffada was approached by fellow CARDD member Leith Moxon Lester from the UQCCR to collaborate on the delivery of FASD in communities as her research shows that targeted micronutrients can ameliorate some of the problems associated with alcohol in pregnancy.

We prepared a funding application under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and although it received good feedback it wasn't good enough for funding to be allocated.

It is impossible to remember all the details of the day to day work of the rffada.

- Many people have been trained
- parents have been provided with information they requested
- some training has been completed free for parents to enable them to pass the information on to others
- we have a bi-weekly teleconference conference with Vicki Russell EO of NOFASD
- regular meetings with other organisations and provider
- almost every day all day is spent working in FASD and ensuring that as many organisations and people as possible in Australia know that the rffada has partnered with TCA in the delivery of non-accredited training and shortly, accredited training

Our aim is to be known as the preferred provider for quality FASD training throughout the nation.

## **2014 - 2015 Correspondence**

There have been so many emails, submissions, and correspondences to a variety of people, organisations, and businesses that I have not been able to keep track of them all.



- Emails are sent many times daily to parents, organisations and schools etc re training
  - Letters sent out regularly, mostly with information packs for parents and submissions
  - Facebook discussions and support is provided throughout each day
  - The rffada accepts requests from people on LinkedIn to connect and provide information on FASD
  - The rffada is now being followed by a number of people on Twitter
- Emails – approximately 3,600
  - Letters approximately 40 over the period
  - Approximately 100 responses to editorials and news items on alcohol and pregnancy | FASD | domestic violence | mental health (anything that relates to FASD but which does not mention it)
  - Many telephone discussions with CARRD Spokesperson Dr Jan Hammill and CARRD member Dr Leith Lester
  - Discussions with Michael Thorn | Sarah Ward
  - Several letters to the government – Susan Ley | Fiona Nash | Dame Quentin Bryce | Dr Sharman Stone
  - Discussions and teleconferences with overseas experts and families
  - Sent out 500 emails to schools and 300 emails to Headspace sites to update them on FASD

## Membership

QNADA (gratis)  
CARRD

## Collaborations

- Delivered 2 information sessions in Cairns to packed venue
- Visited Alice Springs and delivered to a variety of providers
- Visited Cooktown, Hopevale and Wujal and delivered to a variety of providers
- Visited Lockhart and delivered to all services in community
- Delivered to Apunipima staff
- Delivered to Parole and Probation staff at Corrections Cairns
- Youth Justice Cairns
- Delivered to all services in Napranum | Nanum | New Mapoon
- Delivered to all services in Bamaga | Mapoon
- Delivered to all services in Beswick community
- Have been asked to deliver to 12 communities across Australia

## Joint Programs

- National Parents Advisory Group
- NOFAS Birth Mothers Group
- National Consortium

## Liaison

Close liaison with the following organisations:

- My Pathway
- Training Connections Australia
- FARE
- NOFASD
- QNADA
- NADA

Liaison with the following politicians | agencies:

- Warren Entsch – Federal Member for Leichardt
- Glenn Lazarus – Senator for Queensland
- Jan Lucas – Senator for Queensland
- Dr Sharman Stone – Federal Member for Murray and rffada Patron
- Fiona Nash – Nationals Senator for NSW
- Mick Gooda – Australian Human Rights Commission
- Patrick Dodson – Council for Reconciliation
- Assoc Professor Tom Calma - NCIS
- Susan Ley – Health Minister
- Nigel Scullion – Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs

## Other

- Congratulations to the Qld FASD Support Group for becoming incorporated and for providing Facebook and face to face support for parents and carers in the Gold Coast area
- Congratulations to Louise and Craig Wilson from Western Australia who have established another support group on Facebook and face to face for people in Perth

## Funding Received

- FARE provided funding for Anne Russell to attend the AMA Alcohol Summit in Canberra
- FASIN donated \$2,000
- FARE donated \$740 for insurance premium this year
- Training Connections Australia provided funding for 1000 Indigenous brochures and 1000 mainstream brochures

## Where to now

**Research** – support research in FASD intervention, and prevention

**Surveillance, Public Health Research, and Prevention** – conduct support activities to integrate case definitions into clinical practice, and to provide health care workers and others with resources to reduce alcohol-exposed pregnancies

**FASD Clinics** – facilitate development of nation-wide FASD diagnostic clinics where practical

**Community Partnerships** – partner with health professionals, school systems, child welfare offices, incarceration facilities, parent organisations, Indigenous organisations and others to collaborate on common objectives and integrate services

**Support Services** – provide assistance for all ages of people with FASD but particularly adolescents with FASD as they transition to adulthood including housing, vocational training and placement services, medication management, and mental health services

**Public Awareness and Education** – the development and broadcast of national public service announcements to raise public awareness of the risks associated with alcohol consumption during pregnancy

**National Task Force on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders** – an Interagency Coordinating Committee on FASD to evaluate and make recommendations

**Criminal Justice** - Prevention, Intervention, and services in the Justice System implement screening procedures, introduce training curricula on how to effectively identify and interact with individuals with FASD, and develop transition programs for individuals with FASD when released from incarceration.

## Thanks

Thank you to Sonia Berton who has asked to not be considered for President next year as her personal and professional life has reached a stage where she must divest herself of work otherwise she will have no time for all her commitments. We would like to thank Sonia for her work over the last 8 years with the rffada and to wish her the best for her future outside of the rffada but not outside of FASD, as I am sure this condition will remain close to her heart.



Elizabeth Russell and Sonia Berton

Executive Officer (unpaid) and President Russell Family Fetal Alcohol Disorders Association 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015