

The Council for Social Work Education in Aotearoa New Zealand: A brief history

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Despite tertiary social work education commencing in Aotearoa New Zealand by 1950, it was not until the mid-1990s that social work educators established a unifying body (the Council). The Council aimed to promote teaching and research in social work within Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, and enhance relationships and collaboration within the sector.

METHODS: A qualitative, critical realist research methodology has been utilised, analysing interviews with eight people who have served as president of the Council or chair of the field education sub-committee since the Council's inception. Data were augmented with Council archives, including minutes and reports.

FINDINGS: Themes of registration, relationships, resourcing and bicultural commitments were identified. These provide an overview of key issues that have impacted on social work education in Aotearoa over the past 25 years and record the rich stories of some of the key people involved.

CONCLUSIONS: Social work educators established a forum to unify their voices and enhance standards in social work education. Ongoing professionalisation and developing regulation of social workers became a Council focus. Future challenges for the Council include ensuring its viability and operation, responding to bicultural responsibilities and strengthening the voice of social work educators in a state-regulated environment.

KEYWORDS: Social work education; social worker registration; course accreditation; bicultural responsibilities

This article provides an introductory account of the Council for Social Work Education of Aotearoa New Zealand. Tertiary social work education in Aotearoa New Zealand formally commenced in 1949 and further detail regarding its history and context is available in Nash (1998) and others (for example, Dale et al., 2017; Staniforth, 2018). However, a unifying body for social work educators was not established until the 1990s

(although an Education Committee had existed within the social work professional association). This group was initially named the New Zealand Association of Social Work Education (NZASWE), later Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Work Education (ANZASWE), and then renamed as the Council for Social Work Education of Aotearoa New Zealand (CSWEANZ)/ Kaunihera mo ngā Mahi Mātauranga

Toko I te Ora (hereafter “Council” will be used when referring to the organisation). Information has been drawn from Council archival material including minutes, reports, memos, the recollections of the people who have acted as president of the body, as well as a longstanding field education sub-committee chair. More detailed histories of the Council, including its field education sub-committee, are yet to be written¹.

Method

While the three authors have varying aspects to their ontological positions, they would all describe themselves as holding subjectivist views on how knowledge is perceived (Bryman, 2012). As to the epistemological orientation for this research, the authors held a critical realist framework which posits that there are things that are *facts* and how they are interpreted can vary. This approach is compatible with historical research and oral histories (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Fyfe, 2003; Houston, 2001).

In 2016, the first and second authors (both were Council members at the time), agreed to undertake a project to develop an archive for CSWEANZ. That year, the first author was awarded a summer scholarship to archive historical material related to CSWEANZ/ANZASWE/NZASWE, as well as to interview the presidents of the Council. The third author was awarded a student scholarship and undertook six of the eight structured interviews for this project.

Ethics approval was obtained for this project from the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on November 1, 2016 (for [3] years, Reference Number 018270), which was then extended for a further three years, until November 1, 2022.

Each of the seven past chairpersons or presidents (and the one long-term chair of the field education sub-committee) was invited to participate in an audio-recorded interview and was also asked to give permission for the interview recording to be archived with CSWEANZ. Interviews were held between December 2016 and October 2020. The interviews were transcribed and participants were encouraged to make any amendments for publication. Seven of the eight participants agreed to have their audio recordings archived with CSWEANZ. Interview transcripts were then uploaded into NVivo and a thematic analysis in line with Braun and Clarke’s (2013) six-stage model was conducted. Twenty nodes were created; themes were developed which form the basis of this article. Table 1 lists the research participants and their roles.²

Context and history

There is some debate around when the NZASWE was first established. An anonymous and undated summary of ANZASWE (electronic file dated 2006) indicates that it was formed in 1993, “as a result of the expansion of tertiary institutions offering professional social work courses.”

Table 1. Participants

Participants	Roles	Years	Institution	Date of interview
Gavin Rennie	Council President	1995-2004	Unitec	31/1/2017
Carole Adamson	Council President	2005-2007	Massey	7/12/2016
Lynne Briggs	Council President	2008-2010	Canterbury	16/2/2016
Allyson Davys	Council President	2011-2013	WINTEC	25/1/2017
David McNabb	Council President	2014-2017	Unitec	9/2/2017
Sarah Fraser	Council President	2017-2019	NMIT	9/11/2020
Neil Ballantyne	Council President	2019-2020	Open Polytechnic	30/10/2020
Kathryn Hay	Field Education Subcommittee chair	2006-2016	Massey	1/2/2016

In another document, dated 2004, written by the president Gavin Rennie, NZASWE's beginning was recorded as being in 1995. Hunt's (2020) thesis documents suggest that it was established in 1996, while Mary Nash's (1998) well-documented history of social work education in Aotearoa offers another date. Using insider knowledge of the situation as convenor of the New Zealand Association of Social Workers (NZASW) Education and Training Standing Committee, Nash (1998) claims that:

...the Association of Schools of Social Work Education, [was] formed in 1997. This organisation was established as tertiary level educators became increasingly alarmed at the lack of accreditation systems for their courses of study and the consequent potential they saw for lowering standards of social work

education if the only nationally recognised qualifications were to be a National Certificate and a National Diploma registered with NZQA. (pp. 429-430)

Regardless of the actual starting date of the Council, it was not until 2004 that ANZASWE became an incorporated society with a constitution (Rennie, Chairperson's report December 2, 2004). An updated constitution was subsequently approved in February 2014 (Minutes Special General Meeting, 26 February 2014, Auckland) with further amendments made during that year and a final version signed by President McNabb and some executive members in November 2014.

The seven main objects of the organisation were formally documented in its constitution (see Table 2). Carole Adamson (president 2005-2007)

Table 2.

General Objects of ANZASWE, 2004 (Constitution and Rules of Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Work Education (Incorporated Society) 2004)	General Objects / Whāinga of CSWEANZ, 2014 (Constitution and Rules of Council for Social Work Education of Aotearoa New Zealand Incorporated (CWSEANZ). Ko ngā Ture Kāwanatanga me ngā Tikanga o te Kaunihera, e aro pū ana ki ngā Mahi Mātauranga Toko i te Ora, o te Koporeihana Aotearoa. June 10 th , 2014) (signed by President McNabb November 11 th , 2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote the scholarly pursuit of teaching and research in schools and departments of social work that offer education that leads to a recognised professional social work qualification. • To ensure that social work education is in accordance with the articles of Te Tiriti O Waitangi, with a commitment to promote an indigenous identity for social work education in Aotearoa New Zealand. • To promote and support social work, social services and community work education. • To maintain close relationships with the social work sector that includes Statutory, Community, Health, NGOs, and the Social Work Registration Board. • To collect and publish information about the functions and needs of tertiary social work, social services and community work courses. • To encourage and contribute to the scientific base of social work education by the publishing of scholarly journals, monographs and collections of papers. • To organise conferences on social work education as appropriate. (ANZASWE, Constitution at 2004) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To promote the scholarly pursuit of teaching, research and publication within social work programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand. b. To promote that social work education occurs is in accordance with the articles of Te Tiriti O Waitangi, with a commitment to promote an indigenous identity for social work education in Aotearoa New Zealand. c. To promote and support collaboration across social work, social services and community work education at local, national and global levels. d. To maintain close relationships within the social work sector, which includes professional bodies such as the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW), the Tangata Whenua Social Workers Association (TWSWA), the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) and statutory, community, health, education and non-government organisations. e. To organise or contribute to hui and conferences on social work education as appropriate. f. To uphold, promote and advocate the professional principles of social justice, social responsibility and human rights. g. To advocate for the needs and resourcing of the education sector and its students to government, regulatory and professional authorities and social work/services agencies.

We had good attendance and that reflects a commitment that people have to trying to be collaborative, trying to build a voice and by sitting around the table having discussions ... what's on top, what are the important issues, how are we going to deal with these things? It does produce that sense of solidarity ... we've got small providers who are quite isolated, not just geographically, and it's good for people to be able to hear the issues being voiced in perhaps slightly different ways by other people. To have a voice.

The rules and constitution of the Council outline that membership was available to each of the tertiary education providers offering social work education which leads to a recognised professional social work qualification. Each member (one per provider) has one vote at Council meetings and shall nominate a representative who usually is the head of school or convenor of the programme, or their representative, to attend meetings. The Council has an elected executive who serve two-year terms (that may be renewed for a further two years) that includes a president (the president chairs the meetings—sometimes people referred to themselves as the chair rather than president), vice-president, secretary, treasurer and four to seven members. All schools pay membership to the Council and, to date, these fees have included membership to the Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education (APASWE) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW). Minutes indicate that the Council has usually met three times a year with the AGM generally being held in November or December.

While the organisation was originally known as NZASWE, it changed its name to ANZASWE in line with similar changes that had occurred within the professional association, recognising the importance of its bicultural mandate. In June 2009, its name was changed to CSWEANZ. Lynne Briggs (president 2008-2010) that this change occurred principally due to the

confusion caused by the name being so close to that of the professional association of social workers, Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW), stating:

... I'd get mail addressed to the President of ANZASW that would come to me, they were writing to the wrong [body], so there was a lot of confusion for both the profession and the general public around both bodies.

A website was developed in 2018 (<http://cswanz.ac.nz/>) which holds the organisation's information in a secure, but accessible, site for the continually rotating membership.

Findings and discussion

The major themes from the interviews revolved around *registration, relationships, resourcing, and bicultural commitments*. Within each of these major themes there are also sub-themes.

