



WALT members...

I thank you for your attendance at this biennial general assembly and acknowledge your commitment and perseverance in supporting your organisation which remains the only truly international association dedicated solely to laser therapy.

The last two years have highlighted to me the challenges and opportunities for our association.

1) Our Strengths include our Specific Focus on LLLT; an increasing international membership profile with new societies in consideration by countries such as India. We have our own journal. Passionate, experienced and highly regarded executive council; and an increasing quality in the biennial congress program which we've witnessed over the last few days and exemplified by the invitation this year to have the conference proceedings included on Scopus and Compendex.

2) Opportunities: As an organisation we need to do some self-contemplation - we have busy people on ExCo with an inability at times to devote the time needed to both run the Association and to undertake the activities we aspire to, and so the ExCo is re-considering how we can do this.

We also need to gain some consensus on a range of matters directly related to laser therapy - these have been the subject of some expert discussion groups during this congress and so I'm hopeful that we'll have some interesting recommendations to consider subsequent to this meeting. As an organisation I believe that we're ready to take the next steps as we now have the mechanism, we have a better understanding of what we need to report and how - we have a platform on which to build our activities

3) For WALT To be the lead international federation of laser societies we need to think globally yet act locally; to coordinate global action to promote a consistent message regarding LLLT

to consumers, practitioners, funders and to government. To be the leader, we need to have people to lead hence I have spent some of my time in the last 2 years talking with like-minded organisations (specifically WFLD and NAALT) as to how we might work together to advance the field. These discussions will require nurturing in to the future as there is much to do and we cannot do it alone.

In terms of other activities:

- I met with some of the ExCo members at the conference of the WFLD European section in Brussels to discuss progress;
- I have spread the word about WALT in meetings with clinicians and scientists from Indonesia, China and India; and I welcome Dr Murthy's attendance here and his desire to start an Indian Laser society
- I undertook to commence a newsletter that was posted on the WALT website but this initiative has proven to be difficult to sustain due to a range of factors; and the ExCo earlier this week discussed how we can address these factors
- and lastly, and what proved to be a time-consuming task, the first stage of a significant review of the Articles of Association and Bylaws - I undertook this work as it is appropriate for all organisations to undertake governance reviews from time to time; to remain relevant and contemporary, to ensure that operational matters are functioning well, and to inform the initiatives and activities of an association. I have made suggestions for inclusion of modifications to the Articles and Bylaws that will provide more detail and clarification of procedures, roles and responsibilities but this job remains unfinished and will continue with the new Committee. As part of that review, the ExCo has decided upon a Mission Statement that will help to guide its strategies in to the foreseeable future.

In closing, I wish to thank the Executive Council members for their willingness to work on behalf of WALT and I wish the next President and office-bearers the very best as WALT looks forward toward what we might achieve.

Liisa Laakso

WALT President, 2012-2014