ACHS has got off to a running start in 2016, with a number of high profile and big impact projects coming together.

First cab off the rank is the imminent launch of the ACHS Improvement Academy – planned for Thursday 3 March in Melbourne. This marks a significant change in direction for the educational offerings ACHS will provide in the future Briefly, we will be offering an internationally competitive level of education – with a range of national and international speakers that will make this one of the most highly recognised series of healthcare programs offered in Australia and overseas. There is more detail about the Improvement Academy on page 3.

Two other new initiatives which were conceived towards the end of 2015 are also starting to take shape and demonstrate ACHS’ flexible and innovative approach to meeting the changing needs of healthcare services.

Alternative approaches to surveys

ACHS has extensive experience in surveying health care organisations against accreditation standards. Our survey methodologies include all or a mix of the following: organisational self-assessment; desktop audits; gap analysis and, on-site assessments by peer-review surveyors which include semi-structured interviews, document analysis and direct observation. The provision of a summative report to organisations provides opportunities for continuous improvement.

The above assessments are based on advanced notice, however ACHS is currently working with the Australian healthcare industry on two alternative approaches to accreditation that have potential international application:

- **Short notice surveys**

  The intent of this approach is to support an objective of shifting organisational culture from a mindset of accreditation as ‘an event’, to accreditation as an ongoing process or an organisation being constantly ready. This model has been trialled and evaluated previously (Greenfield et al, 2011) and these surveys produced ratings congruent with the advanced notice survey approach.

  The model is to be further tested shortly with the co-operation of two large regional health services.

- **Dual accreditation surveys – implementing a ‘joined-up’ approach**

  Over the past decade there has been progressive implementation of stronger regulatory frameworks in the acute, aged care and primary health care sectors. These frameworks have included both mandated and legislated standards in the acute health and aged care sectors and have been important in driving opportunity for health services to implement a robust continuum of ‘compliance through to improvement’ within formal quality processes.

  However, the burden of accreditation has been of particular concern to health services that provide a mix of acute care and aged care services. These organisations are currently subject to accreditation against both the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care’s National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and the Aged Care Accreditation Standards as detailed in the Australian Quality of Care Principles 2014.

  ACHS is working collaboratively with the Aged Care Quality Agency to develop a single accreditation survey process for concurrent use against two sets of standards. We will shortly be piloting this approach in two rural health services in Victoria, which both deliver a mix of acute care services and aged care / residential care services.
ACHS elected a new President, Mr John Smith PSM at its November Annual General meeting.

As a representative of the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) on the ACHS Council, Mr Smith has been an ACHS Board member since 2005, and was the elected Treasurer from 2009 - 2012. He has held the position of Vice President since 2011 and has also served as a Board member of ACHS International (ACHSI), a division of ACHS, since 2008. Based in Victoria, Mr Smith is the Chief Executive Officer of the West Wimmera Health Service, a position he has held for 31 years. Mr Smith succeeds Adjunct Associate Professor Karen Linegar, who has held the position of ACHS President since 2011.

Dr Len Notaras AM was elected ACHS Vice President and is a government (Northern Territory Health) representative on the Council. He has been a Board member since 2002 and an ACHSI Board member since 2009.

Mr Stephen Walker, based in South Australia, retains the office of ACHS Treasurer, a post he has held since 2012. Mr Walker has been the Australian Private Hospitals Association's representative on the Council since 2006 and joined the Board in the same year. He is the Chief Executive Officer of St Andrew’s Hospital, Adelaide.

ACHS Chief Executive Officer Dr Christine Dennis congratulated the office bearers and the Directors on their appointments and re-appointments.

“Mr Smith has had a long association with ACHS. We warmly congratulate him on his new position of ACHS President and look forward to working with him as we continue the Council’s important task of strengthening safe, quality health care by continuously improving standards and education both nationally and internationally,” she said.
In 2016, ACHS will break significant ground in the delivery of education to its members, with the establishment of the new ACHS Improvement Academy.

To be launched in early March, the new Academy will complement ACHS’s existing accreditation activities by providing contemporary content and training approaches to meet the healthcare industry’s evolving needs.

“The move to contemporary education is a bold step which will ensure that we are leading on the healthcare education front in Australia,” said Improvement Academy Director Ms Bernie Harrison.

“The purpose of creating the Academy will be to build capability across the healthcare system in all facets of quality and safety, from Boards and Executives to frontline clinicians. Patient safety is increasingly moving to the prospective design and redesign of health care processes, using reliable systems thinking to prevent harm.

“In addition we will continue to provide our highly regarded educational resources to support our members’ preparation for surveys,” she said.

The Academy will offer practical training opportunities that will align with the strategies and missions of organisations. Programs will be tailored to the roles and needs of different staffing levels and will employ mixed modes of learning, including opportunities to participate in large scale collaborative improvement projects.

