



The Australian Pain Society

2015  
*Distinguished  
Member  
Award*

Awarded for services to the promotion,  
treatment and science of pain management  
and lifelong contribution to the  
Australian Pain Society.

Maree has quietly been a powerful supporter of the Scientific Programs of the Australian Pain Society (APS), particularly to ensure scientists remain engaged and supported in contributing to the meetings, and to create links between scientists and clinicians.

She delivered the inaugural Tess Cramond Lecture in 2007 and has been the driving force in developing and maintaining the APS PhD scholarship program, both the (APRA) Australian Pain Relief Association scholarship and the industry sponsored scholarships. Over the years she has negotiated changes in industry management and changes to their pain product portfolios, ensuring continued funding of the three scholarships. She has steered the PhD scholar selection committee and has personally supported all scholars. Sometimes problems have arisen with scholars' supervision and other challenges in their work, however her experience and commitment to successful PhD candidature has ensured a high rate of successful completion. Although no longer Chair of the PhD Scholarship Committee, Maree maintains strong links with scholars and is currently the President of APRA. Her contribution in time and effort to our society has been considered, generous & greatly admired.



## Maree Smith

B Pharm (Hons), PhD

Maree's other meritorious performance is in her work as a scientist and leader at the University of Queensland (UQ). She joined the School of Pharmacy as a lecturer in 1989 and was successively promoted through academic ranks to professor in 2004.

More recently she has been associated with industry bodies, currently serving as Executive Director, CIPDD / TetraQ, Faculty of Medicine

and Biomedical Sciences (80%) and Head of the Pain Research Group, School of Pharmacy, Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences (20%).

Maree undertook a PhD and early postdoctoral training in clinical pharmacology with specialist expertise in bioanalytical method development, bioanalysis of human plasma samples, drug metabolism and clinical pharmacokinetics. Her second postdoc was in the field of pain management and pain pharmacology. During the years 1990-2005, Maree Smith taught in the Drug Discovery stream of the undergraduate pharmacy program and she was instrumental in developing innovative courses for the final year of the undergraduate pharmacy curriculum. More recently, she was instrumental in the development of a course for the Master of Biotechnology program at UQ entitled *Quality Systems in Biotechnology*, delivered successfully for the 5th time in 2014.

Maree has successfully advised / co-advised to completion 24 PhD students, 2 Research Masters students and 40 Honours students. She also served for 14 years as an external evaluator for the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

Maree is a leading researcher in discovery translation - specifically, she is inventor on patented novel analgesics technologies licensed to three UQ spin-out companies (QrxPharma, Spinifex Pharmaceuticals, QUE Oncology) for commercialisation. She also has highly specialised expertise in the pain field - with her research team she developed a portfolio of 15 innovative rodent pain models that more closely mimic individual human pain conditions, and that are unique in Australia and rare internationally. These models combined with the CIPDD / TetraQ's internationally recognised quality credentials (OECD GLP and ISO17025 from the National Association of Testing Authorities) means that these capabilities are unique in Australia and rare outside large pharmaceutical companies internationally.

Biospectrum Asia published an excellent article about Maree in which she gives further insights into her distinguished career. It is viewable at [www.biospectrumasia.com](http://www.biospectrumasia.com)

Maree grew up in Brisbane, Queensland, was the eldest of nine children and played netball at school. In her career in pharmacology research and pain research she acknowledges mentors Professor Eadie and Professor Tess Cramond, whilst carefully balancing a supportive family.

She has successfully transitioned from academia to working with industry in partnership for drug development.

In the Biospectrum Asia article Maree speaks of ongoing challenges. The first of these is being part of a small minority of female university professors in Australia - a gender imbalance she says that has not improved in twenty years. Professor Smith believes that affirmative action will be required for at least another decade to see more women in such roles.

Another challenge is securing investment for undertaking the 'killer experiments', that are necessary in her drug development work while safeguarding her intellectual property and achieving the financial security to complete such development.

We commend Professor Maree Smith for her achievements in Pain Medicine and Research, leadership in development of treatment and her ongoing service to this Society and the scientists we support. By extension her work continues to benefit our patients who suffer pain conditions for which new therapies are still required.

