

CAPA PACFA Potential Restructure - Survey responses

Number of members
789

No. of Responses to Survey
345

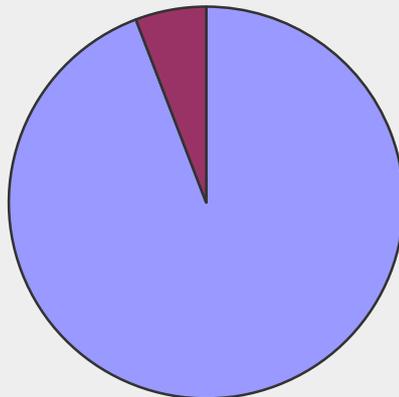
Response Rate
44%

Question 1

Are you in favour of CAPA NSW (and other PACFA member associations) merging with PACFA so that they become one national organisation representing counsellors and psychotherapist?

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Yes	94.2%	325
No	5.8%	20
<i>answered question</i>		345
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Are you in favour of CAPA NSW (and other PACFA member associations) merging with PACFA so that they become one national organisation representing counsellors and psychotherapist?



■ Yes
■ No

Question 2

If CAPA NSW (and other Member Associations around Australia) were to merge with PACFA what advantages would you expect to see in having a single professional association?

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Reduced costs of membership	79.2%	266
Reduced membership and renewal paperwork	83.6%	281
Reduced organisational complexity	79.5%	267
A stronger voice for our association in seeking better professional recognition	94.0%	316
Other (please specify)		51
<i>answered question</i>		336
<i>skipped question</i>		9

Some comments were made reinforcing the four advantages listed above i.e.

Survey No.	Comment
44	Streamlined, simplified...
39	Better and more immediate recognition Less time required to join up. Less complicated!
35	All round better!!
29	A reduction in duplication of roles.
22	less complex for people or organisations wanting to connect with counselling and psychotherapy practitioners and representative bodies
19	reduced duplication of admin and therefore perhaps more funds available for increased services

A number of other advantages were identified. These have been grouped under general headings:

Increased Unity, Credibility & Professionalism

49	Would make registration more professional such as with AHPRA and also more user friendly for clients.
46	a more unified organisation which can withstand the business focus of ACA's emergence
42	more credibility as a profession
40	Strength, coherence and streamlining of the organization that will enhance the power of the organization for lobbying and marketing purposes.
2	Public's perception of a stronger and more cohesive body of professionals. Greater credibility
37	A stronger body alongside APS Having countless organisations has convoluted the integrity of the field and reduces the sense of validity it exudes. One single and recognizable credential will expedite our mutual goals.
36	
34	Stronger political footing in establishing a united voice for difference with psychology
28	Dare I say 'Unity'???
25	Unity This will be a very strong move forward, uniformity of professional recognition will create a stronger environment for regulation
27	
24	More streamlined, more professional and easier for government and others to understand I am a Nurse and have seen Nurses, Chiropractors, Psychologists all merge under a national AHPRA. The result has been a much more unified body looking after the
21	

- professional interest of the professionals. There would be the same result in this proposal.
- 20 reduce governance risk
- 18 A national body presenting a unified front to government & social organisations.
- 16 A higher level of professionalism
- 13 One clear voice one clear direction, increased numbers.
- 9 A stronger united voice
- 8 Being a member (intern) of a national organisation upon graduation from accredited counselling and psychotherapy would help with obtaining employment because a national peak body has more status than a NSW Association.
Centralised focus of association to member responsibilities.
- Clearer and more direct communications as to association representation goals and intents for its members.
- 47 More accountability to members as to; effectiveness of association representatives/officeholders.
A more unified standard within the counselling profession and stronger representation.
- 7 Consolidate internal resources.
- 3 More resources, greater voice and more efficiency in supporting counsellor needs.
Less committee resignations and more voluntary help with various executive and admin tasks. Alternately more paid staff.
- 51

Better for professional development & networking

- 41 More and cheaper professional development opportunities
access to good professional development and a journal that takes over where
- 33 psychotherapy in Aus. is relinquishing
more access to PD events
- 12 networking opportunities
- 50 A stronger and more accessible network of fellow counsellors and psychotherapists
- 4 A broader range of professional development workshops

Improves the chances of getting Medicare rebates

- improved campaign to get psychotherapist services covered under mental health treatment plans
- 48
- 31 Medicare rebates for counsellors and psychotherapists
- 17 Also more chance of being covered by Medicare like Psychologists.
- 14 A much much stronger voice across issues like Medicare etc.
- 15 Inclusion of the profession as Health Services Provider and exemption from GST
The stronger voice for professional recognition in order that our clients can claim Medicare rebates on a Mental Health Plan is the most important for me.
- 11

Better for clients and the public, less confusing

- Ease of recognition by the public of qualified counsellors and psychotherapists - less confusing
- 43
- 30 less confusion in the general population - to understand counsellors' roles and standards

Other comments

- The larger an organisation becomes the less they appear to be for their establishment, how can this be managed??
- 26
- 32 To see a stronger understanding and consideration for those who have many years of life skills and experience and not based on academic qualifications.
Regulation is necessary but impossible and I frankly don't know what we pay for...promises?
Cultural constraints (politics) prevent stringent selection and effective standardization
- 38 processes. Calibre and ability in counsellors challenge all being subjective - employers colleagues and you... ETC. No organisation can speak for all of course.

