Almost half of 2012 has flown by already, as we approach mid-year, we hope everyone has been enjoying the Serology QAP surveys so far this year, where most modules are into the second or third survey for the year. We think we have provided some challenging specimens this year, and are finding participants are up for the challenge….. If your laboratory has an interesting specimen, or knows of a potential donor, please let us know.

We have been busy this year, attending and presenting at various conferences and meetings, and there are still a few to come, see inside for details.

The Serology QAP is scheduled to hold our annual Management Review in August, after which, the Standing Committee Meeting will be scheduled. These meetings, allow the Serology QAP to plan for the coming year and beyond, from the information, guidance and advice gathered. Stay tuned for developments of these meetings.

The RCPA QAP is also pleased to share that there is considerable progress regarding our new ‘Centre of Excellence’. The building work is progressing and it is envisaged we will be moving before the end of the year, see inside this issue for some photographs.

Our last newsletter requested feedback from our participants regarding some green initiatives we wanted to implement from the 2013 survey year, and from this feedback we will be discontinuing the supply of the red (Serology) and blue (Molecular) Participant Folders.

Till next time...

The Serology QAP Team

Are you wondering… I have something to say...

Where is the Serology QAP Customer Satisfaction survey???

Traditionally we would be sending out our biennial Customer Satisfaction Survey around this period, and in a drive to improve the overall RCPA Quality Assurance Programs Pty Limited experience, we are moving towards an annual company-wide, subject-matter focused, survey. Watch this space for further details, for how you can help us to enhance your RCPA QAP experience.
Meet Serology QAP Staff

Ricky Widjaja

**Background:** After completing studies in IT & Science, I started working in private pathology, gathering experience in Serology/Immunology, Haematology/Blood Bank, Flow Cytometry and Molecular Diagnostics. I have also performed various roles in pharmaceuticals, health economics and clinical data management.

**Working with the RCPA QAP?** I commenced with the RCPA Serology QAP in November 2010.

**Your current role?** Scientific Officer, with responsibilities including specimen acquisition, preparation, packing and dispatch, specimen testing (in-house), evaluation of participant performance and statistical analysis.

**Enjoyed most in your role?** Networking at meetings and conferences, with people from laboratories around Australia and overseas, as well as performing a variety of office and laboratory duties.

**Greatest achievement during your time at RCPA QAP?** Performing my first professional presentation at a conference in 2011 and the opportunity to attend different training courses.

**Like to do in your spare time?** Home brewing and I recently picked up a new sport, golf. So, I like to practice to lower my handicap whenever possible.

**What are you looking forward to?** Lunch time, my 30th birthday this week and the progression of the Centre of Excellence.

Have you missed something?? Viruses in May, in August??

For this year only, Viruses in May will be held 16-18th August; so you haven’t missed a thing! Viruses in May (now in it’s ninth year) is still Australia’s only meeting focusing specifically on the clinical, diagnostic and management aspects of viral infections. It enjoys an outstanding reputation and attracts pathologists, microbiologists, infectious disease physicians, general practitioners, as well as registrars and scientists, from Australia and overseas. This meeting is accredited for continuing education by the RCPA.

Scientific Conveners Prof William Rawlinson and A/Prof Monica Lahra have put together an excellent scientific program this year, focusing on Principles and Practice of Clinical Virology, Viral Hepatitis and Respiratory Infections and Emerging and Exotic Viral Infection Issues.

The meeting will be held in the Carrington Hotel, Katoomba, NSW with discounted hotel accommodation for delegates. Registration includes two and half days of scientific program, dinner and drinks on two nights and lunch and tea breaks each day.


We look forward to seeing you in the mountains!
At the beginning of March, the annual RCPA Pathology Update conference was successfully held in Sydney. ‘Science and the City’ was the theme and Susan attended many interesting presentations including infectious diseases and even learnt all about bodies in wheelie bins!

The RCPA QAP was delighted with the interest shown at the booth, which focused on new innovations, the new Centre of Excellence and other exciting developments. This encouraged networking and information dissemination between QAP staff and conference delegates and it appeared all were impressed with the advances being made.

During the conference, Susan presented the Serology QAP poster titled ‘Accuracy of Serological Testing in the City, Country and Beyond!’... and was very pleased to win the Roche General Poster Display 2012 Microbiology... Congratulations!!

