

**The Australian Society for  
Performing Arts Healthcare  
(ASPAH)**

***Strategic Plan Summary***



**ASPAH**

Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare

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## The Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare Basic Information

Legal name and status of business:	The Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare Inc.
Office bearers	Dr Bronwen Ackermann (President) Dr John Hadok (Vice President) Dr Paul Duff (Secretary and Public officer) Dr Jonathan Livesey (Treasurer)
Address of main office:	c/o Woy Woy General Practice, 26-30 Railway St, Woy Woy, 2256
Addresses of other offices:	N/A
Address of registered office:	535 Ravensdale Rd, Ravensdale, 2259
Main telephone:	61 2 43444466
Main fax:	61 2 43431488
Main e-mail	secretary@aspah.org.au
Website:	www.aspah.org.au
Business incorporation/registration date:	22/12/2006
Business incorporation/registration number:	INC9886791
ABN	78 424 294 802
Date of Registration as and Australian Registrable Body	25/2/2008
ARBN	129 605 143
Date of endorsement as a Registered Charity	2/11/2007
Date of endorsement as a Deductible Gift Recipient	1/7/2009
Main shareholders:	The members
Professional Advisers:	
Auditors	Self audited under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 1984
Legal advisers	N/A
Bankers	National Australia Bank
Patent (IPR) attorneys	N/A
Financial/tax advisers	Bongiorno and Partners (NSW)
Patron	Richard Gill OAM

# The Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare Strategic Plan Summary

## Introduction

The Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare was formed in November 2006. Its members come from a broad range of people who work or who have worked with performing artists at many levels, and who share a passion and common belief. This belief was succinctly expressed in the following sentence in a letter, written to the Medical Journal of Australia in 1987 by Tom Hall, a violinist and ex-editor of Senza Sordino (Journal of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians)

*"The vitality of the arts and culture of any society is threatened by those forces that disable its artists."*

We are hoping that we will be able to change the culture within which all performing artists operate. We see the health of the performing artist and the quality of their art as inextricably linked, yet all too often the two are treated as somehow separate with health taking a very poor second place to the art.

We believe this must change.

So why does Australia need ASPAH now?

The importance and prevalence of the Performing Arts has dramatically risen in Australia over the last decade or so.

Nonetheless, life remains tough for performing arts organisations, making life even harder for performing artists. In spite of the risks, pressures in the education system leave little room for health and safety issues in performing arts training. But change is coming. With injury prevention increasingly a focus of action in Australia AND with the issue of performing arts health gaining greater prominence daily, the interest in performing arts healthcare is all leading to more than just talk. Forces are driving action in this area and thus both the need and the opportunities for action are there, demanding a response.

This document, then, is a living, growing and evolving reference of who we are, what we hope for and how we think we may achieve those ASPAH-rations.



## Vision, Mission and Strategic Focus

Our aims are best expressed by our Mission and Vision statements, the first of which is enshrined in our constitution.

### Mission statement

This organisation recognises that all performers, young and old, amateur and professional, have unique needs that may not be met by standard models of health care.

Therefore it promotes:

- Accessible high quality holistic health care for all performing artists
- Education for health workers, teachers, performers and students to improve health and well-being
- Research across disciplines relevant to this field
- A culture of lifelong preventative health care and safety practices
- Multidisciplinary discourse among health professionals, educators and performing artists
- Increased community awareness of performing arts health care

### Vision statement

The Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare will serve nationally and internationally as the peak body in Australia for the promotion of holistic healthcare for performing artists.

The **Strategic Focus** of our activities for 2011 and 2012 is Communications and Awareness.

## Values

At the Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare we value Excellence, Leadership, Integrity, Respect, Creativity, Independence, Fairness and Transparency.

## Memberships



At heart ASPAH is a democratic organisation run by its members; individuals who are committed to the better health of performing artists. To these we offer a range of financial contributions; from the full membership fee for full time health professionals, to a discount fee for educators, performers and unregistered health professionals and finally a special fee for full time students and concession card holders.

