

AGM 2001

President's Annual Report

27 August 2001

Ladies and gentleman

I'd like to start by welcoming everybody tonight to the association's first Annual General Meeting. Keratoconus Australia was incorporated as a non-profit organization in April 2000 by a small group of idealistic volunteers who wanted to help people with keratoconus and their families. We set ourselves what seemed at the time to be an ambitious set of objectives. These included to

Conduct regular group meetings and information seminars,
Create help lines, a web site and provide individual counseling.

We also planned to:

- create a network of support groups throughout Australia.
- Refer people with keratoconus to experienced eye carers to ensure proper treatment and to avoid unnecessary corneal grafts
- Conduct publicity campaigns and seminars to improve community awareness and understanding of keratoconus and its impact on those with the condition, with particular focus on schools and eye carers.
- Publish a regular print and electronic newsletter with information on a wide range of issues affecting people with keratoconus.
- Act as a lobby group for keratoconus patients to improve health rebates for treatments (contact lens and solutions, glasses) and corneal surgery, and to obtain higher funding for local research into the condition and recognition of keratoconus as a disability.
- Develop a national registry and database on Australian keratoconus patients designed to assist in networking individuals and groups within Australia, and to form a basis for future research work.
- Support efforts to increase organ donation rates with the aim of reducing waiting times for corneal grafts.
- Over the past 12 months, we have achieved a surprising number of these objectives thanks to the efforts of our small but active committee and its supporters.
- These include
- The creation of a Members database. Thanks to the information being collected in the database, we hope to be able to target people needing special assistance and utilize the skills of our members to advance the association.
- We have already registered almost 200 members Australia-wide. That is an excellent result compared to other international keratoconus support groups.
- We have set up a Website with online registration and Q & A forum that is proving of great assistance in providing information to members about keratoconus and the association's activities

- We recently assisted in the creation of a support group in Perth. We hope to provide those interested in expanding the group with information material and space on the website to publicise their local activities
- We've organized three Information seminars that have been well attended. Videos of the conferences have been made available to those unable to attend and have been of particular interest to members interstate and in country areas.
- We've provided a number of people with referrals to eye carers experienced in keratoconus. Expanding this service remains one of our key objectives.
- To do this properly, we are expanding our contacts with eye-carers around Australia. Information about Keratoconus Australia has already been published in a number of optometrists' newsletters and presented at conferences on keratoconus.
- We have also established International contacts with similar support groups in the United States, France and Britain. We hope to draw on these contacts to keep up to date with new developments overseas and get ideas for new initiatives.
- We hope to continue growing the association over the next 12 months. As foreshadowed at our last seminar, a number of projects are already in the pipeline
- A Members' questionnaire is almost complete and will be sent to all members in the near future.
- Work has started on an Information brochure on keratoconus and the association. It will be made available to eye carers around Australia.
- We hope to form a Finance sub-committee soon that will deal with fundraising activities and the issue of membership fees to cover basic costs
- An Online newsletter remains an objective for 2002
- We also are trying to assess the demand for Small support group meetings similar to those being organized in Perth.
- We also need to reorganize our volunteer structure to ensure that the association's workload is spread more evenly and is completed quickly.

As you can see, we have achieved much in the past year – notably in helping people to cope with problems related to contact lenses and corneal grafts and the dissemination of information relating to keratoconus. With your assistance and support, we hope to be able to expand our activities in 2002.

Thank you.

Sources and Application of Funds Statement
For the period 1 February 2000 – 30 June 2001

Sources of Funds		
Donations	Seminars	\$768
	Other	\$

		6715
Video Sales		<u>\$75</u>
<u>Total Funds</u>		<u>\$7558</u>
Application of Funds		
Cash at Bank		\$3055
Cash on Hand		\$46
Bank Charges		\$84
Web Site		\$2247
Seminar Video		\$745
Post Office Box		\$253
Postage		\$48
Copying		\$35
Printing		\$195
Printing and Stationary		\$245
Incorporation Costs		\$30
Telephone		<u>\$566</u>
Total Application of Funds		<u>\$7558</u>

ABN 80 683 325 208

Election of officebearers

Results of the elections for positions on the Keratoconus Australia board of management are as follows:

**President Larry Kornhauser
Vice President Belinda Cerritelli
Tresurer Elena Rullo
Secretary Robyn Gillis**

**Committee members
Elizabeth Paganin
Mirella Matotek**