1 A national register

No Advantages & some Disadvantages

45 no

23 As I read it, see zero advantages that are assured, a few that a spoken about as potential.

10 I see no advantage

6 There is no evidence of such efficiencies, indeed experience suggests the contrary. I think we need a strong voice but not just one voice and not if PACFA does not work in ways that the industry agrees with. Too much Power for one organisation or one person is not OK. Why are some really High PACFA members also working for big colleges that teach counselling and can make big decisions affecting the education of counsellors? There needs to be more separation of roles and if you roll CAPA and PACFA in together will one person get all the power. This needs to be looked at... Policy procedures etc... At the moment they don't seem to be working too well.

5

Question 3

If CAPA NSW (and other Member Associations around Australia) were to merge with PACFA what disadvantages would you expect to see in having a single professional association?

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Loss of identity as CAPA NSW	45.3%	91
Increased organisational structure	26.9%	54
A need to increase my professional qualifications	28.9%	58
A loss of our history and the achievements of CAPA NSW	29.9%	60
The organisation would become too big and my interests will get lost or not be represented.	42.3%	85
Other (please specify)		92
<i>answered question</i>		201
<i>skipped question</i>		144

Survey No	Comment
	Some comments were made reinforcing the disadvantages listed above i.e.
4	Not sure if qualifications would need to be increased.
10	Some concerns that PACFA's requirements for non-clinical members could be different from CAPA's. Without knowing that, I can't answer accurately Q4 below. (I have had to answer it because the survey would not go through without an answer).
11	Big usually means more complex, less remote from members and less responsive to constituents
12	PACFA would have to allow for more options of entry into membership to create boundaries around professional expertise.
14	I would expect not to have to increase my professional qualifications due to a merging. I would like to increase my professional qualifications for my own learning and practice. I am concerned that counselling as a profession and service to the community will be undermined.
21	My main concern is that PACFA has not recognized my undergraduate training whereas CAPA and CCAA have. IF they don't approve my training, I would be unhappy and change to another accrediting organization
23	Associations and individuals with local issues would get lost in the big picture.
	Before I would agree to the merger I would need much more detail to protect individual levels and rights.
29	Committees like the CAPA Rural and Regional may not be viable, which could mean that needs in our own community are not addressed.
30	Loss of some professionals with a lot of experience and knowledge but may not have the necessary qualifications
37	Auditing could be more complex in a larger organisation.
38	Questionable as to whether I could practise as a clinical supervisor without meeting the PACFA requirements.

- 54 Concerned that like ACA, the new PACFA structure may adopt an undergraduate degree requirement.
Also concerned that the ACA won't join this initiative leading to a further split of two large groups. I don't have any information about this, but I would be concerned if ACA did not join.
- 65 Possibly the last point unless a structure is in place for seats being appointed for NSW members upon board for decisions and member input being vetted
- 67 See 2 above!
- 77 I am a clinical member of CAPA. I have actually got enough hours to be a full member of PACFA but I already don't know how to upgrade. The paper work makes it look like I need to go back through several years of documentation that I no longer have a record of. I also found the recent information from PACFA confusing re Professional Development.
- 83 I have ticked the last box only as a 'possible' concern.
- 84 Fees go up. AHPRA proved that with pharmacists fees going up plus it was slower and more cumbersome

A number of other comments were made. These have been grouped under general headings:

- I see no disadvantages**
- 2 None in particular
- 5 none
- 6 None
- 13 I do not see any disadvantages except the process of merging with all the expense and work it will entail.
- 18 None
- 25 I cannot see any disadvantages
- 32 None.
- 34 NONE
- 35 None, It is the best thing that can happen to our profession.
- 36 None of the above
- 40 No disadvantages
- 42 No downsides that I can see. The merge will put PACFA on the same footing as ACA and this would be a good thing!
- 45 Don't see any disadvantage.
- 47 No disadvantages expected.
- 48 I see no negatives
- 49 No disadvantages
- 51 No disadvantage
- 53 If PACFA behaves as a professional organisation I can't see any disadvantages. With regard to increasing the professional qualifications it is necessary in order to be taken more seriously.
- 55 None
- 57 none
- 59 No disadvantages
- 60 I only see advantages
- 63 No
- 64 Not applicable
- 66 none

- 68 The losses incurred will be on the part of any individuals with vested interest (money, influence) in these satellite groups. Gains will accrue on behalf of actual members. There are far more people in the latter party, and their needs outweigh the costs significantly.
- 69 With good management and systems, I can only see that the adv. would outweigh the disadvantages
- 71 I do not think any of these suggested disadvantages would exist under a single professional association
- 72 I don't see any disadvantage
- 73 None of the above really cause me concern providing the PACFA organisation can be kept thoroughly professional and not over bureaucratic
- 75 None
- 76 no negatives
- 78 None of the above.
- 79 No disadvantage. As I see it CAPA is not doing much and fees are really high. I have planned to move to other association anyway. So good initiative.
- 80 None
- 82 no significant disadvantages
- 86 I don't see any disadvantages :)
- 87 none
- 88 I don't see any major disadvantages, I feel we need greater representation and credibility for our profession
- 90 With the right approach I am hoping it assists in regulating and improving the Therapist arena.
- 91 I see no disadvantages
- 92 None

