



ANNUAL REPORT 2006

This report covers 2005 and 2006. Last year an annual general meeting was not held.

Medical Aid Abroad NZ has continued with its activities and has met specified needs from many countries overseas. In the 2006 we have seen several significant developments that will enhance MAANZ. These include the involvement of medical students in a new organization called MAAP (Medical Aid Abroad Programme) which has been designed to provide extra assistance to medical students going on electives to various countries throughout the world. Another development has been the availability of spacious storage rooms at Greenlane campus. We welcome the appointment of new trustees who are to be formally appointed at this meeting. There have also been improvements to our finances spearheaded by Dr Brenner. Some of these matters will be referred to later in this report.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL SUPPLIES

Medical orders supplied

In summary, over the past two years MAANZ has processed over 90 orders to 23 different countries but with 90% of parcels going to Polynesian or Melanesian countries. Tonga and Fiji were by far the largest recipients. Many smaller orders went with medical students travelling on their medical elective programmes.

Countries to which goods were sent

Bangladesh, Botswana, Burma, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Ecuador, Fiji, Indonesia, India, Kenya, Nepal, Niger, Malawi, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zambia

Almost 600 parcels were exported (where a parcel can consist of anything from a simple box to a major piece of equipment). In the future we may measure the quantities of goods sent out in kilograms or cubic metres.

The work in fulfilling these orders is considerable. Not only do the incoming items need to be sorted and categorized, but they must be packed and labelled and arrangements made for despatch. A single order may easily take a day or more to prepare and involve several people. We are particularly grateful to the volunteers who help with this work .

Some pictures from the Solomon Islands taken during delivery of goods from MAANZ to TARD.



Left: boxes of medical supplies onboard MV Bikoi before being offloaded at Auki Port, Malaita Island; Right: supplies being loaded onto the CSP Land Cruiser at Auki Wharf.



Left/middle: Delivery at Bitama Clinic; Right: Final delivery at Malu'u Area Health Center

Dental orders supplied

Arun Pragji has sent consignments of dental equipment to India (3), Tonga (4), Solomon Islands (4), Fiji (5), Cook Islands, Cambodia(3), Rarotonga, Sierra Leone and Sudan. Some extra assistance in this area of the work would be appreciated.

OTHER PROJECTS

- Following an initiative by MAANZ, the University of Otago, with support from the WHO, hosted the Pacific Open Learning Health Net in Suva.
- 16 students graduated with the Diploma of Health Informatics last year. This was a two year program that was predominantly distance learning but involved several workshops in Suva. The enthusiasm and standards were high although there were indeed challenges due to difficult internet access and lack of broadband facilities. The University is currently in negotiation with WHO and it is hoped that further courses will be offered this year. The project was arranged and supervised by Dr Bernie Brenner, a MAANZ Executive member.
- We also assisted in raising funds for ophthalmic laser equipment for a hospital in Swaziland that had special needs in treating the blind.

ROOMS

During 2006 we moved from rooms in National Women's Hospital upper floor to an area in the basement below block 17. The transfer of items to the new rooms was assisted by members of the Kumeu Rotary Club and students from MAAP. Although it was very untidy when we took over, the hospital management arranged for repairs and painting to be carried out. This has made the area quite attractive and there is far more space than we previously had. Not only do we have an office and easily available toilets but a good room for secure storage of pharmaceuticals. We employed a carpenter to erect new shelving and volunteer work has now ensured that most shelves are full of products available for release. We have had one episode of flooding but this was quickly dealt with.



Part of the new rooms with Dr Wansbrough at work

Another improvement is having the rooms open on Wednesday mornings. This has meant that we have had numerous visitors and we try to ensure that incoming horse requests are dealt with on that morning as much as is feasible. Often the mornings are quite busy dealing with visitor enquiries and sorting goods and packing orders.

We are fortunate in being able to obtain the services of Dr. Tony Wansborough whom we appointed as stores manager on a small honorarium. She provides continuity of action for MAANZ and has relieved the pressure on some long-standing volunteers. Already a number of new volunteers had joined the team and we expect more in the future as the availability of a services becomes better known. Signage to the rooms is now being arranged to enable visitors to more easily find the rooms.

We are most grateful for the help of the Auckland District Health Board, particularly Barbara Lomas and Paul Jepson for facilitating the availability of the rooms and arranging for their refurbishment. We hope that this support from the DHB will continue in the future. The use of the previous rooms is acknowledged. Although they were difficult of access they meant that MAANZ was able to continue its work.



Students assisting in the transfer of items from the old to the new rooms

OVERSEAS CONTACTS

Addresses and personnel overseas keep changing but we have tried to keep in contact with overseas contacts, by sending out irregular newsletters listing items we have in stock. This is an area where we need somebody to improve our contact lists as we feel there are many organisations that do not know of our activities. The feedback for some overseas groups has been encouraging, particularly from Tonga, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomons. We do try to supply only what is requested but the cost of transport is always a problem and we need a designated source of funds to assist with this.

VOLUNTEERS

We could not function without volunteer input. We are most grateful for the work carried out by Dr Gordon Nicholson who has always carried out more than his fair share of MAANZ duties. The pharmacists visit regularly to sort and classify drugs and the tidiness and organisation of the pharmaceutical area is a credit to them.

