

VPNG Country Conference Ballarat, 2011

Gaye Hose • Ballarat Health Services, VPNG Committee Member

This year's VPNG Country Conference, in collaboration with Ballarat Health Services, was held on 18–19 February at the Mercure Convention Centre, Ballarat. The team from Ballarat Health – Gaye Hose, Lyn Dehnert, Bernice Anderson, Fiona Williams and Angela Hand – conducted a successful event where 120 delegates and 50 trade exhibitors attended.

Friday afternoon commenced with workshops concentrating on clinical practice, which were run by Olympus, J&J and Depuy. Daniel Scholtes opened the trade with a cocktail party which was enjoyed by all. We were all warned that bad weather was approaching Ballarat later that night and to expect high winds and possible flooding.

Saturday morning commenced with a welcome from Gaye Hose followed by the keynote speaker Dermot Moynihan. Dermot spoke on 'Critical Incident Stress' and shared with us how research has shown that we are not assisting staff appropriately to deal with stressful incidents.

Carollyn Williams had an emotional launch of her book *Unmasked*. The book chronicles the work of VPNG over the decades, with its focus on the professional development of perioperative nurses and the advancement of the perioperative profession. In attendance was June Allen, Margaret Walshe, Nanette Lundie and Carollyn's family.

Dr Russell Dalton, obstetrics and gynaecology, presented 'Making the Easy Hard Again'. He spoke of the growth of performing laparoscopic hysterectomies, its benefits for patients and reduced bed days – although, while learning it does take longer than the open hysterectomy. Sharon Cronin from Ballarat Endometriosis Clinic spoke on the role of the endometriosis clinic nurse – an advanced practice role. Sharon showed some fascinating pictures of endometriosis, the journey of the patients and recovery.



June Allen, Nanette Lundie, Carollyn Williams and Margaret Walshe at Unmasked book launch.

After a local produce lunch, Mr David Mitchell, orthopaedic surgeon presented 'How to do a Day Case Total Knee Replacement' and together with Jenny Dodson, CNS, post-anaesthetic recovery unit, presented 'PARU Pain Protocol' and Leonie Lewis, physiotherapist, presented 'Redesigning Care Pathway in Primary Joint Replacement'. It was obvious they all had to work together to ensure the patient had a pain-free and uneventful journey, ensuring they were prepared to return home to their families after one or two days in hospital

After afternoon tea, Dr Fred Rosewarne, Director of Anaesthetics, Ballarat Health Services, spoke on 'Local Anaesthetic Toxicity'. He emphasised the need to be attentive to the early signs of local anaesthetic toxicity, especially with the high doses of local anaesthetic that are given pre-, intra- and postoperatively today. He highlighted the signs and symptoms and possible precautions to take.

The last speaker was Dr Hoc Tan, anaesthetist, who presented 'Difficult Airway Management – Awake Fibreoptic Intubation'. He spoke of patients with potentially difficult airways and how to prevent complete occlusion of the airway when the patient has been anaesthetised. He showed videos of patients being intubated while awake with little distress to the patients and then safely anaesthetising the patient prior to surgery.

After the drawing of raffles we finished with happy hour.

From the evaluations completed by delegates, the VPNG Committee will work towards providing education on the topics suggested.

I would like to thank all who helped prior to and over the two days of the conference.



ANF House Metro seminar Delegates enjoy morning tea.