Too much power for PACFA or self-interested groups within PACFA

- 15 No choice in the association I want to belong to. This would especially be an issue if I was not happy with how the association is run. There is also a danger when there is a monopoly that the organisation becomes overbearing and uninterested in member's concerns. I think a level of competition is healthy and to have PACFA as our peak body to represent us to government is great.
- 19 It gives a lot of power to a few people. PACFA is already not representing its practitioners in the way they need. They are just following the medical model and want to make us like psychologists. We are not!
- 24 Avoidance of the political power plays that have emerged in the profession in the last two or three years would be impossible. A few individuals already seem to have too much "power" to control what are essentially person-oriented services. The multiplicity and diversion of interests will be either disregarded or subject to becoming "loud voice" pressure groups. Aaaarghhhh - those who chose this should from an alternate bureaucracy.

52 I'm often perplexed by the direction that PACFA takes. I don't see supporting research for 'research sake' or to gain recognition as valuable. Research should be done because it needs to be done, not because people think it might make them look better. I saw this in Nursing with the striving for 'professionalism'. 'Professionalism' happens with an attitude & behaviour shift, not from trying to 'keep up with the Joneses'.

2. PACFA is based in Melbourne - a loooong way away...

56 Possibility of the organisation becoming more dictatorial as opposed to representing the interests of its members.

8 I think we need a strong voice but not just one voice and not if PACFA does not work in ways that the industry agrees with. Too much Power for one organisation or one person is not OK. Why are some really High PACFA members also working for big colleges that teach counselling and can make big decisions affecting the education of counsellors? There needs to be more separation of roles and if you roll CAPA and PACFA in together will one person get all the power. This needs to be looked at... Policy procedures etc... At the moment they don't seem to be working too well.

I will be grouped with less professional practitioners or I might lose recognition I have through CAPA

3 I fear my qualifications being diminished - being linked to sand play or equine therapists

26 An Advisory Committee of the Catholic Education Commission recently rejected PACFA membership as a criteria for the employment of school counsellors in Catholic schools because it deemed some of the member associations as not having enough emphasis on 'counselling'. CAPA was accepted, along with Psych registration and AASW. Will the counselling/psychotherapy focus be lost among 30 broadly-focused MA's?

41 PACFA achievement so far in recognition of CAPA counsellor skills has been minimal. Potential due this lots of counsellors could lose accreditation

44 specifically, I am thinking that school counsellors will lose identity and a share in the actions of the larger group

70 WorkCover capacity would be lost.

Loss of diversity in the industry

9 Less diversity of opinions

27 The possibility that the new organization in the desire to gain credibility and to align /justify with the "medical model" will exclude those trainings and modalities that are more experimental in approaching new ideas

39 I would be concerned that a majority decision might discount the needs of a minority group. I answer question four in favour of the single association only if the needs of the smaller groups will be met by the larger organisation

61 Worry about one size fits all qualifications. The potential loss of small training providers being recognized as providing legitimate qualifications and potential of theory outweighing applied training

62 Again, I cannot emphasis strongly enough the importance of life skills and experience not being overridden by academic achievement.

85 Accommodate diversity and specialisations

Loss of free PD nights

20 Free PD sessions organised by CAPA

22 Harder for clients to find my private practice when they search.

loss of CAPA PD nights

33 State referral online process might suffer, and professional development opportunities locally might be impacted

81 Loss of local PD opportunities offered through CAPA

Other

1 Hopefully counsellors would be well represented, respected and recognised and not considered 'less important' than psychologist and others.

7 I know that PACFA currently require more PD points than CAPA. I've never understood the reason for this and I'd need to be convinced that this was necessary if the merger were to go ahead.

16 I am not sure what implications will arise in terms of ACA.

17 Not applicable for me

28 I don't think CAPA has achieved the profile for the industry because it appears too light weight

31 Should be automatic membership from capa to pacfa as in past

43 membership costs may actually be higher

46 Positive outweigh the benefits

50 That psychotherapists (who are not trained as psychologists) will become less valued in the system

58 I'm unsure as I'm still a student and new to CAPA anyway. I'm currently a telephone crisis volunteer with Lifeline and wish to do face-to-face. In order to do this I need qualifications as counsellor and membership with CAPA. Will Lifeline recognise PACFA? I think so but I'm not sure.

74 Have a registration body to track all practitioners and provide for legalities etc. I estimate 50% are not bothering to register...it is costly complicated and may offer few/no benefits.