On top of this, however, ASPAH is a part of a broader community of organisations working with performing artists. An increasing number of these organisations have asked to become "members", and in discussing this with them we are considering possible structures for corporate "membership" options. These include

- **The Performing Arts Healthy Practice Partnership**; a proposed service of resources aimed at providing small organisations such as performing arts schools and venues with support in improving the health environment of their clients.

- **Affiliation**; a proposed peer to peer arrangement with larger organisations such as performing arts bodies or other healthcare organisations, intended to bring mutual benefits while ensuring the cause of performing arts healthcare progressed by all involved.
- **Sponsorship**; an arrangement similar to affiliation but where the agreement more clearly specifies the tangible mutual benefits agreed to for a specified period.

## Intended Activities and Overall Objectives

Our primary services will be of a charitable nature and open to all who may benefit from the promotion of better health amongst performing artists.

Our belief is that our services to the performing arts community will be driven by the combined interests, enthusiasms and contributions of our members. By creating a structured forum, by opening doors to ideas and organisations from around the world, and by bringing together people with a concern and desire to improve the health of Australia's performing artists we hope that we will foment new directions and activities in performing arts health in Australia.

For this model to work, however, ASPAH would need to also have a body of member services which would be ancillary to the charitable services available to all.

Having exclusive membership services would, at first glance, seem to contradict the charitable nature of the organisation. This would not be true, however, if the benefits of membership were of a special interest nature. Given the nature of ASPAH as a healthcare organisation it is thus likely that membership will be of greatest benefit to healthcare professionals, and this is indeed the case. We highly value, however, a broad and eclectic membership base so membership will need to provide some unique benefits for all.



With this in mind, our currently identified long-term objectives are:

### **Access to Healthcare**

- *Performing artists touring, working, living and teaching across Australia will have local access to performing arts healthcare, including:*
  - *Specialists in appropriate fields practicing performing arts healthcare.*
  - *Performing arts healthcare clinics established in metro and regional areas*
  - *Existing clinics and outpatient departments providing performing arts healthcare activities*
- *There will be improvement in the availability of health insurance systems for performing artists*

### **Education**

- *ASPAH will improve the availability of quality educational resources regarding best health practices for performing artists*
- *ASPAH will run an Annual Conference which will be the premier performing arts healthcare conference in Australia*
- *Access to "Medical Problems of Performing Artists", the leading journal in the field of performing arts healthcare, will be made more accessible to our members.*
- *ASPAH will, through its professional and integrated online presence, become a primary resource for information in the field of performing arts healthcare*

### **Research**

- *Australian Bureau of Statistics and other surveillance/epidemiology organisations will gather data specific to performing arts healthcare*

### **Injury Prevention**

- *Performing Arts schools/studios/programs will have a performing arts healthcare focus*
- *Performing arts organisations of all sizes will have a healthcare plan for participants.*
- *Employers will have healthcare strategies for artistic workers*
- *Mass Gathering Arts events will have health plans for artists, staff and attendees*

### **Networking**

- *ASPAH will have strategic relationships with every important Australian and international entity dealing with performing artists or their health*
- *ASPAH's members will have ready access to each other and to other relevant organisations*

### **Community awareness and advocacy**

- *ASPAH will be viewed in the community as the primary body providing information and support for the healthcare of Australian performing artists*
- *ASPAH will be the lead organisation for advocacy for performing arts healthcare*
- *ASPAH will engage with the large population of child learners and performers in the arts.*
- *Policy in government and private organisations will be translated into effective programs*

### **Viability**

- *ASPAH will have a vibrant, professional interactive and evolving presence on the internet to act as a key conduit for our activities.*
- *ASPAH will be managed and funded reliably and adequately to achieve its Mission Statement*
- *Membership of ASPAH will be desirable for health professionals, educators in performing arts and for performing artists*
- *Affiliation with ASPAH will be desirable for organisations in the Performing Arts*

## **Conclusion**

In a world where artists are expected to suffer for their art and the phrase "Break a leg" is a tradition of the industry, ASPAH is working to have performing artists, young or old, professional or amateur, expect and know what it is to work to the best of their ability, unhindered by illness or injury. We seek this not just for their sake but for the sake of Australia's cultural richness, and for the sake of all of us who have ever walked out of a theatre just reminded how good it is to be alive.