



The Australian Pain Society

2017
*Distinguished
Member
Award*

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

It is our very great pleasure to introduce Dr Tim Semple as recipient of a prestigious Australian Pain Society Distinguished Member Award.

Tim completed his undergraduate medical training at The University of Adelaide, before relocating to Canberra for his internship and Resident Medical Officer (RMO) rotations. Although the first two years of his anaesthetic training were spent in England, being a local boy at heart, he was lured back to South Australian soil in 1986.

However, it wasn't until 1990 that his career in pain medicine took full flight. In July of that year, he accepted a six-month full time Senior Registrar appointment in the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) Pain Management Unit and, luckily for all of us, he liked it! In fact, he liked it so much that in January the following year he accepted a permanent Staff Specialist position within the unit – allocating half of his time to pain medicine and half to anaesthesia - a split he continues to maintain in his clinical work to this day.

Around the same time that Tim joined the Pain Management Unit, he was appointed to a Clinical Lectureship in the Department of Anaesthesia at The University of Adelaide. This appointment saw the merging of what would be two very strong themes in his career - teaching and pain medicine. Over the years, Tim has mentored a vast array of individuals including medical students, registrars participating in Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM)



Tim Semple

MBBS, FFARACS, FANZCA, FFPANZCA

accredited training, primary health care partners seeking to establish new initiatives, consumers, multidisciplinary colleagues and even health executives who perhaps didn't always realise that they were being quietly schooled in the finer arts of pain medicine. Throughout these interactions, Tim has been known as a mentor of great warmth, high standards, incredible knowledge and a strong passion for equitable access to good quality health

care for all. For this reason, he frequently tops the national 'go to' list for pain-related issues.

It was in this vein of improving access to tertiary care that Tim, together with his RAH colleagues, helped establish a Visiting Pain Specialist service to Royal Darwin Hospital and Alice Springs Hospital. He was also instrumental in establishing a regular outreach clinic to Whyalla in country South Australia and 10 years later, it continues to provide almost monthly clinics to that region. Tim has also worked tirelessly to foster health sector engagement with telehealth and other models to improve service access in rural / isolated areas. He remains first and foremost a clinician who is never too busy to listen to an individual's story and who genuinely cares about helping people to achieve the best outcomes possible.

Always ready to lead by example, Tim has been a staunch contributor to many professional bodies. From an Australian Pain Society (APS) perspective, he has served as SA State Director (2001-2007), Secretary (2007-2009), President Elect (2009-2011)

and President (2011-2013). He was part of the local organising committee for the APS Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) in Ayers Rock (1997) and Convenor for the 2007 ASM in Adelaide - the first to feature a consumer forum. During his time as APS President, Tim played a strong role in fostering links with the Association of South East Asian Pain Societies (ASEAPS) and challenged us all to work more effectively around indigenous and refugee health issues. In 2013 he established the now regular APS ASEAPS Award, which offers free registration to an APS Annual Scientific Meeting for the ASEAPS Best Poster winner. Another initiative in his term was the annual combined APS / ANZCA / FPM / Painaustralia Board breakfast at the APS ASM in order to optimise communication between the peak pain organisations. Tim also remains the only APS President to be passed the presidential baton in a crocodile infested tank! He has served on the board of Painaustralia and various committees of the Australian New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA), contributed to key initiatives such as the National Pain Strategy and 2010 National Pain Summit, and continues to support pain-related research via a position on the Australian Pain Relief Association (APRA) Board. He is a highly sought after speaker for national and international conferences, and has published numerous articles across a variety of issues related to pain management.

Locally, Tim is known as 'the ideas man' - he has an exceptional ability to think creatively, to draw on the strengths of others and support people in extending themselves. In a state with limited pain resources, Tim has been a staunch advocate for the importance of pain services, regularly holding health executives to account and lobbying for

service enhancement - always with an eye on identifying financial sources to strategically inform the next key initiative.

On a personal level, Tim is married to Nikki and together they share two children, Harriet and James. He is an avid gardener, kayaker and storyteller. Always one to enjoy water sports, I have it on good authority that a certain Morris Minor parked out the front of RAH with a surfboard on top was a sure sign that Tim was on duty somewhere in the building. He has a passion for music and dancing and, as many of us know, always leads the charge of the SA contingent to the dance floor at every APS conference dinner.

Whenever you talk to people about Tim you hear the same themes - genuine care, compassion and understanding; kindness and respect; persistence and tenacity; networker extraordinaire; enthusiasm and effervescence. International colleagues are invited to share Christmas dinner; team members are fed random offerings of Vietnamese rolls and Tim's famous homemade basil pesto; and expressions of kindness and compassion are offered quietly and without question.

Tim is a thoroughly deserving recipient of this award. We thank him for his commitment to the area of pain medicine and for challenging all of us to identify service gaps and strive for continual improvement. ■