Registration

The issue of registration of social workers, including its consequences for social work education, was the most consistent topic or theme that the Council has considered at its meetings. When NZASWE began, the profession and other social work stakeholders had actively begun the process of moving towards a registration system (Hunt, 2016, 2017, 2020) and much of NZASWE's time and energy were devoted towards this development. Rennie, the inaugural president, recalls some of the early discussions about registration:

When registration [was first discussed] there was a general feeling that most people liked the idea of registration, but ... there was quite a strong feeling amongst a number of people, that registration [should be] in the hands of a body like ANZASW rather than setting up a new body.

Kieran O'Donoghue (Waikato Institute of Technology member at that time) coordinated a submission to the Social Services Select Committee on the Social Workers Registration Bill on behalf of NZASWE. Under General/Summary, the submission stated that the Council was in favour of statutory registration, but argued it needed to also include reference to policy which reduced inequality and to organisational cultures which supported frontline social workers. The submission also stated:

Clearly, for this Bill to be effective in delivering what it espouses it must focus wider than purely the person of the social worker and take cognizance of the social environment in which social work occurs. A focus purely on the social worker without addressing the resourcing of social work and the education, training and supervision of social workers is nothing short of social policing. (O'Donoghue, 2001, p. 2)

Rennie also recalled views of NZASWE regarding the type of legislation that should be brought in:

Child, Youth and Family were fairly slow at getting on the [band] wagon, in terms of registration, because they had so many unregistered social workers, and we saw the need for an incremental thing to come in, not an immediate thing. But also, we held a position which said if there was going to be registration it should be compulsory to be really effective.

Following the enactment of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003, ANZASWE continued to be preoccupied with the demands on social work education of the new legislation:

We regularly met with the [SWRB], and there were pluses and minuses in doing that because it became a major part of why we were meeting, and it [dominated] what we were doing. (Rennie)

Feedback on the Social Workers Registration Act

Following the passing of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003, the newly appointed Crown Entity, the SWRB, established an Education Advisory Group (EAG) in 2004. The EAG was chaired by Buster Curson, deputy chair of the SWRB. Minutes from ANZASWE meetings indicate that there were several Council members who sat on the EAG that met regularly with the SWRB Standards and Practice Committee of SWRB through 2004–2005. Members of ANZASWE were also members of the EAG (ANZASWE minutes December 7 2005).

The Council continued to be actively involved in the process of consultation and feedback about registration issues. David McNabb (president 2014–2017) recalled that:

... we did give feedback regarding the Social Workers Registration Act and there's been a fair amount of change and development of some key policies, [for example] going from three to four years [bachelor degrees]. Some of the other changes included [requirements for] qualifications for staff, some of the field work standards and how tight they should be.

In 2017, as mandatory registration was being considered, the Select Committee on Social Workers Registration Legislation Bill provided a consultation document which suggested that employers would have the power to determine what social work was, and who would be defined as a social worker. Sarah Fraser (president 2017–2019) commented that "the way the Bill was framed raised a serious concern that organisations and employers could dodge the added cost of employing registered social workers by simply changing job titles". Many social work stakeholders were concerned about these issues, including education. Fraser recalls

that responding to this proposal and others:

... [was] the focus of the Council's work for the early part of the year [2017]. A number of Council members including Neil Ballantyne, Carole Adamson and Kieran O'Donoghue worked extensively alongside ANZASW and other bodies to offer an alternative to the [Select] Committee's recommendations. A submission was then made from the Council to Minister Sepuloni in May to support the proposed amendments. This effort had a huge impact on the way the Act finally came through, much to the relief of educators and others in the profession.

State control of education accreditation

While the Council was generally supportive of registration, it came with some loss of autonomy for the education sector. Accreditation for social work programmes had sat with social work bodies, including the New Zealand Social Work Training Council (established 1973), later replaced by the New Zealand Council for Education and Training, then Te Kai Awhina Ahumahi Industry Training Organisation in the Social Services. ANZASW established a professional accreditation process for social work programmes (Hunt, 2020; Hunt et al., 2019; Nash, 1998). The process of accreditation was transferred to SWRB after the 2003 Act came into being. Adamson recalled this transition:

It was a time of a certain amount of resistance of the responsibility ... for recognition of social work programmes to be taken away from ANZASW and moved to the crown entity of the SWRB, because that was in my perspective, changing the Treaty relationship. It was changing the responsibility for standards within the social work profession, and within social work education, taking it away from the profession and putting it with the state.