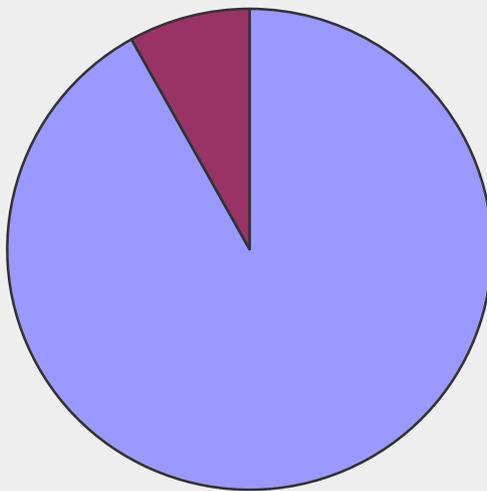
89 I would hope that long term changes would not affect long term members.

Question 4

In looking at the previous two questions I believe that:

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
the advantages of a single professional association outweigh the disadvantages, or	91.9%	317
the disadvantages of a single professional association outweigh the advantages.	8.1%	28
<i>answered question</i>		345
<i>skipped question</i>		0

In looking at the previous 2 questions I believe that:

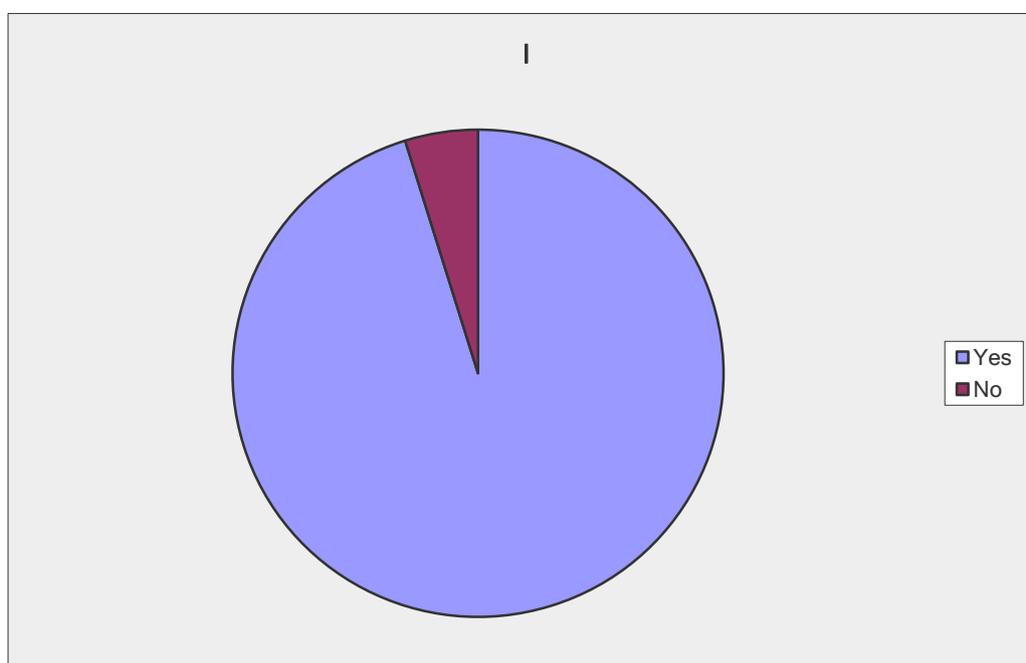


- the advantages of a single professional association outweigh the disadvantages, or
- the disadvantages of a single professional association outweigh the advantages.

Question 5

In a restructured PACFA, that becomes a unified national professional association representing counsellors and psychotherapists, are you in favour of being able to vote directly in an election of key office holders e.g. President, Vice President, Secretary?

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Yes	95.2%	320
No	4.8%	16
If no, what other model of selecting office holders would you suggest?		31
<i>answered question</i>		336
<i>skipped question</i>		9



Number If no, what other model of selecting office holders would you suggest?

Other models of selecting office holders included:

- 1 A board represented appointment of a paid position
- 7 Either local/state or interest group representatives to vote and then send delegates, who can vote for candidates to a conference.
- 8 I would prefer the current, where those who have the time and energy, and creativity, to support their individual professional group continue to have that avenue of expression.
- 11 CAPA and other MAs in NSW become the NSW Division of PACFA. We vote for our NSW Members - they represent our interests and stand for key office positions. There is a full time professional CEO supported by office staff.
- 17 Perhaps some restrictions on the representation of office holders from any one power group would be good. Not sure how to achieve that if we are all merging, but perhaps people could be heads of different chapters and then restrict clustering of office bearers that way....

- 18 Paid CEO
19 appointed representative
20 Regional representation
25 Not of interest to me. Appoint respected persons annually rotating and paying them every 3 years or similar.
28 Appointing a board and that board elects office holders.
- Considerations for the selection of office holders
- 2 However how will you make sure everyone votes... and again there needs to be much stricter guidelines of who can and can't be in these positions. People vote for people because of agendas and I think there needs to be some policy in place that does not allow for too much Power to be held by anyone individual.
- 5 Those up for election need to prove why they should be there. Therefore candidates would be worth voting for.
- 9 Yes, as long as voting can be done remotely, by e-voting, and does not require attendance at the AGM or special meeting for election of key office holders.
- 10 However I will need to see the candidates to "campaign" for the positions and to present to the members their vision and plans for their work in office before election. A problem in the past has been that I never knew who the candidate was and what s/he was going to plan to do or to offer to the organization.
- 12 Years of professional development
- willingness to fulfil requirements.
- 13 I believe that only clinical members be able to vote.
- 14 I do not vote because i do not know enough about the people to be voted for. I do not have a chance to meet each person and ask them questions, do I?
- 15 If adequate yet easy accessible and quick to read information is distributed about the board.
- 31 Within this 'direct voting' process I would see the need for each individual seeking office to present to all members their reasons, goals, position on current and future association directions.