Courses will also be modular, allowing participants to create courses to best meet their varying roles and functions within organisations e.g. Directors of Patient Safety and Quality Improvement. Planning is underway to ensure that the educational content offered will be eligible for recognition through Continuous Professional Development programs, both nationally and internationally.

For further information or to register for one of the first two courses; Patient Safety Lead (PSL) Training Program or the Quality Improvement Lead (QIL) Training Program, visit the website at www.achs.org.au.

Special speakers at the launch to be held in Melbourne will include Dr Brent James, Director InterMountain Healthcare, USA (by telelink) and Dr John Wakefield, Deputy Director General, Queensland Health.

“An inspired level of health education for the Australian healthcare workforce”

ACHS Consultancy Team in Macau

The ACHS consultancy team, management and staff of the Conde de Sao Januario General Hospital, Macau photographed at the conclusion of the five day gap analysis held in mid-January, 2016. The gap analysis provided an excellent opportunity for the survey team and the organisation to share ideas on future improvements.
Following nearly two year's work of consultation with members, surveyors and other stakeholders via surveys, working groups, desktop audits and pilot surveys in member organisations, the revised edition of ACHS Evaluation and Quality Improvement Program - EQuIP6 - is ready for implementation.

The goal of the revision was to ensure that the new edition of ACHS’s core accreditation program reflects current best practice, addresses emerging issues in health, and is responsive to organisational and member needs.

EQuIP6 is scheduled to be implemented between 1 July, 2016 and 1 January, 2017.

"The Development Unit has again undertaken a thorough approach to reviewing ACHS’s central accreditation program, taking into consideration the feedback and advice from a range of stakeholders and ensuring that the new standards were satisfactorily piloted," said Ms Linda O’Connor, Executive Director of Customer Services and Development.

Existing EQuIP5 members have already been advised that there will be a transition period of six months, during which organisations scheduled for an accreditation event can elect to be assessed against either the EQuIP5 or the EQuIP6 standards.

From 1 January 2017, all EQuIP events (Self-Assessment, Periodic Review and Organisation-Wide Survey) must be undertaken against the EQuIP6 standards, irrespective of where a member is in their current four-year EQuIP cycle.

All EQuIP5 members have been sent information detailing the changes from EQuIP5 to EQuIP6, as well as a table listing the EQuIP6 criteria, and identifying the mandatory criteria.

A new Electronic Assessment Tool (EAT6) is being developed to complement the standards and members will receive more information about this later in the year.

If you have any further inquiries about the EQuIP6 standards, please contact the Development Unit on 02 9281 9955 or email spd@achs.org.au

Two KIMS Medical Centers receive ACHSI Accreditation

KIMS Medical Center in Doha and KIMS Oman Hospital in Muscat recently achieved ACHSI Accreditation. KIMS Oman Hospital is the first organisation in Oman to achieve this milestone.

The official certificate presentation ceremony for KIMS Oman Hospital (KOH) was held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel Muscat on 31st January, followed by the ceremony for KIMS Qatar Medical Center (KQMC), on 1st February 2016.

Dr Desmond Yen, ACHSI Executive Director attended the ceremonies with dignitaries including Dr Mazin Bin Jawad Al Khbouri, Director General of Private Healthcare Establishments in Oman, Engineer Saeed Bin Nasser Al Saadi from the Ministry of Manpower, Dr Mohammed Sahadulla, the Chairman of KIMS Group, Dr Sheriff Sahadulla, the Executive Director-Medical & Group Chief Medical Officer and Mr Jacob Thomas, Director Operations KIMS.

Commenting on ACHSI Accreditation, Dr Mohammed Sahadulla, Chairman of KIMS Group, said, “Since its inception, KIMS Oman Hospital has strived to serve the Omani community with the highest standards of medical care and health services. Today, with the joint efforts of our medical and administrative teams, we have proudly achieved this milestone.”

Guests attending the Qatar celebrations included Dr Samar Aboulsoud, A/CEO of the Supreme Council of Health, Mr R K Singh, Deputy Chief of Mission, Indian Embassy to Qatar and Dr Mohammed Sahadulla, Chairman of KIMS Group.

KIMS now employs more than 5,000 staff including over 750 doctors in 17 healthcare facilities throughout India, Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE, and has its flagship hospital in Trivandrum, India.
TIP 1: It is recommended to enter directly into ART or EAT as it reduces the need to double work and duplicate data entry efforts. It also keeps the content as ‘Plain text’ for ease of future formatting if required.

TIP 2: If you have to enter data into another application first (e.g. Microsoft Word) due to internet, location or personal preference reasons, please use the suggested keyboard shortcuts of Control + C to copy and Control + V to paste into ART or EAT.

TIP 3: Due to the numerous browsers currently available on the market, the pasted content may require further format editing. It is suggested that, to keep formatting to a minimum while still cleaning your data, all content is changed to ‘Plain text’. Do this as follows:
1. Use the ‘Select All’ button on the toolbar to select all of your data (including the background code which is determining its formatting),
2. Click on the rubber tool to remove the formatting code. After this, you will be able to format the text as you please.