The minimum qualification for registration

The SWRB brought in accreditation standards for social work programmes over time. Hunt et al. (2019) outlined how the qualification criteria for social worker registration in Aotearoa New Zealand were initially established with a historical two-year Diploma in Social Work recognised alongside a new benchmark of a three-year bachelor degree. The education sector mainly accepted this decision. However, of more contention was the SWRB's subsequent requirement that all undergraduate social work programmes should be four years long. While the universities had a tradition of four-year programmes, the polytechnics and the wānanga did not. This was a divisive issue within the Council. Some members were against this standardisation, arguing that the extra year required would disadvantage some groups:

I think the move to a four-year degree has got serious social implications. I think it's likely to whiten programmes, exclude Māori and Polynesian [students] because it's another year and just changes the social nature of the students who do the course ... there's some dangers of elitism coming in ... I think the pluses of having a three-year and a four-year was that people had choices. (Rennie)

McNabb echoed some of Rennie's concerns in that the move from three to four-year programme requirements had created:

[A] split basically between university and non-university ... the three-year programmes not seeing the argument as to why they should change to four-year. And [negative] impact on students and equity issues, cost of it etc., and that we should put more emphasis on post qualifying resourcing people in employment, [such as] assisted first year of employment [and] internships.

Allyson Davys (president 2011-2013) provided an alternate perspective:

I did not think it was good for social work education to have two standards, to have polytechnics three years and universities four years ... immediately, you've got a two-tiered system. If you're going to say any degree is similar to another one, we have to have similarity, but not everybody agreed with that. And so that did become quite a divisive issue [which] did again emphasise the [group] divide.

Davys added that, having observed that the SWRB had granted accreditation to Bethlehem Tertiary Institute and Open Polytechnic based on them having four-year degrees, there was little point in opposing the move to four-year programmes as "it had already been decided". Having reached this point, CSWEANZ supported the polytechnics in this transition:

Through CSWEANZ we ran two or three workshops in Hamilton where we invited all of the Polytechnics ... to discuss what it would look like, how we could actually be collaborative, how we could look at the interface between the programmes so that students could actually move more easily from programme to programme ... we started to say "OK as a group what are our strengths and how can we be collaborative and supportive of one another?" (Davys)

Requirements for educators

The SWRB signalled that, by June 2017, all people teaching in social work theory or skills papers needed to be registered and have a minimum of a master's degree. There were some social work educators who were philosophically opposed or not comfortable with the notion of becoming registered. Rennie, for example, stated that:

[W]e ... didn't feel that we were doing very much social work and therefore we were going to resist being registered as social workers.... But a decree came [from the SWRB] that we just had to be

registered and so those of us who were social workers did [do that].

Davys recalled that these requirements often made it difficult to recruit and fill social work teaching vacancies. For Fraser, the issue was at the forefront of her time as president of CSWEANZ. She described:

[There] was a deadline set by the SWRB for all social work academic staff members to be registered and have completed their master's degrees or submitted their PhDs by the end of June 2017. While people had known that this expectation around qualifications existed, it was considered an aspiration to work toward, rather than a requirement with a fixed date.... The notification of the deadline came as a shock to a number of programmes. It had significant ramifications because it meant that anyone who was teaching social work theory or practice papers (including fieldwork coordination), but did not have a master's or PhD, would be unable to teach or coordinate those courses. This was a huge concern for many programmes trying to grow their academic workforce with staff enrolled on PhDs and master's, but not in a position to complete in the designated timeframe.

Shifting relationships over time

The work of the Council required constant liaison with several key sectors. It was evident from the interviews with all participants that negotiating and strengthening relationships was one of the important roles of the president.

With key stakeholders

The Council liaised with a number of key stakeholders including ANZASW, SWRB, Oranga Tamariki, Industry Training Organisations and the health sector. Briggs described her time as president between 2007 to 2010 as one

where conflict existed between many stakeholders:

What I remember most was sorting things out with the SWRB, and getting on with them, and making good partnership and relationships. And being very aware that ANZASW and their executive at the time were...in a lot of conflict with the SWRB. My aim as president was to not be in conflict with [SWRB] and to work with them as much [possible] and also to try and establish a better relationship with ANZASW again, because we were all members of ANZASW, it was a very confusing, very conflicting time.

Davys took over as president from Briggs and continued to work on the relationships with SWRB and ANZASW. She described that, during her two-year tenure:

We established relationships with ANZASW and had regular meetings with the SWRB. About the time that I became president we actually started to meet in [SWRB] offices and they were very hospitable [and] an easier relationship built up there.

Davys also discussed the importance of having the education sector represented on the SWRB. She described that the previous president had been a representative on the SWRB and when she vacated that position there was no assurance that education would continue to be represented, "and so [we made] representation both to the Minister and to the SWRB about the importance of the education sector having a voice on the SWRB".

The relationship with SWRB continued to be of prime importance. During McNabb's tenure, Jan Duke from the SWRB routinely attended CSWEANZ meetings:

Every meeting [we] meet with the SWRB officials and again we try and collaborate. I think we do fairly well most of the time. The tension is that they're our regulator

as well, so in the end they come in and tell you what they demand to keep your recognition as a programme.... Sometimes different programmes are not happy with some aspect of the SWRB, or how the recognition of a programme's gone, or how some policy's been interpreted. So again, we try and address that, either in the Council, or individually. (McNabb)

McNabb also reflected that the Council welcomed the establishment of the Tangata Whenua Social Workers Association (TWSWA) as another important relationship to develop.