Other comments:

- 3 Clearly, this agglomeration is presumed! I sense inevitability!
4 I don't know
6 I do not agree with the merger.
16 If I pay my fees & contribute, I EXPECT voting rights!
21 In response to number 6 below: Australian Association of Social Workers also has interest groups known as practice groups
22 Not sure
23 I'm not sure what would serve the members best. Currently most members wouldn't know their office bearers would they? But I've voted YES anyway!
24 Not sure
26 People who know the people voting. I would have no idea.
27 I don't know but I often don't know the people in these positions
- so it has little meaning to vote directly
- 29 Not sure:
30 Not sure. I don't really have enough information.

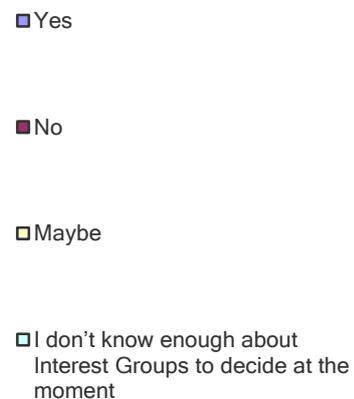
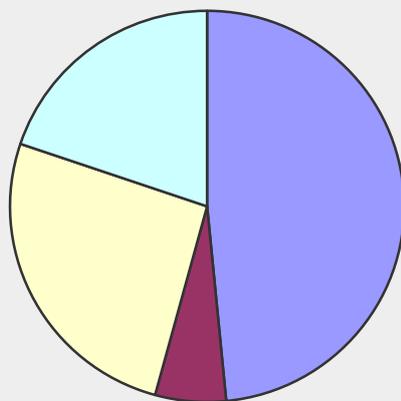
Question 6

Within a restructured uniform, single professional association (PACFA) there could be structures to cater for various interests or specialities within our industry. These might include Interest Groups. In a restructured PACFA would you be interested in joining, or forming one or more interest groups if they existed?

Explanatory Note: Many organisations e.g. the Australian Psychological Society (APS) & the American Counselling Association have interest groups which members may join. Members can join none, one or several Interest groups as they wish. Interest groups have a convenor & provide a venue for members with particular interests to network and develop those interests e.g. there might be an interest group for child & adolescent issues in counselling and psychotherapy, Gay and Lesbian issues in counselling and psychotherapy etc. (e.g. the APS has over 40 interest groups). Interest Groups would not have a role in elections or the governance of PACFA.

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Yes	48.4%	166
No	5.8%	20
Maybe	25.9%	89
I don't know enough about Interest Groups to decide at the moment	19.8%	68
<i>answered question</i>		343
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Within a restructured uniform, single professional association (PACFA) there could be structures to cater for various interests or specialities within our industry. These might include Interest Groups:



Question 7

What other comments do you have about any restructure of CAPA NSW or PACFA?

Answer Options

Response Count

117

Survey Number

Response Text

117 people responded to this question. Responses have been loosely collated under several like headings:

Don't do it

- 17 Do not do this!!!!
- 22 I would prefer things to stay as they are.
- 32 I feel CAPA would lose a lot of members. The warmth of the association could be lost and decisions would be made that may not be in the interest of our members.

Do it

- 4 Any rise in Professional recognition would be a good thing
- 5 It is important that there is a consistent and unified voice that can speak nationally with credibility to government etc. This could also have the benefit of providing consistency nationally with requirements for accreditation.
- 6 Currently I don't think the relationship between CAPA and PACFA is very strong. I often make different phone calls to each organisation and find myself having to review information etc. on 2 websites. I have also had to pay more money to join both associations (with two different application forms) whereby just joining 1 would mean I would become a closer advocate of one, rather than two.

I am highly supportive of both organisations joining.
- 8 CAPA has struggled to get the people and the lobby going, it's a good idea to align more strongly with PACFA who a head start and will now have greater numbers. It makes a lot of sense!
- 9 I think the key issue is having a more unified and hopefully a more powerful voice in discussions with governments and their agencies
- 10 The proposed merger is an excellent idea. It will give us more clout politically!
- 12 I see this restructuring as advantageous to clients also as it will give us an opportunity to lobby government on behalf of our clients' needs while also elevating our professional recognition.
- 14 I think we need to be a more unified body because the psychologists have become very aggressive in staking their claim over us. This year, I've lost my private health fund rebate with Medibank Private, have experienced severely reduced EAP and WorkCover work and in each instance, have been told by the organizations involved that it's because I'm not a registered psychologist! I think it's a restriction in trade! It's very frustrating because I've worked so hard to reach this status and things were going well for me.
- 18 seems to me that been a national structure could strengthen the public perception of the profession and organisation
- 19 I have been frustrated about this hierarchy for years so I would be celebrating the merger.
- 24 About time!
- 28 Definitely a good move
- 36 it will be a really positive merger
- 37 This is the way of the future for our profession.

