



Australian Pain Society

2025 DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AWARD

Awarded for services to the promotion,
treatment and science of pain
management and lifelong contribution to
the Australian Pain Society.



Ms Trudy Maunsell

RN, RM, NUM Cert, BHealthMgmt, MScMed
(Pain Management)

Trudy Frances Maunsell was born at the Mater Hospital in Waratah, New South Wales (NSW). She was the youngest of three daughters for Carlene and Harold Maunsell and baby sister to Jane and Sally. "Chude" as she is affectionately called by her family, attended primary school at St Patrick's in Swansea and then Holy Name in Forster, before completing her secondary schooling at Lismore High School. After graduating from high school in 1980, Trudy chose to embark on a career in nursing. Turns out she was incredibly well suited to the role, and her career - and indeed broader life - was ultimately characterized by deeply compassionate service to others.

Trudy spent the first 15 years of her nursing career in NSW. She completed certificates in Nursing (1984), Midwifery (1987) and Nurse Unit Management (1989), and worked across general medical, surgical and labour wards in both metropolitan and remote services. By the early 1990's she was a staunch advocate for the importance of effective pain management and during her time at Tamworth Base Hospital was central to the introduction of patient-controlled analgesia (PCA) and creation of a Clinical Nurse Consultancy service in Pain Management for the Northwest Area Health Service – a first of its kind in the region. It was clear by this time that the pain management spark had been ignited for Trudy and this proved to be a theme that directed the remainder of her career.

In 1995 Trudy moved from NSW to sunny Queensland (QLD) where she spent six years specialising in pain management; providing nursing, education and consultancy services across the state. It was here that she also completed a Bachelor of Health Management (1998: Uni New England) and a Graduate Diploma of Science in Medicine (Pain Management) (2000: Uni Syd).

Her connection with QLD was short lived (this time) and she returned to NSW in 2001 when she joined the team at the prestigious Royal North Shore Hospital, Pain Management Service as a Clinical Nurse Consultant. During her 10 years in this role she not only provided clinical services to patients of the unit, she also enthusiastically shared her knowledge by providing lectures in a range of university training programs and participating in the Pain Management Research Institute (PMRI) Education Committee. It was here that Trudy also rounded out her formal pain management education by completing her Masters of Science in Medicine (Pain Management) (2006: Uni Syd).

In 2011 Trudy once again returned to QLD where she spent the next 12 years working as the Clinical Nurse Consultant for the Acute Pain Service at Princess Alexandra Hospital. During that time her colleagues remember her for personally reprogramming 120 CADD pumps (no mean feat), helping to establish an intrathecal infusion service for palliative care patients in Metro South, staying

onsite and on-duty until every patient that needed help from the acute pain service was "sorted", and "buoy(ing) the acute pain service team everyday with relentless humorous anecdotes". She embodied the ethos of patient first and regularly inspired her colleagues to do the same.

It was during her time in QLD that Trudy's involvement in the Australian Pain Society (APS) really ramped up. Trudy first joined the APS as a member in 1993. She joined the board as QLD state director in 2013, serving two successive 3-year terms (maximum tenure) before being elected to the executive and serving as President Elect (2019-2021), President (2021-2023) and finally Immediate Past President (2023-2025). Throughout this time Trudy has contributed to a range of APS committees and activities including the Education and Innovation Committee (Inaugural Member: 2017-2019, Chair: 2019-2023), the Relationships Committee (Member: 2019-2021, Chair: 2021-2023), the Scientific Program Committee (Member: 2021-current), the Membership Committee (Chair: 2015-2019) and the painSTAR Committee (APS Board rep: 2021-2023; Faculty: 2023-current), as well as a range of aged-care related activities that are cornerstones of the APS education agenda. Trudy also led the development of the first APS Position Statement for Pain Management in Aged Care (released March 2024). A key priority for Trudy during her APS Presidency was the creation of the mentorship program; a project that was successfully launched in 2024 and, at the time of writing, was supporting its first cohort of mentor's and mentee's. Trudy also helped to shape and deliver numerous annual scientific meetings (ASM's), including being on the local organising committee for the 2001 and 2015 ASM's (Cairns: 2001; Brisbane: 2015) and contributing to a range of preconference workshops (Pain Interest Group (Nursing) and Acute Pain: 1995, 2001-2002, 2010-2015; Fundamentals of Pain: 2021-24) as well as breakfast and topical sessions (2013, 2024).

From a broader perspective, Trudy was a founding member of the Pain Interest Group (Nursing Issues) NSW - now known as Pain Nurses Australia - and held various roles as Chairperson, Newsletter Editor, Secretary and committee member. Beyond our shores she has also conducted several commissioned training programs for nursing staff in Hong Kong and Singapore.

As can be seen, Trudy's contribution to APS and the broader pain sector has been prolific. As is so often her way, much of it was delivered quietly behind the scenes with her no-nonsense approach to mucking in and doing what needs to be done.

Those who have the privilege of knowing Trudy know she has a larger-than-life personality, a wickedly funny sense of humour, a passion for travel and a deep love of family and friends. When you see her surrounded by her nearest and dearest, it's clear how much she loves and is loved in return, and how central she is to the family unit.

In hindsight, it's perhaps no surprise that Trudy found a calling in pain management. She approaches life with a deep interest in people and their stories and applies a lens of compassionate understanding that fosters genuine connection. She is first and foremost for the patient – never shying away from her clear sense of purpose to advocate for those who need assistance and staunchly challenging those around her to do the same.

Trudy is a thoroughly deserving recipient of the 2025 Australian Pain Society Distinguished Member award.





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