

**AGES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021**

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**InterContinental Adelaide, Sofitel Brisbane Central, Sofitel Melbourne on Collins, Ritz Carlton Perth, InterContinental Sydney & Virtually through Zoom**

**Attended by:** Jason Abbott, Jade Acton, Michal Amir, Catarina Ang, Fariba Behnia-Willison, Alison Bryant-Smith, Felix Chan, Weng Chan, Timothy Chang, Shirley Chen, Sarah Choi, Rachel Collings, Kirsten Connan, Dean Conrad, Sean Copson, Sarah Corbett, Ashmita Desai, Marilla Druitt, Bronwen Eldridge, Lenore Ellett, Hugo Fernandes, Bassem Gerges, Myriam Girgis, Helen Green, Rachel Green, Philip Hall, George Hardas, Keryn Harlow, Candice Houda, Kim Jansen, Cherynne Johansson, Supuni Kapurubandara, Krish Karthigasu, Shamitha Kathurusinghe, Akram Khalil, Padmaha Koya, Lider Kukurt, Blake Knapman, Tarana Lucky, Stephen Lyons, Helen McNamara, Peter Maher, Kate Martin, Bernadette McElhinney, Andrew McIntyre, Luke McLindon, David Munday, Anna Nicholson, Nargis Noori, Sneha Parghi, Mohamed Sajid Patel, Sarveshinee Pillay, Jennifer Pontre, Nyan Rasheed, Emma Readman, Martin Ritossa, Stuart Salfinger, Anil Sharma, Katie Taylor, Jim Tsaltas, Carolyn Wilde, Michael Wynn-Williams, Anusch Yazdani, Mini Zachariah

**Apologies:** Devini Ameratunga, Donald Angstetra, Elinor Atkinson, Khaldoun Aweidah, John Bailey, Douglas Barclay, Michael Bardsley, Sarika Bhadange, Norman Blumenthal, Marcia Bonazzi, Alexandra Bonner, Thea Bowler, Neil Campbell, Robert Carey, Andrew Cary, Weng Chan, Claudia Cheng, Jason Chin, Bradley Chittenden, Jason Chow, Prathima Chowdary, Marilyn Clarke, Emma Clifton, Edwina Coghlan, Fiona Connell, Kristin Cornell, Philippa Costley, Naman Dahiya, Russell Dalton, Sam Daniels, Catherine Dash, Praveen De Silva, Rebecca Deans, Ashmita Desai, Kim Dobromilsky, Russell Duncan, Sophia Elmes, Nicola Fitzgerald, Sarah Fitzgibbon, Claire Francis, Elizabeth Gallagher, Amy Goh, Amir Hanna, Samantha Hargreaves, Amani Harris, Martin Healey, Sean Heinz, Lauren Hicks, Caroline Hoggenmueller, Mary Louise Hull, Fernando Infante Torres, Joseph Jabbour, Tal Jacobson, Kanewala Jayasekara, Monika Juneja, Albert Jung, Ganendra Raj Kader Ali, Harvinder Kaur, Bryan Kenny, Paul Knight, Todd Ladanchuk, Suelyn Lai-Smith, Alan Lam, Julie Lamont, Ken Law, Robyn Leake, Lior Levy, Dave Listijono, Jessica Lowe, Barbara (Basia) Lowes, Tony Ma, Peter Maher, Imad Mahmoud, Janine Manwaring, Paulette Maroun, Miguel Marquez, Christiane Mayer, Lalla McCormack, Rose McDonnell, Bernadette McElhinney, Michael McEvoy, Elizabeth McKenna, Jeremy Meates, Uche Menakaya, Harry Merkur, Vadim Mirmilstein, Reena Mohan, Samantha Mooney, Alastair Morris, Stephen Morris, Haider Najjar, Pav Nanayakkara, Jay Natalwala, Erin Nesbitt-Hawes, Sam Newbury, Gene-Lyn Ngian, Cindy Ooi, Sneha Parghi, Ajay Rane, Charlotte Reddington, Lionel Reyftmann, Anna Rosamilia, David Rosen, Mark Ruff, Stanley Santiagu, Erlich Sem, Elvis Seman, Nasreen Shammass, Anil Sharma, Karen Sheng, Kimberley Sleeman, Christopher Smith, Peter Soaki, Soong Ern Grace Tan, Philip Thomas, Anna-Marie Van Der Merwe, Kiran Vanza, Beverley Vollenhoven, Maree Wallwork, Carly Walsh, Luce Wang, Alice Whittaker, Kieren Wilson, Matthew Wilson, Clare Wong, Anthony Woodward, Andrew Zuschmann