The Council consistently sent representatives to the Social Work "Alliance" Group which had been established to network key stakeholders in the professional social work space. Fraser describes this:

Throughout 2017–2018 CSWEANZ also continued its presence on the "Alliance". This had begun as a network of "peak" social work bodies made up of representatives from CSWEANZ, ANZASW, TWSWA, SWRB, and the Social Services ITO. Over time, membership broadened to include the [Public Services Association] PSA and many of the bigger social work employers including [Oranga Tamariki] OT, Health, Non-government Organisations [NGOs], etc.

Another important relationship that has evolved is that of the Council and the statutory child welfare organisation. ANZASWE archives hold a "Memorandum of Collaboration" signed by Rennie and Paula Tyler of Child Youth and Family Services (CYFS)³ in February of 2005. Other records include minutes from meetings between the two organisations. Davys also recalled:

... we instigated regular meetings with the then new chief social worker ... there was a process [for that] to be a regular meeting, it didn't necessarily happen ...

it was about negotiating relationships; [about] establishing the credibility of social work education with those other broader committees.

This relationship has fluctuated and has, at times, seen the sides being dichotomised as the needs of the employers and the importance of academic freedom and critical thinking. Ballantyne described some of these ongoing tensions:

It's important for our students and for academic staff to take a critical stance towards employing organisations. Partly because the State is a problem for the people we work for, our service users, our clients. And some of the actions of the State and some [State] social policies need to be critically reviewed. And the agencies of the State, including organisations like Oranga Tamariki, as we've seen recently, can be part of the problem. So, the idea that we all have to be a partnership is one thing, but [being] subordinate to the views of employers needs to be resisted.

At various points over the years, members of the Council have met with social work leaders of District Health Boards. Adamson attended the March 2006 annual meeting of the District Health Board (DHB) Social Work Leaders Council and following this it was proposed that the Council appoint a liaison to attend the annual DHB leaders meeting (Rennie, correspondence April 3rd, 2006 to Michelle Derrett, Working Party Co-ordinator DHB Social Work Leaders Group).

The relationship between CSWEANZ and the SWRB continues to evolve. Ballantyne (president 2019–2020) described some of the current and future issues: “they're in the middle of looking again at programme recognition standards and this new workforce planning document, and they've got a role now in ... workforce planning” (see for example, <https://swrb.govt.nz/workforce-survey/>).

Another issue being considered is the move by the SWRB towards charging increased fees to programmes for regulatory processes. Ballantyne commented:

[T]here was not much we seem to be able to do, apart from concede. So, one of the conversations we [the Council] were having today is “Is that the best we can do? What can we do to stand together? How can we hold the SWRB to account as users of their services as much as people are subject to their conditions?”

At the time of publication, the SWRB is currently engaged in reviewing its Education Programme Recognition Standards and CSWEANZ should have a role to play in that process.

Internal relationships

Rennie believed that, during his tenure, relationships between the polytechnic and university schools within the Council were good. While there may have been different foci for each of them:

After a while the universities saw themselves as taking a different approach to some of what was going on, you know their programmes were probably more research based [and] I always saw the differences between the programmes as opportunities.

Adamson described the interesting relationships that exist(ed) within members of the Council, who were often competing for the same share of student enrolment:

We were all independent and in many ways we're competitors but we were trying to work collaboratively on behalf of social work education, on behalf of social work, and therefore the communities, and the students. And so, there's always that push-me pull-you tension between firstly trying to collaborate, which means that we have to

agree on things, we have to have robust debate, [and] some sense of direction.

This was reiterated by Fraser, who remembered that “when I first started attending the CSWEANZ meetings ... back in about 2006, there was quite a split at times, with some distrust and frustrations between the different institutions”. Similarly, Davys recalled:

[T]here was always a tension between the universities and the polytechnics and the wānanga. Sometimes that tension was [overt] and often it was exacerbated, because there was a time when in fact the universities would go and talk as a group, and then the polytechnics would go and talk as a group and there was a certain sort of divide there.

The requirement for a four-year BSW, mentioned previously, also placed stress on Council relationships. By the time that McNabb took office in 2014, all programmes were required by the SWRB to have four-year undergraduate degrees. McNabb considered that tension:

I think that’s faded hugely. Maybe it’s a combination of some of the mix of who is around the table, you’ve had some people who’ve been staff in both institutions people like Wheturangi [Walsh-Tapiata] who were a long time at Massey [University] and [then] with the Wānanga.... I think has probably just helped even out the sense of “look we’re all educating together and we’re on this track”.

Fraser related how, during her tenure, there were some contentious issues that had brought the Council together (including the requirement for staff to have at least a master’s qualification and concerns around employers being able to identify who was “doing social work” in the proposed mandatory registration bill).

