



Volunteer Profile – A/Prof Peter Scally

Hospital/Practice: Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

Role Title: Chair, South Pacific Radiology Liaison Group

What is it? The South Pacific Radiology Liaison Group is responsible for providing assistance in radiology for South Pacific Island nations.

How did you get involved? It was around 1998. Dr Cliff Trotman from Victoria had provided guidance for the committee for years and wrote in the College newsletter about the group and the important services it provides.

What does it involve? We have meetings once a year at the College ASM. In between, communication is by email and phone.

What commitment is required? Not much, or quite a lot, depending on the time available.

What skills do you need to have? Some organisation skills; patience.

What do you get out of it? Satisfaction that some of the projects come to fruition. We have organised:

- Training for radiographers in the South Pacific
- Visits by radiologists to Tonga, Fiji, Samoa, and the Solomon Islands
- Equipment for radiology departments
- Email and phone consultation about images and management
- Training in Australia and in the host countries
- Contributions to the WHO radiology texts
- A CD radiology interpretation training program
- Sponsorship by the College for South Pacific radiologists at the Annual Scientific Meeting
- Liaison with AusAID and the Pacific Islands Project of the RACS, the World Health Organisation, the Radiological Society of North America, the European Society of Radiology, the International Society of Radiology, and the ISRRT (International Society of Radiographers and Radiographic Technicians)
- An article in the *Medical Journal of Australia* about the training program.

Why do you enjoy it? It feels like something that needs to be done.

What difference has it made to you? It makes me think a lot about overseas aid. Is it useful? In what way? Can we do it better? Transferring knowledge and perhaps some equipment to other countries sounds like a good thing and not too difficult to do, but the more I am involved, the more doubts I have

about how to do it and how much good it produces. It must be done with sensitivity. It must be appropriate. Hopefully, there will be a measurable improvement as a result of what we do and the measurement and judgement of the quality of the aid will be done by the customer, that is, the people in the host country. In the past, so much aid has been beset by paternalism, the belief that the donor knows best.

I would like to be exporting happiness, not just radiology knowledge, but knowledge that is appropriate and adds to the self-esteem of the recipients, rather than making them more dependent on Western aid. The way the system operates, it costs developing countries more to train a radiologist than it costs a developed country, because the developing country takes 10 years to train a radiologist instead of five. One in two will leave to earn more elsewhere, perhaps even in Australia and New Zealand. Is it fair that we provide five weeks of training, and then perhaps take a valuable resource from a developing country for 30 years?

Should other people become involved? Certainly.

How can other people get involved? I would like someone to volunteer to coordinate the trial of the R-ITI training for one or two doctors in the Solomon Islands or in Fiji. The R-ITI program from the National Health Service in the UK would give targeted knowledge to doctors that would increase their effectiveness, whether they continued with radiology training or not.

Additionally, the Fiji School of Medicine would like to have more teachers of radiology for medical students. If funding could be found, radiologists would be appreciated in adding to the course. Dr Patrick Luckey is coordinating.

Who to contact to find out more? Contact me on 0408701652 or at p.scally@uq.edu.au

Volunteer Opportunities

Our members are integral to the future of radiology and radiation oncology. The College encourages its members to get involved. The College's mission as a Fellowship-based organisation is to set, promote and continuously improve the standards of training and practice in radiology and radiation oncology, for the betterment of the people of Australia and New Zealand.

The College's ability to meet its mission and objectives is directly contributed to by the members who volunteer their time and expertise in numerous ways. The College has many ways members can make a contribution to the radiology or radiation oncology profession. For further information please contact +61 2 9268 9704, email pamela.taylor@ranzcr.edu.au or visit www.ranzcr.edu.au/members.