**Annual General Meeting Opened:** 5:30pm AEDT

PRESIDENT

Dr Stephen Lyons

VICE PRESIDENT

Dr Rachel Green

HON SECRETARY

Dr Bassem Gerges

TREASURER

Dr Michael Wynn-Williams

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Dr Stuart Salfinger

DIRECTORS

Dr Jade Acton  
Dr Fariba Behnia-Willison  
A/Prof George Condous  
Dr Kirsten Connan  
Dr Helen Green  
A/Prof Emma Readman

Trainee Representative

Dr Kate Martin

General Manager

Mrs Mary Sparksman

Item	Discussion	Action/Outcome
<b>Welcome</b>	Rachel Green (RG) opened meeting	
<b>Election of Office Bearers</b>	Stuart Salfinger (SS) announced outcome of election for positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Trainee Representative for the 2021-2023 AGES Board:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secretary:</b> Dr Bassem Gerges</li> <li>• <b>Treasurer:</b> Dr Michael Wynn-Williams</li> <li>• <b>Trainee Representative:</b> Dr Kate Martin</li> </ul> <p>SS advised positions that were elected uncontested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>President:</b> Dr Stephen Lyons</li> <li>• <b>Vice President:</b> Dr Rachel Green</li> <li>• <b>Ordinary Directors:</b> Dr Jade Acton, Dr Fariba Behnia-Willison, A/Prof George Condous, Dr Kirsten Connan, Dr Helen Green</li> </ul> <p>RG advised that there was one Ordinary Director position still to be filled and nominations had been received from the following members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A/Prof Emma Readman</li> <li>• Dr Martin Ritossa</li> </ul> <p>RG advised voting was open via the Vero Voting system and would close at the end of the Treasurer’s Report</p>	
<b>Apologies</b>	RG announced that 105 apologies had been received	
<b>Confirmation of Previous Minutes</b>	<p>Previous meeting minutes were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed by Stephen Lyons</li> <li>• Seconded by Bassem Gerges</li> </ul>	<b>Outcome:</b> The previous minutes were passed as a true and correct record.
<b>Business Arising</b>	RG called for business arising, none stated.	
<b>Executive Report</b>		
<b>President’s Report</b>	<p>Transcript of Stuart Salfinger’s Presidents report:</p> <p>This [photo of Optus Stadium] was the view from Optus Stadium in Perth at the dinner at the ASM in 2019 when I commenced my term as president. The Matagarup Bridge - and indeed the entire stadium illuminated in purple for International Women’s day.</p> <p>What has this time been. Interesting. Busy. Unexpected. Challenging. This [photo of SS daughter] is Elizabeth with her badge from the 2019 ASM. She is truly an AGES baby; 2 meetings in utero, missed the 2016 ASM – well she was born two hours after I got off the plane home from Brisbane, 11 face to face meetings only missing one Pelvic Floor Meeting in that time, but who hasn’t wanted to skip one of those. She’s had 2 interstate birthdays at AGES meetings and today is only her 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday.</p> <p>Where did this board start? I wanted the board to have direction and cohesiveness. We held the first ever strategic planning meeting shortly after the ASM, a two day think tank about direction and the society. We wanted a plan and vision for the society that went past the two-year term and ideas of a single president.</p> <p>The Theme “Together Towards Tomorrow” was our hope for the society.</p> <p>The vision for the society was for it to be; a leading international organisation focused on improving women’s health through education, training research and advocacy. The key purpose of improving women’s health is what underlies everything we aim for as a board and society. The goals beneath that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional leadership</li> <li>• Advocacy and empowerment</li> <li>• Engaged membership</li> </ul>	

- Growth and sustainability

The plan was for this to provide continuity between boards and ongoing progress and sustainability. This is underpinned by the AGES Values Leadership – Excellence – Innovation – Inclusion & Integrity

AGES truly had been a big international player over this time. We have held combined meetings with AAGL, WES, and an upcoming ISGE meeting and are actively sought as a partnering society. These other groups have also learned that we are way more fun.

Meeting attendances in 2019 and the start of 2020 were at record numbers. The Lap D and other workshops were fully booked out with waiting lists. The “When I grow up” seminars increasing in popularity.

