



MEDICAL AID ABROAD NEW ZEALAND ANNUAL REPORT 2001/2002

Introduction

Medical Aid Abroad New Zealand (MAANZ) is a charitable organisation that seeks to support health work in developing countries.

Historically, this has been through providing medical and dental items for charitable hospitals. MAANZ is now the only charitable organisation in New Zealand working in this field - all other branches of MAANZ have ceased functioning and only the Auckland centre is fully operational.

More recently, MAANZ has also begun to sponsor health worker training opportunities and to explore other means of support, such as specialist team visits and the provision of low-cost computers for remote hospitals.

With the demise of other MAA branches, a new trust deed was needed. Four trustees (Dr Pat Alley, Mr Neil Wickham, Dr Elizabeth Smythe and Dr Robin Briant) have recently been appointed. The new trust structure will enable MAANZ to seek funding to develop its services further. The current executive group will continue to meet regularly to attend to day-to day work.

Rooms

We are grateful to National Womens' Hospital administration for the free use of rooms. They have met MAANZ's needs for sorting and packing. More recently, through the generosity of a member we have had rent -free use of a warehouse at New Lynn. Although this was taken initially for three months it is now proving indispensable for our work. It has proved to be essential for storing large medical and dental consumables (but not pharmaceuticals). The availability of these rooms has enabling us to accept useful goods that we previously had to reject through lack of space. A long-term solution to the accommodation needs is still required and our preference is to develop a liaison with another charitable organisation where supervision can be maintained of all stored goods at the one site.

Publicity

We had an article in " NZ Doctor" but we still have not been able to yet get anything in the New Zealand Medical Journal. It is important for the future that we get this publicity if we are to expand our work and get medical professionals behind us. We also need to appeal to Nurse and Technologist organizations as well as Pharmacists. There needs to be a way developed to get regular information to these groups. There is a great untapped potential here.

During the year, the Chairman presented a paper on MAANZ at the International Association of Community Development (IACD) Conference at Rotorua.

Posters have now been prepared and are available on the website. They need to be distributed more widely and placed in more medical and para-medical sites in Auckland.

Updating of our leaflets and other information material needs action which should be possible once the Trust is finally formed.

The website at www.maa.org.nz is proving very useful and we are thankful for the help of Larry Robbins in maintaining it.

We have also set up an email Mailing list to keep anybody interested in MAANZ up to date with news.

Incoming supplies

Pharmaceuticals have come from a number of sources, including private and hospital pharmacies and private individuals. The Auckland Critical Dept and Radiology Departments have helped through the efforts of individuals there, as have a myriad of private pharmacies. We are very grateful for this help.

We also appreciate the donation of quite large quantities of antibiotics from pharmaceutical suppliers.

On the equipment side, Baxter donated over a container load of excellent items as did Taylors Healthcare. These items have been greatly appreciated by recipient organisations overseas. We acknowledge the way in which the Auckland Division of the NZ Red Cross Society acts as a site for the reception of incoming goods as does Diagnostic MedLab. We are also grateful to Maersk Sealand for the temporary loan of a container to store items. The container was stored for some time on the grounds of Mr Gary Green's property at Swanson and we were most grateful for this.

Sorting

A loyal group of Pharmacists under the leadership of Lily Kwok has continued the sorting of incoming pharmaceuticals. Other members have sorted equipment. The rooms are now in much better order although clearer labelling of shelves is still required. We try to store only in-date drugs, although there is some latitude particularly when we are filling an order to a doctor we know well in the peripheral receiving centre.

Packing

Various members attend to this as the needs arise. Statistics of orders filled are tabled below. Although in less orders completed than last year, the volume was greater due to the larger quantity of equipment being sent out.

Medical Aid Abroad Consignments 2001

Country	Number of consignments	Details
Bali	1	40 boxes
Bougainville	5	163 boxes

East Timor	1	
Fiji	2	10 boxes
Ghana	1	
Indonesia	1	
Kenya	1	
Mongolia	1	
Other	1	Salvation Army Bridge Programme
PNG	4	
Peru	1	
Sudan	4	
Tonga	5	Including ECG machine
Uganda	1	
Vietnam	2	
Total	31	14 countries

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Bougainville	1	33 cartons
PNG	2	
Tonga	1	Waiting shipment
Vanuatu	2	
Zambia	1	

Large orders have been sent particularly to Arawa Hospital in Bougainville. We are sending regular deliveries by the RNZAF Hercules and these have required the help of the Kumeu Rotary Club for transport.

Orders have been filled as soon as possible but there are some inevitable delays as there are only a few members who can help with packing and filling out all the details required to complete an order. More help is needed here if MAANZ is to fulfil its obligations. Better recording of the number of boxes packed would give a better idea of the volume of out-going goods.

More medical students about to travel on electives are visiting the rooms. Details of MAANZ are now included in the Medical School Electives Handbook.

Orders for supplies

Orders come from many sources. Many are now coming by e-mail and some centres review the website first and then order. A wide range of countries contact us and we try to meet their needs where possible.

Delivery of goods

We expect requesting Centres to advise us of the way in which transport costs of goods will be met. We have used airmail parcel post, private yachts, the RNZAF and private individuals to deliver goods to their destination.

Dental

Arun Pragji and Newton Wickham have continued to be very active in sending large quantities of dental supplies overseas, but we need more dentists to help to share the load.

Finances

Our costs have been kept low in the past but these are now rising. We need a greater cash flow and this will be a challenge for the next year. The financial report shows we have only just enough finance in stock to meet known current expenses. Fund raising in an organised way will be required.

Fellowships

We were able to help assist in sponsoring the training of Michael from Swaziland, who spent several weeks here obtaining advanced training in radiographic techniques.

Where to from here?

If MAANZ is to develop we will need to consider having a paid staff member part time or on an honorarium. This means we will need to seek new areas of funding. There is now so much work that if we are to be efficient and meet all the requests, it will not be sufficient to rely on the goodwill of a relatively few motivated volunteers.

The many appreciative letters we receive from recipients indicate how valuable our service is. It would be a great shame if we had to cease activities because of the lack of willing workers. There is a real challenge here, particularly as people all seem to be busier than ever, with apparently little time to spare for volunteer activities of this kind. We need to find a better way to harness the goodwill of many people who want to help but who have limited time.

We need to continue working on publicity, revamping our literature and forms, maintenance and upgrading of the website and more regular information to members.

Despite these issues and challenges, 2001 was a successful year. I wish to thank our secretary and treasurer for their long-term and loyal support; the other executive members for their contributions and the pharmacists, such as Jan and Digby Nelson, who have given a huge amount of time to sorting supplies.

Graeme Woodfield
Chair
March 2002