We were all concerned about the same things which gave us a common focus

and drive. I think because it was all so relevant and concerning it meant that we had really good representation at every Council meeting—people did make the effort to get there and to have their say, so that was really good.

The unification of the Council continued with Ballantyne noting that the social work programmes appear to be working better together with common challenges from the regulator outweighing competition between educators:

One of the things about the new political order has been a move away from competitiveness between organisations that are still there. I think the managers of these organisations still see themselves in competition ... but it has seemed less intense and so I found there to be a greater willingness ... to collaborate. I think that would be just the very, very beginning stages of that and I think we can do a lot more to work together.

Bicultural commitments

Reflecting the bicultural imperatives identified within the broader social work profession, the General object of the 2004 and 2014 versions of the Constitution indicate that the Council’s mandate was:

To ensure that social work education is in accordance with the articles of Te Tiriti O Waitangi, with a commitment to promote an indigenous identity for social work education in Aotearoa-New Zealand. (ANZASWE, 2004, 3(point ii), p. 1; CSWEANZ, 2014, 3(b) p. 1)

How this was demonstrated within the Council was an issue for ongoing discussions.

The Council

Despite the constitutional mandate, there was initially no requirement for Tangata

Whenua representation on the Council executive. This was amended by 2014, with the introduction of a statement on Māori representation in the current constitution:

It is desirable, under the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi for at least one member of the Executive to be Tangata Whenua. If no member of the Executive is Tangata Whenua, then the Executive will ensure that consultation with a Māori member and/or representative of CSWEANZ shall occur. (CSWEANZ, 2014, 7(a), p. 3)

There is communication from ANZASWE (December, 2002) to Rongo Wetere and Rory Truell (then Te Wānanga o Aotearoa chief executive and director of the School of Applied Social Sciences, respectively), inviting them to meet with Rennie to discuss the Wānanga's membership on the Council. Records from 2004 indicate that Te Wānanga o Aotearoa was by then represented on the Council. Te Wānanga o Raukawa also came onto the Council at a later date. Having these wānanga on Council was beneficial to the Council as a whole, but Tangata Whenua members likely experienced the pressure of having to "educate" other institutions and "hold the line" in terms of the Council's bicultural and treaty commitments (author one and two's observations).

The position of president has seldom been contested at the AGM, and, on more than one occasion, the sitting president has remained in the role for more than one term as there have been no other people indicating an interest in this role. While there is aspiration for having Tangata Whenua in the president role, it is author one and two's observation that Tangata Whenua Council members are often overburdened by multiple roles and expectations.

Fraser indicated an ongoing concern around Māori representation on Council:

When I first started attending, we were nearly all Pākehā New Zealanders, and predominantly women. While it is a

concern that Māori social work educators remain under-represented, we are much more diverse culturally now I think, which has got to be good.

Staffing and curriculum

Council meetings have often focused on staffing issues for education providers, including appropriate cultural representation. Rennie indicated that it had been difficult for many of the institutions represented on the Council to recruit Māori staff:

Some of us struggled to find suitable Māori staff but of course the, under the Treaty, it wasn't just a question of having Māori staff it was also about Pākehā staff and Pākehā students being aware of the Treaty.

This was reinforced by McNabb:

I used to think [the staffing difficulty] was just in the non-university area but I've heard from some universities that they too are struggling, needing to have PhD qualified staff to be in the university sector but covering all these other bases too; social work registered, needing a practice base, being research active, having teaching ability, teaching competence and "oh by the way having finished your PhD and being onto your next project" is a huge one. And then when you say "oh we want Māori staff or staff who've got competence to teach Māori models of practice, bring that perspective and have that knowledge" is huge, much less Pasifika, much less some of the other refugee migrant background communities that people can represent.

McNabb described how people like Wheturangi Walsh Tapiata and Shirley Ikkala bridged various institutions and provided challenges regarding the social work education sector and the ability to train social workers to work competently with Māori. McNabb considered the role that

such people played on CSWEANZ in the Wānanga's kaupapa approach and:

How they might be sharing that ... with non-wānanga programmes, which is the majority of programmes around the country. Who arguably could all improve how we educate, how we run our programmes for graduates to be better equipped to work with Māori and [stronger] analysis around our Treaty commitment and bicultural commitment. I think that's a huge opportunity and I see the Council as a vehicle to help make that happen.

Decolonising of social work education

There remains much to do around decolonising social work practice and education in Aotearoa (McNabb, 2019), and the Council understands they should play an active role in this process. Ballantyne echoes Adamson's earlier statement on solidarity:

How does the Council connect with those bicultural processes in a more routine way than we have been doing? In decolonising the curriculum and doing that in a positive productive way in partnership with our colleagues in the wānanga. There are some conversations in the Council about that now ... we could lead the way ... we use the words all the time, but it's actually quite painstaking work to do this properly. There is no point in people reinventing the wheel at every institution, each time competing with each other, about which one of us does it best. The only way to do it is collectively and in partnership with our wānanga colleagues.