Research was a key tenet of how we seek to improve women’s health. Applications for our research grants are increasing. More funding is being made available and supporting more projects and we will have an announcement of a further increase very soon. Roger Hart led a redevelopment of the assessment of projects and streamlining the committee. Thank you, Roger, for your work on this.

Train the Trainer was another key project for the society. This is a world-renowned program PROVEN to improve training. Mark Coleman and Tom Cecil, the founders of the train the trainer program in the UK became our close friends and have since become honorary AGES members. They assisted in the rollout of workshops and we now have fully trained faculty and were the first independent site outside of the UK to be approved to run the programs. The bulk of our AGES training supervisors have now completed the program and even those initially skeptical have become passionate supporters. There is planning for a virtual version to take place and stay tuned for this.

The AGES website has been fully redeveloped – another massive project led by Bassem Gerges. The new site is more user friendly and easier for our secretariat to update - although even as the president even I still have problems logging in!

2019 saw a record attendance for a Pelvic Floor Meeting. We had the privilege of having one of the most amazing speakers I have ever seen in Denis Mukwege. The set of truly moving talks from this Nobel prize winning gynaecologist, had most of the room in tears. Truly an amazing man and a highlight of my time as president was meeting him.

2020 was a big year planned for developing international links and here’s where it all took a twist...

We held what was possibly the last ever face to face international medical meeting in the world for 2020 and things immediately changed. A global pandemic – not what I had planned for my presidential term but a whole new set of challenges that needed to be addressed. This little sucker was everywhere.

AGES was amongst the first few societies internationally to provide guidance in pre and intra operative care for risk minimization as well as the

practice safety tips and tricks to help guide of medical practice into this new age.

Surgical restrictions ensued and quickly it was evident that these were outdated -The 2015 categories from RANZCOG and AIHW needed an urgent review to keep women's health at the forefront.

An initial response highlighting categories came out in the first few days after restrictions were in place. This then evolved to a comprehensive document published on 24<sup>th</sup> April classifying emergency Cat 1, 2 and 3 procedures importantly by indication rather than simply a procedure type was developed and made available to all the profession rather than just members. This was invaluable at the time and remains a longstanding well referenced tool based on international guidelines that can be used in the future to maintain the importance of women's gynaecologic care.

Training also was hit hard, and we endeavored to get an adequate response to our AATP trainees. The education committee made this possible. As mentioned in my previous talk – the focus was on standards.

This was a picture of my board here at the top - as we entered a whole new world of virtual education rolling out 5 webinars in quick succession with 150-200 delegates at each;

- Covid 19 educational webinar
- Protecting the surgeon and surgical team
- Morbidity and mortality meeting
- Mental health – vitally important in these times
- And Telehealth

This was as well as virtual trainee journal clubs, virtual "When I grow up" seminars (except for the face to face one in COVID free WA).

Then our first virtual Focus Meeting with 167 delegates, a combined meeting with AAGL and a host of international speakers.

Our evolution to hybrid education as part of the new AGES suite of virtual events then pushed forwards. The Pelvic Floor Symposium with 207 delegates and with a face-to-face hub attended in Adelaide by 40 delegates set a new standard. As our first international virtual meeting I don't think I will forget Karl Jallad taking questions from his car by the side of the road in Lebanon during the panel. Here we are now, a multi-hub Virtual Hybrid extravaganza with a huge virtual audience as well as our in-person audiences in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney and of course here in Perth.

Finances were always going to be affected and Dr Karthigasu in his financial report will report a loss of \$130,000. This was the responsible move by the society. It was time to utilise the funding we had from years of work and to re-invest in the society;

- To provide resources in times of need.
- To provide education where there was a lack.
- To provide support and contact with colleagues.

Rest assured - the society remains financially secure.

We also remain well supported by our industry partners. Support previously always stable at around \$600,000 had been boosted to \$965,000

over the previous 6 years. It has fallen to \$664,000 this last year, BUT this was predominantly due to loss of exhibitors at meetings. We have maintained and improved support from our core sponsors who support the society as a whole over all of our activities. In fact, I can announce that we have been working closely with Medtronic to become our new Platinum Industry and Education Partner. After an agreement in principle this is in the final approval process at Medtronic and very soon, we will be able to announce the formal agreement with a new “Platinum” Medtronic. This is very exciting for AGES as we move forward.

