

## ★ President's Piece: Hear our voices ...

The Occupational Rehabilitation Conference in April, the upcoming Research Symposium in October, and the National Forum on Lifelong Career Development are all examples of CDANZ meeting the challenge to hear and represent the many sector voices. Val O'Reilly reports.



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We have much to celebrate simply because we live in New Zealand. We enjoy comparative political and religious freedoms, and benefit from diverse experiences, landscapes, and people. Our collective desire to protect what we value, and to be listened to, is enshrined spiritually in the line "Āta whakarongo" in our national anthem.

Our CDANZ competencies assert the need to understand and recognise the diverse populations of our client base; yet that very diversity means we are continually challenged as a professional association to hear, and effectively represent, the many sector voices.

This year we took a significant step to meet that challenge, specifically in the occupational rehabilitation sector, with a collaborative career development event representing vocational consultants, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and other stakeholders involved in helping clients obtain employment through rehabilitation. The successful 2016 Occupational Rehabilitation Conference, held in Auckland on 18 April, was designed to promote cross disciplinary co-operation, professional development, and aspirational thinking within the sector. I am sure you will enjoy reading in this issue a number of reflections inspired by the conference themes.

The comparative individual political freedoms we enjoy in our country may well be envied by others, yet the voice of career development as we understand it struggles to be heard within the ever changing New Zealand policy landscape.

Our collective professional voice has critical insights to offer about lifelong career development, social justice, and meaningful work, but opportunities to be heard have been limited and it is important that we address this gap. To this end, CDANZ led the formation in 2015 of the "National Forum on Lifelong Career Development" to broaden the engagement and scope of discussion around career development. Following forum discussion and feedback, we have this year commissioned a scoping paper, prepared by Dr Dale Furbish with assistance from a working group of CDANZ volunteers, to profile career development in New Zealand. Recent policy decisions have heightened awareness of the urgency for our voice to be heard in the policy debate about what a good career development offer actually looks like. We will keep members informed about the progress of the scoping paper and the forum.

The notion of our voice being heard and being valued forms the overarching theme for this year's Symposium in Christchurch on 3 and 4 October. "Our Value, Our Voice" is an opportunity for members and those working across the career development industry to participate in, learn about, and contribute to the research and leading practice of our profession.

I encourage you to join us in Christchurch for the excellent professional development and enjoyable networking. Also, if you are a Professional member considering a presentation

focussing on research or leading practice (or both) we encourage you to look at how the Research Dissemination Fund can support you. Here's an extract from the information on the CDANZ website.

*The purpose of this fund is to foster the dissemination of completed research project findings and/or leading practice findings, which will be of benefit to CDANZ members generally.*

*Funding may be granted for attending conferences, symposia and/or professional - development workshops, provided that the applicant is offering a paper/workshop/seminar/keynote that has been accepted and reflects the applicant's research findings/leading practice.*

And in the meanwhile we have more ways to "hear" your voice so share your thoughts and inspirations... you can tweet or leave a message on LinkedIn or on our Facebook page.



Val O'Reilly – CDANZ President, Professional Member, Life-Story Director

 Follow at [nz.linkedin.com/pub/val-o-reilly/24/533/392/](https://nz.linkedin.com/pub/val-o-reilly/24/533/392/)

Notes:

- Research Dissemination Fund details at <http://www.cdanz.org.nz/resources/research/>