The RCPA Microbiology and Serology QAP session held on Sunday 11th March, saw Scott Craig present ‘Leptospirosis - a global disease, the diagnostic and public health challenges’ and Graham Robertson present ‘Overview of QAP parasitology results’. This session was received well despite the hour and we would like to thank the speakers and those who attended.

Hot news for Pathology Update 2013, for the first time ever, the RCPA Microbiology and Serology QAP session will be held on the Friday of the conference, we will publish the details closer to the date.
Crossword Corner... good luck! (answers next issue)

Across
6. Identified in 1982 by Barry Marshall and Robin Warren (12,6)
10. Kissing disease (10,13)
11. A shapeless unicellular organism (6)
13. Painful swelling of the parotid gland is the most typical presentation (5)
14. Causative agent of whooping cough (10,9)
15. PCR (10,5,8)

Down
1. The causative agent of Q fever (8,8)
2. From the Orthomyxoviridae family (9,1)
3. What does ‘QA’ stand for (7,9)
4. A lentivirus (3)
5. A highly contagious zoonosis caused by ingestion of unsterilized milk or meat from infected animals or close contact with their secretions (11)
7. In the Makonde language "that which bends up" (11)
8. Serology QAP module in which Rubella testing is offered (9)
9. Carried by many ticks, fleas, and lice (10)
12. Rubeola (7)

Conferences, Workshops and Meetings

APCMV 2012 (Asia-Pacific Congress of Medical Virology)

ASM (Australian Society for Microbiology) Annual Conference
2 – 5 July 2012, Brisbane, Qld. www.asm2012.org

NRL Annual Workshop

VIM August 2012

AIMS National Scientific Meeting

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At the end of March, Susan travelled to London to attend the 22nd European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ECCMID). This is the first time the Serology QAP has sent a representative to this meeting, and Susan was overwhelmed with the magnitude of the conference. With over 8000 registered delegates, and more than 1500 trade exhibition representatives, there was certainly plenty to see and do! The congress was held in the refurbished Docklands, at the ExCeL exhibition and convention centre.

With a wide-range of sessions including: keynote, meet-the-expert, grand-rounds, symposia, poster, and educational workshops, it provided an opportunity to see first-hand "how it's done" on the other side of the globe, and it was interesting to hear the challenges that European pathology labs face.

Topics for sessions attended included: Bartonella; Chagas; Coxiella; Hepatitis B; Delta hepatitis; Hepatitis E; Rickettsia; automation of the bacteriology lab; cost efficiency of molecular techniques; novel methods to diagnose infections; parasitic infection in pregnancy and sequencing of viruses.

The meeting provided the opportunity to network with experts from all over the world, as well as catch up with some familiar faces.

The 23rd European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases will be held in Berlin 27-30th April 2013.

http://www.congrex.ch/eccmid2013.html
During April, the RCPA Quality Assurance Programs (RCPA QAP) became aware of abnormal activity occurring on its publicly accessible website located at www.rcpaqap.com.au. Investigations into the activity showed that the RCPA QAP website was experiencing malicious traffic which was causing participants a number of issues, including difficulty using and navigating within the website and the involuntary redirection of participants to external, third party websites. The RCPA QAP took prompt action to shut down the main website in order to protect against this activity. Unfortunately this outage affected legitimate visitors to the website, including our participants.

During our investigation into this incident we identified that unauthorised changes had been made to the content on certain pages within the website. We promptly commenced an extensive review of the website, database and various log files to identify the affected areas of the website. Only a small number of sections within the website were affected. We determined that no participant data or information was accessed at any time and RCPA QAP has not suffered any theft of data from our website. External consultants appointed by RCPA QAP have confirmed this.

We would like to announce that our corporate website was restored to full functionality, effective 4th May 2012. We sincerely thank you for your patience during this period and apologise once again for any inconvenience that this has caused. If for any reason you continue to experience any problems at all please continue to submit feedback to: paul.cohen@rcpaqap.com.au

Our new home... Here are some of the latest pictures... we will add more as they become available and keep you up to date with the latest news, stay tuned for the next Serology QAP News...

Enrolment Credit Voucher & Gift Voucher Values

Single donations of ≥ 50mL serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $150
Single donations of ≤ 50mL serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $75
The patient will receive a $100 Gift Voucher, if the donation is ≥150 mL the patient will receive a $150 Gift Voucher

Pooled specimens of ≥ 50mL serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $75
Pooled specimens of ≤ 50mL serum will receive a Credit Voucher for your laboratory of AUD $30