Resource issues

Resourcing has been an ongoing issue for the Council, both in terms of its own operation, and in its advocacy for social work education.

Internal

The Council has never been funded other than through membership fees paid by the institutions belonging to it. Rennie, who was in term for nine years, describes that his involvement as chair and some of the administrative functions were essentially subsidised by his employer:

I [stayed] for so long because I was lucky enough to have a PA [personal assistant] for a lot of that time so [as Head of School for Unitec], so it meant that the paper kept flowing as a result of that, because it's very easy to take on these things, but if you haven't got some help it can become just another job really.

All roles within the Council are done on a voluntary basis. Adamson described this in relation to the Australian social work educators' counterpart:

We do any of the roles with what is now CSWEANZ on top of our day jobs.... In comparison for example, the social work educators in Australia have a small amount of admin support that they pay for out of their membership. It's currently four hours a week or [more] and it's going up, but that runs a website [and they've] got a journal, we don't. We're a lot smaller, more amateurish in that sense.

External

Review of social work minutes and correspondence indicate that, since its inception, the Council has been advocating for changes to social work education funding in Aotearoa New Zealand. Funding of tertiary programmes is calculated according to different rates. While other professional programmes such as nursing, teaching and medicine are funded at rates that recognise the increased costs associated with practicum, social work education is funded at the same rate as other social sciences. For 2022, social work is \$6,589, teaching is

\$10,475, and engineering and health sciences is \$12,118 per EFT (Tertiary Education Commission [TEC], 2022). While this low rate of funding impacts on all aspects of social work education, it is most keenly felt in relation to being able to locate and sustain quality placements for students. Kathryn Hay, field education sub-committee long-term chair, discussed the impact of low funding rates:

What it means is that social work education is not funded to support students on placement, and that means that we can't pay agencies, that we have really limited money to be able to go and visit students as many times as we might want to. To an extent that might also limit the resourcing of staff inside the tertiary provider as well, so if we had different funding ... then we could do a lot more to strengthen field education.

International association

There has always been a strong relationship between the Council and its international parent bodies. The Council has maintained membership in the regional and international educators' associations, and these memberships are the major costs associated with the organisation. Having all of the social work schools in Aotearoa New Zealand be members of CSWEANZ and be paid members of IASSW ensured each school paid a reduced rate for bulk membership and that there was a spot on the Board of IASSW for Aotearoa. Various Council members have represented Aotearoa on IASSW and other international bodies.

Rennie was a board member of IASSW from 1997 to 2010 and served as treasurer of that organisation from 2004 to 2010. Mark Henrickson (CSWEANZ member 2009–2014) was on the IASSW Board from 2012–2018 serving in a number of roles including Asia Pacific representative (2010–2014), NZ representative (2012–2014), and treasurer (2014–2018). He represented the Asia Pacific region of IASSW on the Joint Committee

on the Definition of Social Work as well as the revision of Global SW Statement of Ethical Principles (2014–2018). McNabb was CSWEANZ representative on IASSW from 2015 and remains in post to date. Barbara Staniforth coordinated the Asia Pacific Amplification of the Global Definition of Social work for APASWE, alongside Miriama Scott, for the International Federation of Social Workers Asia-Pacific (IFAP) from 2014 to 2016. Tracie Mafile'o holds an ongoing role as an APASWE Board member (since 2017). CSWEANZ also supported the establishment of the Social Work Resource Centre of Oceania under the auspices of IASSW to build Pacific capacity for social work education (Mafile'o, 2019), for which Mafile'o is coordinator.

Recently there has been concern expressed about the cost of membership in the IASSW and APASWE. Ballantyne described some of the recent questions that have been raised as to how Council funds are spent:

... and it [being a member of IASSW] is something that's good to do but ... it was consuming more than two thirds of our budget ... and we were acting as collection agents for the International Association. And was that really what we should be doing and did it take away from ... organising conferences and events for us here in Aotearoa, or developing ideas and position papers and so on?

Fraser maintained:

Throughout the two years I was president there was a strong commitment across Council for all our schools to be members of the International Association so that we could have a seat on the executive. I know that there is now some debate about this, given the cost of it. To me it was unbelievably valuable for us as a profession in small, somewhat isolated, country to have a strong voice on the international stage.

CSWEANZ has also maintained a relationship with different Australian bodies. Briggs described that when she was president of the Council that she sat as the Aotearoa representative on the Australian Council for Heads of School. After Briggs became part of the Australian Heads of School group, the relationship was strengthened, “we actually changed the name to [Australia New Zealand Association of Social Work Educators] which includes a New Zealand representative and so there’s a bit more binding of the two Councils”.