TIP 4: Reliable internet connection is key for working effectively with ART / EAT. A physical wired connection to the computer used for ART / EAT has been proven to provide better speed and reliability compared to a wireless connection.

TIP 5: Take advantage of the ACHS ART / EAT support hotline +61 2 9281 9955 and email on art@achs.org.au or eat@achs.org.au - our expert staff will be happy to help you out. For more information please log in to the ACHS website and refer to the ‘Trouble shooting guide and FAQ for new and existing users’ section in the ‘Help Manuals’ located on the login screen and navigation pane.

Australia Day Honours

Congratulations to Dr Sajeev Koshy, ACHS surveyor, on being recognised in the 2016 Australia Day Honours List with the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). Dr Koshy has been acknowledged for his services to public dentistry in Victoria and is a very worthy recipient.

Dr Koshy is the Acting Head of Unit and Specialist Endodontist at The Royal Melbourne Dental Hospital, and assists ACHS as a specialist surveyor. We are delighted that his commitment to oral health has been recognised with one of Australia’s top honours.

One of ACHS’s former Presidents, Dr Barry Catchlove was named a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the recent Honours list, for his services to medical administration, to international business co-operation and to education.

Dr Catchlove was ACHS President from 1983-1985, and is quoted in the “ACHS 30 Years” publication on his time at the organisation “ACHS brought together the administrative people and the medical people, building a coalition which hadn’t existed in the past, achieving a great deal, really, from nothing, very rapidly.”

Congratulations to Dr Catchlove on this recognition.
ACHS said a heartfelt ‘thank you’ and a fond farewell to its longest serving employee, Margaret Jackson, on the significant occasion of her retirement on Friday, 22 January.

Surrounded by colleagues and her family who gathered to celebrate the milestone, Margaret’s achievements were recognised with speeches that captured some of her job history as her roles and positions evolved over the last three decades.

From her first role in 1985 working on the review of the ACHS Accreditation Guide (5th edition), Margaret spent her first decade working on the Guides through to the 13th edition.

Having enjoyed a variety of roles which reflected the maturing growth of ACHS and its EQuIP Standards, Margaret has always shown a strong willingness to take on responsibility and apply cool logic and sound commonsense to the many, sometimes complicated, projects undertaken. A stickler for good grammar and with a keen proofreading eye, Margaret has proven to be an invaluable resource for ACHS to deliver high quality publishable documents.

With her more recent roles working for Corporate Services, Margaret was also able to put her formidable corporate memory to good use, assisting greatly in the documentation for our own ISQua accreditation, worked on a major ongoing review of our own Policies and Procedures while also working on various research projects in collaboration with UNSW.

Jeffrey Yao, Business Manager, Business Support Services, put Margaret’s longevity in the workplace down to a good sense of humour as well as to putting her heart and soul into everything she did.

“As a result, her professional writing and editing work contained lots of insight, history and intelligence,” he said. “Her attention to detail was second to none.”

Former boss Dr Marjorie Pawsey wrote to give her personal thanks and said “The ability of Margaret to take on the challenge and make things happen and to do it so well is why I label her one of ACHS’s assets. Today I wish to publicly thank ‘MJ’ for being such an asset to me during my years at ACHS.”

ACHS CEO Dr Christine Dennis said Margaret had achieved what few employees would ever dream of achieving today.

“Margaret should be proud of her contributions to what was back then a fairly small organisation and is today a thriving international business that has a very strong place in the Australian healthcare landscape,” she said.

“Thank you Margaret for your many years of service and loyalty to ACHS and we wish you and your family all the best for a long and happy retirement.”

ACHS Involvement in DUQuA

ACHS has entered into a partnership with the Centre for Healthcare Resilience & Implementation Science (CHRIS), the Australian Institute of Health Innovation and Macquarie University, to undertake the DUQuA (Deepening our Understanding of Quality in Australia) research project, in order to assess relationships between quality management and patient outcomes in hospitals across Australia.

The study is a multi-level, cross-sectional study with data collection at hospital management, care pathway, professional and patient engagement levels in 70 hospitals across six Australian states and the two territories. Recently, a large multi-national study, DUQuE (Deepening our Understanding of Quality in Europe) explored this topic in seven European countries. This new study is replicating that work but has been modified for the Australian context.

The project will consist of visits to 70 hospitals, exploring three specific casemix outcomes (acute coronary syndrome, stroke and hip fracture), plus the management of these conditions through emergency departments and the quality management systems in place within each hospital. ACHS assisted in the development of the research tools and all surveyors involved in this project will be recognised as associate investigators.

A small team of experienced surveyors will be trained by ACHS in the skills required to undertake the data collection.

The training for this project will address data collection, report writing and consistency in interpreting evidence. It will commence 18 February 2016 with a second training day on 18 May. At the time of going to press, the dates for data collection in the collaborating hospitals have not been confirmed.