

General Managers Report 2024-25

2024-25 was another busy year for NSW Stoma. We welcomed 1706 new members and processed 51,869 orders for 8,106 members. Our amazing stoma nurse, Anne Marie Lyons assisted 375 members in her stoma clinic. We ran 11 support meetings over Zoom for members and conducted 4 Education days around NSW. We published 2 journals and awarded 3 Stomal Therapy Nurse Scholarships. Phew!

None of this is possible with our amazing staff and volunteers. We celebrated with 2 staff members who have both been with us for over 16 years, Fiona Lau and Talei Vakalutugone. It makes such a difference to have long term staff members who retain so much knowledge about NSW Stoma and the way we work.

We now have a total of 27 volunteers, including those working on-site, with our journal and our governing board. Every one of them makes a real contribution to the smooth running of our association and the services we provide. A special thank you to Andrew Hollo who has volunteered in our warehouse twice per week for 5 years. Andrew will be 80 years young in December and shows no sign of slowing down. He is an inspiration to all of us.

We finish 2025 by farewelling our 2 longest serving directors. Both Ian Murray and Carol Quast will retire as directors after serving their maximum time of 9 years on the Board. They will be greatly missed, and we are so grateful for their years of dedicated service to NSW Stoma and its members. Thank you, Ian and Carol. Happily, Carol is remaining with NSW Stoma as our Education Officer (voluntary), so you will continue to see her on our popular online members Zoom meetings, and at our equally popular in-person Stomal Therapy Education Days!

If you were one of our 1706 new members, I wish you a very warm welcome to NSW Stoma and hope you have enjoyed being with us so far. As a new member, your feedback is incredibly important to us, and we always value your opinion. If, at any time, you need assistance, have some feedback to share, or simply want to say hello, you are most welcome to contact us, either by telephone, mail, or email. Of course, this extends to all our members, as it is your valuable feedback that helps shape the services we provide to you and your fellow ostomates.

In 2025 we had our first members' feedback survey in five years. Thank you to everyone who completed this online survey, as your feedback truly goes a long way in determining the services we provide in future. Feedback from this survey was particularly complimentary to our wonderful STN, Anne Marie Lyons, so a very special shoutout and thank you to her for the dedicated, warm and joyous care that she continues to provide to all our members. We are certainly all very grateful to have you. *Go raibh maith agat!* ('Thank you' in Irish).

This year, NSW Stoma has had some changes in the online space. We continued to see an increase in the number of members placing their orders via our online portal; now at a rate of 44% up from 35% this time last year. Thank you, as this truly does make our job easier, and we hope, is easier for you too. Also, for your ease and accessibility, we increased the font size across our website, which we trust, has made viewing our site and keeping updated

easier. We've also become more active on social media with the appointment of our Digital Content Creator. If you don't already, please do follow us on Facebook and Instagram to see everything we have to share. We hope you have enjoyed our posts as much as we've enjoyed bringing them to you!

This year, we were very pleased *not to* increase the membership fee for our members (although we unfortunately did have to pass on the cost of the higher postage fees from Australia Post). We always have you, our members, at the forefront of our minds when reviewing service decisions such as these and we truly hope this has made a difference to many of you.

Financially, we remain in a good financial position with healthy reserves. The additional services we offer rely on the generosity of our members and their donations. Without that it would be very difficult to offer any of those support services.

Unfortunately, we have not yet heard of the findings of the Federal Government schedule review of distribution arrangements for the Stoma Appliance Scheme (SAS). The proposed final recommendations to the SAS were due in the first half of 2025, but at the time of writing (October 2025) have not yet been handed down. As soon as these findings have been released, they will be communicated to you.

So, what's next? Well, 2026 will see NSW Stoma celebrate ten years since being incorporated in 2016 from the Colostomy Association of NSW. (We began as the Colostomy Association of NSW in 1964). It will certainly be another interesting year that, I'm sure, will fly by just as this one has!

Warm Regards,

Mary Egan
General Manager, NSW Stoma Ltd