Education - I won't re-hash my presentation immediately before this meeting, but this remains one of the huge achievements of this current Board. The establishment of the Education Committee and the commencement of the curriculum renewal as described represent a mammoth task well on its way to completion. This is not achieved without support and hard workers and I want to particularly thank all of the contributors especially the Education Committee as well as all of those who have participated. Erin, Jade, Dean, Anusch and chairs over that time Jason then Steve.

So, to touch on some thanks – two of my great mentors;  
Tony McCartney – If you weren't taught by him – you were taught by someone who was taught by him. I was lucky enough to work for Tony as a resident, registrar and then share rooms with him as a consultant. A true giant of the profession – to those next generation youngsters – this is the guy who that weird tube thing is named after!  
And Jim Tsaltas – I worked as Jim's fellow back just after the turn of the century. We still speak every week and I still learn from him.

My Board - I will truly miss each one of these people being such a regular and constant part of my life. To work alongside them all, to see those who you have had under your guidance as residents, registrars and fellows and also junior board members, and to see them grow into leaders of the profession is one of the most amazing experiences. You have all led the society through undoubtedly the most difficult year of its existence, and it is stronger, it has grown, and it will continue to. Thank you each and every one of you.

To Mary & YRD - This picture speaks volumes. Mary – you love this society; you work tirelessly for it. Your team loves you and so do we, Daniele and your entire team – you make it all easy and fun.

To my Family - My children haven't known a time I wasn't on the board. Elizabeth as I mentioned is THE AGES Baby, she regularly makes cameos at Board meetings. And to Jade thank you for supporting me on this journey it would not have been possible without you.

Hopefully 2021 will provide a world where we can again reconnect in person with our colleagues across the country at AGES events. Adversity brings strength and we grow from it. This little one [photo of Elizabeth] could teach us all a little bit about dealing with adversity. We have learnt many things, we have connected on different levels, we have learnt not to take anything for granted and to appreciate the love of family and friends.

	<p>I would encourage you to take some time to reflect on everything that has been and how we have grown.</p> <p>Thank you all - It truly has been an honor.</p>	
<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	<p>Krish Karthigasu (KK) reported that AGES made a loss of \$130,482 in 2020.</p> <p>KK stated that this was a pleasing result given the difficulties with COVID-19 and that it was due to the hard work of previous boards, treasurers and the society that AGES is in a good financial position in terms of the assets that have been retained.. COVID was not expected but the Society was ready and able to continue to provide services for all members.</p> <p>KK stated that the bank balance is still in a good financial state and that his predecessors on the board have done all the background work to ensure that the Society had a nice, wide range of sponsorship, regularity of sponsorship, good interaction with our sponsors and all of this has created a very firm base.</p> <p>Most of the Society's losses will relate to some decrease of sponsorship and the inability to host face to face meetings, but the Society has managed to maintain its inputs into education, the website and hosting virtual meetings so as to keep the business functions running.</p> <p>KK advised the Final Audited statements outlining the soundness of the society will be available in the members section of the AGES website.</p> <p>KK opened up to questions, none received.</p>	
	RG advised that voting for the Ordinary Director position had closed.	
<b>Auditor's Report</b>	KK has proposed BDO be reappointed as auditor for the 2021 financial year, Helen Green (HG) seconded motion.	<b>Outcome:</b> BDO reappointed as Auditor for the 2021 financial period.
<b>Election of Office Bearers</b>	<p>RG confirmed incoming AGES Board for 2021-2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>President:</b> Dr Stephen Lyons</li> <li>• <b>Vice President:</b> Dr Rachel Green</li> <li>• <b>Secretary:</b> Bassem Gerges</li> <li>• <b>Treasurer:</b> Michael Wynn-Williams</li> <li>• <b>Ordinary Directors:</b> Dr Jade Acton, Dr Fariba Behnia-Willison, A/Prof George Condous, Dr Kirsten Connan and Dr Helen Green</li> </ul> <p>RG announced successful candidate for the remaining Ordinary Director was A/Prof Emma Readman</p>	
<b>New Business and Close of Meeting</b>	RG called for any new business, nothing raised. RG closed the meeting 6pm.	

**Annual General Meeting Closed:** 6:00pm AEDT

**Next Meeting:** AGES Annual Scientific Meeting 2022, Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March, Crown Promenade Melbourne.