We need to consolidate to be stronger and have our voice heard.
- 39 Something needs to happen for our industry to move forward. This idea seems a possible way to gain more clout on many levels and get things done to take us further

- 40 I've been involved in other groups (Lifeline, Australian Computer Society -ACS) which have made similar restructures. If we want professional staff to look after and market our Members, I don't believe it is feasible to continue to rely on the efforts of volunteers. The current board have done an amazing job getting to where we are now - but my sense is that CAPA almost collapsed before they took over. There are disadvantages to amalgamation (as above), but Lifeline and ACS are now stronger for it.
- 41 We need a national focus and voice. PACFA can do this role.
- 44 One voice is more powerful as a representative of the Profession as a whole united entity.
- 45 It makes sense to me to streamline the whole accreditation process under one organisation and less cost to members.
- 46 It is the best thing that can happen to CAPA and PACFA.
- 47 Jointly we can bring about change and add more support in areas that are really lacking
- 49 Really good idea would mean less membership paperwork and costs and a stronger national voice.
- 51 I think this is a great decision.
- 53 Do it and do it quickly
- 54 We need recognition and influence to receive government approval, and this is found in unity and credentials by all members.
- 55 While organisations such as CAPA NSW may merge/join with PACFA there is no reason why the history of the joining organisations cannot be recorded and added to the history of PACFA - a diverse background would add to PACFA's standing and 'joint forces' add strength to the state/territory/regional people's voices.
- As long as the small players in regional and rural areas (which are already under-resourced and suffer through isolation/distance from metropolitan areas) are not disadvantaged. The need for professional support in regional and rural areas is great, as is the need to provide quality psychotherapy and counselling services (as opposed to or in addition to psychological and psychiatric services).
- 56 I am very much in favour of this step forward. I am also currently a member of the APS (Australian Psychological Society), and hope that CAPA NSW/PACFA will organise itself in a similar way as a singular body that represents all Counsellors/Psychotherapists across Australia.
- 57 My biggest hope would be that the counselling profession, if represented by one body, would be better placed to receive government recognition in line with social workers and psychologists.
- I think the current lack of recognition and support is most unfair and unsatisfactory.
- 58 I think merging into one will allow our profession to present itself to government and the community at large as a much more integrated professional and unified/powerful field. Although our field is rich with diversity in relation to the many different schools of therapy and counselling people practice, at the end of the day we are all doing the same thing, offering assistance to people and supporting people to make positive and healthy changes, to grow and develop etc. to improve their quality of life. We need to present ourselves as a meaningful whole.
- 59 Very long overdue!
- 61 I am in favour of restructure if it is for the greater good of the profession as a whole and therefore for those they serve.
- 63 I think we need to have a more combined and powerful voice to government and to the community and peers, as we still appear less than in the eyes of the mental health professional etc. psychologists and psychiatrist.
- 64 I think it is long overdue and would be better for everyone.
- 66 I think it is a brilliant idea and the sooner it materialises the best.
- 67 It's about time. Great move.
- 68 I feel that this move is long overdue! - I have watched CAPA struggle to present a professional image - but unfortunately despite the gallant efforts of the individuals it looks like amateur hour. It has not moved with the times and lacks serious credibility within our industry.
- 72 Great idea. There has been too much duplication of paper work I am a member of APS and it is so seamless and quick

- 73 I am all for it. I believe this would really raise our profile as a professional body. Working in a medical environment i struggle with getting professional recognition. I am an oncology counsellor with a medical background yet am often not recognised professionally because I am not a psychologist.
- 75 The counselling industry is yet to find a way to have any real gravitas with government and many associations are yet to provide real return on member's fees over and above administering qualifications. Having a simpler system through merging member associations with PACFA is an opportunity to centralize the use of funds and a larger more consistent voice.
- 79 It is about time we became a national body. There are too many smaller organisations within PACFA that drive their own agenda and protect their own "turf"
- 80 It is timely and urgently required I recommend this moved be seriously considered and with appropriate consultation with recommendations be implemented. I wish the working party and Executive every success. It's been a confusing system for far too long.
- 81 I would be happy to see the merger go ahead
- 83 Thank you for your hard work over the years!
- And whatever helps Counsellors and Psychotherapists have a stronger voice and get recognition and respect!
- 84 CAPA NSW has, until now, failed to meet the goals of its members. Excessive turnover in governance and a general lack of a unilateral vision has mired it in mediocrity.
- The goals of gaining national recognition (both formally and informally), were never met, and neither was the goal of acquiring a meaningful financial rebate for its constituency.
- To be taken seriously, PACFA must seek to more rigorously follow the model of U.S. organizations and of the APS, and to dissolve CAPA.
- 85 Many organisations now ask prospective mental health practitioners to be members of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), from which counsellors are excluded. In my opinion it would be really important to align ourselves with AHPRA, and in order to do this, it's important to have a single unified voice. I hope we see this happening soon.
- 86 Thank you for fighting for the credibility of counsellors. My hope is that a unified body will = greater professional recognition
- 87 Go for it!
- 88 Simplify
- 89 This sounds like an answer to the profession being recognised by government for Medicare rebate. This will give immense progress to the profession. Unity is strength. We are all following the same ideals. Why not unite.
- 90 Go for it!
- 91 The sooner the better for our profession and for our futures
- 93 There is a definite requirement for more immediate recognition of what it means to belong to a professional organisation that represents psychotherapists - restructuring and solidifying such an organisation means less uncertainty as to what each individual association represents - it will be easier to market and identify with.
- 94 Sooner the consolidation happens the better.
- 95 Good idea
- 96 Go for it. If nothing changes I would guess you would lose members. I am leaving CAPA this year. Wishing you all the best.
- 97 A good idea if it moves us closer to being unified and represented to government and able to get government recognition.
- 99 I fully support it
- 100 please move forward asap
- 101 My opinion is that this is the only way forward