Pharmacists are Clive Watkins, Digby and Jan Nelson and Lily Kwok. Others help in the equipment room, and in making up orders under the supervision of Dr Wansborough. Medical volunteers include Drs David Caughey, Peter Doak, Gordon Nicholson, Allan Ker and Graeme Woodfield. Lay volunteers include Joy Glasgow and Rosemary Fairbanks.

INCOMING GOODS

These come from many sources, such as hospitals, pharmacies, and individuals. Often we do not know from whom they come as unlabelled parcels arrive at the rooms. We are grateful for all these contributions even though we still have high discard rate, particularly of over-dated drugs. *Health Support Services Ltd (HSSL)* have been very helpful in co-ordinating the inflow of drugs from pharmacies. *Smith and Nephew Ltd*, a medical equipment firm have been particularly helpful, consistently supplying many boxes of useful goods. *Diagnostic Medlab* have continued their help by acting as a supply depot for incoming pharmaceuticals and also by making available many computers that we were able to distribute.

EXECUTIVE

This group has met frequently to discuss operational and policy matters. In 2006, Dr Brenner galvanised us into further action resulting in a change of the MAANZ logo and the distribution of a letter to doctors in the Auckland region inviting their membership. This assisted in improving our bank balance. He also has given specialised lectures, the proceeds of which have been donated to MAANZ. In 2007, the Executive will be meeting monthly, with renewed efforts to place MAANZ on a better financial footing, and to improve various aspects of the work of MAANZ. Special thanks are due to Drs Morris, Bullen and Brenner, whose reliable and loyal support is greatly appreciated. Members include Dr Graeme Woodfield (Chairman), Dr Chris Bullen (Secretary), Dr David Morris (Treasurer), Dr Glenys Mafi, Murray Kerr (overseas), Arun Praji, Dr Bernie Brenner, Irene Knight-Willis, Dr Eric Pushparasah.

TRUSTEES

We were sad to lose Dr Robyn Bryant and Mr Lionel Young from the Trustees. Robyn has been overseas for some time and Lionel has not been well. We are most grateful for their input and help. Two new trustees have agreed to serve on the Board, namely Mr Dick Seddon, and Mr David Halstead. We look forward to their contribution. Dr Peter Vanniasingham remains as a Trustee. The Trustees often also attend Executive meetings. In 2007, they will be attending to Charities Commission matters, reviewing the Constitution of MAANZ and governance matters. We look forward to their input.

WEBSITE

Our webmaster Larry Robbins has upgraded the website and it is now more attractive and informative. It still needs further work to keep its content current.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership list has expanded recently after a letter was sent to many Doctors in the Auckland area. This is an encouragement and we hope this will be the start of more medicos becoming involved. We also need to encourage more nurses and technical staff to join MAANZ as they have particular skills that we could use. Our life member is Dr Newton Wickham (Wicky). At this meeting we will also be conferring Honorary Life membership on Dr Gordon Nicholson as a token of respect for the work he and Jocelyn have carried out for MAANZ over the years.

FINANCES.

Some fund-raising has been done and this is reported elsewhere. We do not spend a great deal but certainly need funds to finance our part-time stores manager and sometimes for the transport of goods to deserving countries. We have also had extra expenses this year with the move to the new rooms. If we had a better financial base we would also purchase goods for medical firms as so often we do not have in stock the requested items.

CHRISTCHURCH BRANCH OF MAANZ

This branch is still functioning and has considerable stocks of in-date pharmaceuticals that are accurately classified and appropriately stored. We have contacted with them from time to time and they have supplied some items to help fulfil our incoming orders. Their focus is on pharmacy matters but they are finding problems with a small aging membership and little medical input.

THE FUTURE

There are few limits to the work that MAANZ could do given the availability of finances and volunteers and the vision to develop. Needs still exist in many countries and many new projects are possible.

MAANZ is still very small as compared with many other aid granting agencies but fills a unique part in providing direct medical assistance to meet emergency medical needs over and above what some countries can provide from their own resources.

There are some things that MAANZ still needs to get organised including

- Regular fund raising and extending our membership base
- Upgrading of our supporting organisations base.
- Applications to fund-granting bodies
- Improved and upgraded publicity material. We need somebody to help with this.
- Availability of a person to liase with medical equipment and pharmaceutical firms
- Improved contacts with overseas organisations who have medical needs
- A membership secretary and the development of a working office
- A leader for new projects
- Attention to all matters of governance.
- Finding ways to increase our capacity to respond to major disasters.
- A separate telephone to the rooms besides the mobile we use at the present time (027 413 1033)

There is also a need to start development projects whereby we lend our expertise to assist countries to achieve health objectives. Such projects can be more easily funded by government aid agencies. An example where we have been able to do this in previous years was the pharmacy project in Tonga and the school survey for intestinal parasites that we did in Taveuni, Fiji. Similar projects could be developed.

FINAL COMMENT

MAANZ is still functioning well and there are encouraging signs for the future particularly the development of MAAP, improved membership and new volunteers emerging. We still receive many letters of appreciation from a variety of countries and there is little doubt that the work we do is highly regarded. We need to build on that base and expand our work in an effort to meet the special health needs of developing countries. In conclusion, thanks are due to the many people that have assisted us over the last 2 years. Volunteers including wives, financial supporters, firms and other supporting organisations have all played a significant part in the work of MAANZ.

Dr Graeme Woodfield
Chairman, Auckland Executive Committee