

General Managers Report

As 2026 draws to a close, I have been reflecting on another busy and rewarding year for NSW Stoma.

We also farewell our Chair, Allen Nash, who joined the Board in 2019 and has served as Chair since 2020. Following his move interstate, Allen is stepping down from the Board. It has been a pleasure working with him, and I sincerely thank him for the experience and knowledge he brought to the Board, as well as his valuable contribution to the governance of our association. He will be greatly missed.

In 2025–26, we welcomed 1,647 new members and dispatched 53,068 orders to 8,346 members. Our warehouse staff and volunteers, ably led by Carlos Soares, work hard to dispatch your orders as quickly as possible. Under the guidance of our Deputy Manager, Fiona Lau, our administration team processes orders, answers your questions and keeps our organisation running smoothly. A heartfelt thank you to all our staff and volunteers for their dedication, hard work and commitment.

We held 11 Zoom meetings for members this year. A huge thank you to Anne Marie Lyons and Carol Quast for the time and care they contribute to making these meetings such a success. In partnership with our sister organisation, Ostomy NSW (Stoma Support Services), we also held four education days attended by 370 ostomates, family members, carers, suppliers, stomal therapy nurses and others. The feedback is always very positive, and we welcome your suggestions for making these events even more valuable and enjoyable.

Those familiar with our premises will know that the lift has been out of service throughout the year. Its location at the rear of the warehouse has made access to our stomal therapy clinic difficult for those who rely on it. After seeking expert advice, we decided to relocate the clinic to the ground floor. This requires extensive renovations, but we hope to have the lift operating again by the end of this year, with the clinic and other works completed in the new year. We look forward to creating a more functional and ostomate-friendly space.

We continue to be deeply grateful for the generosity of our members. Your donations make our support services possible, including our stomal therapy clinic, Zoom meetings, education days, Stomal Therapy Nurse Scholarship and our journal. A heartfelt thank you to every one of you for your donations and support—we could not do it without you.

Thank you to everyone who uses our online ordering portal. The portal reduces the administrative workload for our staff, helps keep costs down and allows us to maintain a consistent level of customer service as our membership grows. More than 50% of orders are now placed online. We are continuing to improve the portal to provide a better experience for members and a smoother, more efficient process for our team. We work closely with other stoma associations across Australia, all of which use the same software, to make these improvements possible.

Our online community continues to grow, with more than 800 members in our private members group. We are also refreshing our website and have launched new pages offering travel advice and mental health resources. If you have suggestions for other useful topics, please contact us. We want to make these resources as accessible and helpful as possible.

This year, the Board decided not to increase membership or postage fees. While we recognise that this is not sustainable over the long term, we understand the financial pressures many members are facing in the current economic climate. Our costs continue to rise, largely because of international factors beyond our control, placing pressure on the entire supply chain—particularly transport costs and fuel surcharges. Suppliers are required to deliver products to associations without charging delivery fees, while product prices set by Services Australia have not increased for more than a decade. We are reimbursed for the products we supply and receive a service fee of 2.75%; however, this does not cover the full cost of providing them. Membership fees and the small margin on postage help us continue operating, while the generous contribution of our volunteers enables every dollar to go further. We will continue to keep fees as low as possible and appreciate your understanding when increases become necessary.

I would also like to thank our volunteer Board of Directors for their dedication and hard work. Their commitment to strong governance and a sound organisation helps ensure that we can continue serving our members well into the future.

I wish you and your loved ones a wonderful festive season and a very happy 2027.

Mary Egan

General Manager