- 103 Sounds like the way forward to me.
- 108 I hope it goes ahead and without too great a delay
- 109 Whatever supports a robust, healthy, and inclusive structure based in sound educational standards balanced with experiential training I am for a restructuring.
- 111 I am all for it!
- 112 This is an exciting development.

- I can see it is a significant developmental step for our professional recognition and industry.
- 114 It seems like a sensible idea for me individually and the profession as a whole

Things that will need to be considered in a restructure or more information is needed

- 1 The need to really look at each different qualification (counsellor, psychotherapist, psychologist....) and the requirements / study / professional development that suit it, and not have one blanket rule and expectation that applies to all the different types of roles.
- 2 More information is needed.
- 7 Would we still have meetings held in NSW
- 13 need to ensure that complimentary PD sessions are still offered to the members if the organisations merged
- 16 I would like to see other pd venues, Capa only provides pd in Crows Nest, not available to most members, I would like to see that varied
- 20 This is an opportunity not to be missed and a forgiving transition period needs to in place to make it easier for the membership to embrace and not rushed
- 29 The biggest concern is that often when organisations merge - with all the best intentions of reducing paperwork, costs and being more unified and therefore having more of a public voice - that unless there is considerable forethought and experience that is brought to the process, it can often end up being more inefficient as a whole, and less valuable for the individual members.
- 33 My only concern is that new members would not get an opportunity to become involved I would like some assurance that the board was not made up of a mixture of new and old.

- That the term on the board was set for a period of time and could not be renewed except under exceptional circumstances
- 42 Again clinical members with capa should remain clinical members of pacfa automatically
- 43 I would like to see a very clear delineation between Counsellors and Clinical Counsellors.

- What criteria would be necessary to achieve this?
- 52 The main problem is the difference in the PD year
- 62 It is important to keep local PDE events that are included in the membership fee.
- 82 There needs to be a membership category for people who do not earn any money from their work but are involved in volunteer work only. It can be very expensive to keep up to date, have supervision and insurance when you are not earning any money.
- 98 I hope the small working group in CAPA working on this is consulting the views of and other ex-Presidents. I remember she was against the merge of CAPA with PACFA at a meeting I attended. I am broadly for a merge but would like to know her objections and she obviously has a lot of experience to offer.
- 116 I fear losing the WorkCover status and option to work as a school counsellor in a catholic school
- 117 How would a larger single association verify, audit and manage the renewal and accreditation process so that we are not compromised by unqualified practitioners

- I'm concerned about qualification requirements**
- 15 On the whole I am in favour but I have concerns about possibly not being able to meet PACFA's requirements i.e. I am an Intern member of CAPA and am a long way off having enough hours to become a Clinical member.

23 I was a member of PACFA was some years and then they decided I didn't meet their requirements all of a sudden. I have no wish for this to happen again I have been a consistent member of CAPA for many years meeting all requirements

25 Being a member of CAPA who joined at a time when membership requirements meant I could join CAPA, but not PACFA, I would not want to see my membership marginalised as a result of the merger.

60 Otherwise I see this as potentially a very good thing.
The concern I have with the restructure is the that some associations are a lot more professional and have stricter supervision/professional development etc. than others. The memberships that are more respected would potentially lose this respect due to being affiliated with more unprofessional associations.

69 As noted above:

- Concerned that like ACA (Aust Counsellors Assoc), the new PACFA structure may adopt an undergraduate degree requirement or different levels of qualifications undermining practitioners with a lot of experience, but not a relevant undergrad degree.

76 Also concerned that the ACA won't join this initiative leading to a further split of two large groups. I don't have any information about this, but I would be concerned if ACA did not join.
I would hope that CAPA members (especially those who may not have degrees, etc.) do not get pushed by the wayside in favour of a system that only recognises qualifications as being the "Be all and end all" of what therapy is all about. Based on what I and many others have seen, heard and experienced, I feel VERY strongly about this issue to the degree that I would be more than happy to provide CAPA, PACFA, or any other association, written evidence and testimonials, from both clients and professionals alike, showing the quality of service delivery and significant positive treatment outcomes achieved (especially complex cases), through life skills, experience and decades of full-time counselling.

