



The Australian Pain Society

2009
*Distinguished
Member
Awards*

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

Dr Carolyn Arnold is a Rehabilitation Medicine and Pain Medicine physician who has the honour of being the Australian Pain Society's first female president, from 2003 to 2006. She served on the APS executive for 12 years, as Victorian Director and later as Secretary.

She studied Medicine at Monash University and later entered postgraduate training at the Australian College of Rehabilitation Medicine (later to be the Australian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine in the Royal Australian College of Physicians) to pursue this newly identified specialty. Her interest in Rehabilitation Medicine was sparked following a general practice training rotation in Geriatric Medicine at Bendigo.

Dr Arnold obtained her fellowship in Rehabilitation Medicine in 1990 winning the Basmajjin Prize and the Award of Merit. She began consultant work in the Caulfield Pain Clinic where she is now Clinical Director as well as working in Neurological Rehabilitation at Hampton Rehabilitation Hospital, both in Melbourne, Australia.

She was mentored into Pain Medicine by Dr Terry Little (Anaesthetist) and A/Prof George Mendelson (Psychiatrist), both former APS Presidents. Terry and George both asked her to join the Caulfield Pain Clinic which was keen to strengthen its interdisciplinary and rehabilitative approach to chronic pain management. They also encouraged Dr Arnold to take up committee work (hence the APS), and conference presentations. It was quite an achievement for her to work and contribute to the APS, while juggling her three young



Carolyn Arnold

MBBS; FAFRM; FFPMANZCA

children, achieving computer literacy in the early 1990s and updating her knowledge. None of Carolyn's children were good sleepers, and she recalls occasionally nodding off to sleep during evening APS teleconferences!

Carolyn Arnold particularly enjoyed presenting difficult clinical cases at her early APS conferences, hoping to obtain insights into better managing these challenging cases. A network of Australian friends, clinicians, researchers

and colleagues grew out of society activities and provided her with broad based insights into the complexity of chronic pain, the paucity of awareness and suitable treatments and the role of health service delivery. Without these associations she may not have continued her work in the field of pain management.

Dr Arnold's most significant activities and contributions during her APS Executive tenure include:

- Contributions to content and organisation of the Annual Scientific Meetings
- Providing multidisciplinary education for health professionals working in pain
- Contribution to the ACHS pain unit accreditation guidelines
- Expansion of the APS Scholarship Program to 3 scholarships
- Seeing the 2005 Management Strategies for Pain in Residential Aged Care Facilities project come to fruition, highlighting the significance of pain in the elderly and Australian expertise in the field
- The second Australian IASP Meeting in 2005

Dr Arnold has also participated in clinical research into pain after amputation, longitudinal studies into the outcome of spinal cord stimulation in workers compensation patients, pain after trauma, psychological aspects of chronic pain, and compensation and legal issues in chronic pain.

Elected as a Foundation Fellow to the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists in 1999, she has worked on the examination, research and training unit accreditation committees. She is currently a Board member of the Faculty of Pain Medicine, where issues of training, advocacy with government and awareness of the humanitarian need to provide better treatment of pain are prominent themes.

Dr Arnold has headed the Caulfield Pain Management and Research Centre, a multidisciplinary centre, since 2002. She has worked as a consultant to the Alfred Health Acute Pain Service since 2003, expanding her clinical work into acute pain and she's shown great commitment to the public health system. This has had its challenges in sharing and prioritising spending on health. There is further work to be done raising awareness of chronic pain sufferers' poor quality of life and the way they are often denied reasonable and cost effective health care. She has on several occasions, fought to avoid service closures, always championing the patient's need for better pain treatment services and seeking treatment innovation.

As a mentor, Carolyn has encouraged staff from many disciplines to work in the field of pain management, training, teaching and tutoring postgraduates in anaesthesia, rehabilitation medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and psychiatry .

She has treated and assessed many patients with chronic pain who are in receipt of compensation under Worksafe and Transport Accident in Victoria. Her expertise in this area is highly valued. She is keenly aware that fostering an understanding of the disabling influence of persistent pain, so it is fairly treated under compensation systems, is a huge and ongoing challenge. As a member of The IASP Clinical and Legal Issues Special Interest Group she has contributed to workshops and satellite meetings furthering work in the interesting interface between physical medicine, psychological medicine, financial compensation and the law.

Some recipients of the Australian Pain Society Distinguished Member Award have received international accolades. Carolyn's achievements, though less prominent, exemplify her skill as a collaborator and contributor to team work, her commitment to patients and co-workers, her humanistic values and her underlying rehabilitation medicine approach to facing challenges, learning from them and advancing the art and the science of Pain Medicine.