Another relationship has existed between CSWEANZ members and Australian and New Zealand Social Work and Welfare Education and Research (ANZSWWER)⁴ which is an independent commentator on social work and welfare education with membership from social work and welfare educators, field supervisors, practitioners and students in Australia and New Zealand. Among other things, ANZSWWER produces a peer-reviewed journal, *Advances in Social Work and Welfare Education*, twice a year. Council members, Liz Beddoe, and then Adamson, have been editors of this journal. This role provided membership on the Executive on the Board of ANZSWWER.

Changes

It appears likely that there are changes in the wind regarding CSWEANZ. As many organisations experienced during the Covid-19 crisis, the ways that the Council has communicated have shifted. Under Ballantyne’s presidency, there was an increased use of technology, including establishment of the CSWEANZ website, and the use of Loomio to communicate. While CSWEANZ usually met three times a year, this was not possible during the pandemic. Ballantyne described the use of the new platform:

We found a way of continuing our business, we’ve moved on to an ... asynchronous discussion called Loomio. And we’ve had most of the business

there and extending the meeting over two weeks of people dropping in and out and then concluded up with a Zoom meeting just to wash up and see if there’s anything left ... and people were quite pleased that they got on board with it ... I acknowledge it doesn’t replace ... kanohi ki te kanohi [face-to-face] meetings, that’s always important, but as a supplement to it.

There are some significant changes occurring in the education sector, with the polytechnics coming under the umbrella of a parent organisation—Te Pukenga/New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST)—with a convergence of social work programmes slated for 2023. This will shift social work education, and also the composition of CSWEANZ, requiring flexibility, which Ballantyne considered:

[T]here’s a growing recognition that we ... need to have a good long hard look at ourselves and decide on what our mission is, how we want to shape ourselves for the future...

Conclusion

This article has provided an overview of some of the key recollections from each Council president since its commencement in the 1990s. Put together and set within the contexts of time and place, the interviews have provided a rich repository of some of the key issues that have impacted upon social work education in the past 25 years. Registration, relationships, resources, and responding to bicultural mandates tell some of the story of social work in this country.

While the Council was initially concerned with early course accreditation, it was clear, from the interviews and archives, that responding to the proposals and requirements of social work registration have preoccupied the Council. With mandatory registration now achieved, there remain further policy / scope of practice issues to address.

Relationships within the Council have shifted over time with universities, polytechnics, wānanga and PTEs at the same table and often competing for the same students. With the polytechnic programmes soon to come under the same provider, it will be interesting to see how relationships and power shift within the Council. Relationships with external bodies such as the child welfare organisation, health boards, or the SWRB have been a focus, and all presidents spoke about the importance of these.

The Council has relied strictly on the membership fees paid by the various Council members, with no other funding sources. This has likely impacted upon the scope of the Council to engage in some of its objectives, such as encouraging research or hosting conferences. The lack of funding for any administration of the Council is of concern. The archiving of documents about the Council has only occurred as a result of this research project and information is not currently stored in an accessible and searchable data base. With staff churn and increased stress upon the tertiary social work programmes due to Covid-19 and other factors, there has been inconsistent membership of the Council and it has been difficult to fill executive positions, including that of secretary. This is likely to lead to further gaps in the historical record occurring.

While strong links and relationships have existed with international bodies, this is in question now as the Council grapples with the high cost of membership in these associated bodies. The other key resourcing issue that the Council has attempted to change is increasing the funding per EFT for social work education, decided upon by TEC. To date they have had no success, but this remains an important goal.

Finally, one of the most important areas for consideration is how social work education and the Council respond to the imperatives of biculturalism and decolonisation as mandated by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The Council has provided an important forum for social work educators to come together and attend to the various objectives outlined in its constitutions. Social work education continues to evolve and it will be interesting to see how the Council responds to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Notes

- 1 While the leader of the field education sub-committee from 2006–2016, Kath Hay, was initially interviewed for this article, material from that interview will be mainly presented in a subsequent article on the Council's field education sub-committee.
- 2 Research interviews were completed in 2020 and the current president is Dominic Chilvers who was not interviewed.
- 3 The statutory child protection and welfare services in Aotearoa New Zealand have undergone a number of reviews, ministerial reshuffles, rebrandings, and name changes over the years including: The Child Welfare Division of the Department of Education (1925–1972); Social Security Department (1939–1972); Department of Social Welfare (DSW) (1972–1992); Children and Young Persons Service (CYPs) (1992–1999); Child Youth and Family Services (CYFS) (1999–2006); Child Youth and Family (CYF) (2006–2017); Ministry for Vulnerable Children (Oranga Tamariki (April 2017–October 2017); Oranga Tamariki (OT) Ministry for Children (October 2017–present).
- 4 ANZSWWER was previously known as the Australian Association for Social Work and Welfare Education (AASWWE).

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