106 I thank you for reading and appreciating this.
Transparency and communication with members

Other comments

11 Is there a reason interest groups cannot be set up now under PACFA?

21 In my opinion the focus on lobbying for a Medicare provider number is misguided. Instead, the focus should be on (a) providing information to the public and community groups about the benefits of counselling and psychotherapy to society as a whole and (b) on supporting members to better serve their clients and the community. Establishing and maintaining a connection and on-going communication between community and the bodies that represent counsellors and psychotherapists is essential for lifting the public's understanding of how we can support people.

Counsellors and psychotherapists need to distinguish themselves as a profession from psychologists. The agenda of APS can be seen in the following statement: 'The APS continues to lobby for the prescription rights for psychologists in Australia

and are well prepared to thoroughly train, regulate and support psychologists to

competently deliver high quality psychological services to Australian consumers.' (see <http://www.hwa.gov.au/sites/uploads/HPPP-Australian-Psychological-Society-45-20121019.pdf>). Is this the path that PACFA wants to take us?

26 I don't know what the best method is for election of key office holders.

- 30 I have been waiting for 14 years for CAPA to have a positive for Counsellors & Psychotherapists regarding a Medicare Provider number.
- 31 Having our qualifications and years of experience recognised would allow for our practices to grow. At the moment it is very easy for potential clients to find my services on the CAPA website search. I get good number of new clients this way and am worried about losing this good referral source. The current search on PACFA does not have clear field for 'speciality'. My speciality is working with children and families and I have NEVER had a client who has found me through the PACFA website.
- So although the paperwork would be easier, cost cheaper etc., the bottom line for me is client numbers, if clients can't find me I have no private practice.
- 34 I am concerned that strong egos would take over the organisation and run it from a dominant personal aggrandisement perspective, as already happens in ACA. There are already some disturbing conflicts of interest and dubious ethical behaviour around the training for supervision, in that it has been designed and mandated by officers of the organisation, who are now running supervision courses in their private capacity. If people such as these behave in this way now, it is unlikely that they will behave better if they have more scope to exercise power, with less challenge from the wide range of people currently coming from PACFA member organisations.
- 35 Interest groups become POLITICAL interest groups in an amalgamated structure. Again Aaaargh....
- 38 That the restructure and coming together of professional associations under PACFA finally achieves Medicare benefits for all Clinical Members, not just those registered as Mental Health Providers.
- 48 For all the time, money and effort of past CAPA Executives, it does seem sad that it would all have to be dismantled.
- 50 PACFA in my mind hasn't made much inroad professionally across and for CAPA's cohort, lots more work need to be done for this and i am not sure of the immediate advantage for CAPA's membership.
- 65 I don't have enough recent information to know whether this restructure is ready to happen. From being on the Executive, I think there is much to iron out & I'm a bit bemused about whether the time is right yet. I need to see primarily an 'attitude-shift' within PACFA. Having said that, ultimately it is the way to go.
- 71 See above i.e.: make sure that organisations hiring counsellors (paid or volunteers) will equally recognise PACFA.
- 77 Two other organisations that I'm a member of have 'Chapters' or more localised sub groups. These are led and/or facilitated by a Chair person who reports back to the main Executive. This seems to work well. One of these organisations is an international group, ISTSS, International Society for Trauma and Stress Studies. They are even able to mobilise counsellors for times of disaster. The same applies for NALAG, National Association of Loss and Grief. These organisations are governed by a set of 'Model Rules' plus a Constitution for operating a charity
- 78 Whatever happens the fees must be reduced. The current fees are way too high for little or nil return to members
- 92 I have found the recent information sent out by PACFA confusing and have found it difficult to know how to upgrade my registration with PACFA. Haven't been particularly impressed with PACFA. I have been considering not re-registering with PACFA. I guess this would change if the two organisations merge.
- 102 Would like to see the reintroduction of the journal
- 104 We could have a 'we don't need Medicare' group ;) Medicare would be a nightmare for therapists - just ask our insurance based colleagues in the States. We'd all have to subscribe to CBT and a medical based approach.
- 105 It was a problem with the pharmacists; it could be a problem for the counsellors. I am a pharmacist as well so I know from first-hand experience.
- 107 The Interest Groups probably cover some of the disadvantages I perceive as they would supplement 'lostness' in a large organisation.
- As an Affiliate member doing volunteer work I retain membership because of the free Professional Development evenings.

- 110** I think CAPA has high standards of professional practice that would be diluted by merging with the diverse bodies that comprise PACFA.
- 113** I am discontinuing my CAPA membership because I need to join AASW to get a Medicare provider no. I don't want to do this as my id is as a psychotherapist and only became a social worker due to Aus. mental health systems exclusion of non-allied health. I'd still like to be part of PACFA if it was possible to join directly and at a reduced rate. thanks
- 115** I would like to be actively involved/volunteer with the restructuring whilst respecting the history of CAPA in whatever capacity that would be helpful to the organisation and industry.

Question 8

What is your CAPA membership level?		
Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Student	9%	29
Intern	13%	46
Provisional (P) Clinical	18%	62
Clinical (C)	58%	201
Affiliate	2%	5
<i>answered question</i>		344
<i>skipped question</i>		1

