

Name: Meredith Caelli

Location: Singleton, NSW

Work role: Manager, Audit and Risk, NSW Health Pathology

Professional role: Proud to be a Professional Member of the IIA-Australia; I acquired my Grad Cert IA in 2017, completed a PhD in 2010 and have held registration in NSW as a Registered Nurse since 1987.

Community role: I am human slave to a cat. I have 9 nieces and nephews and 11 great nieces and nephews. Also, carer to my parents to whom I live next door.



How did you get a start in internal audit?

I moved across to NSW Health Pathology in 2015 as their first Manager for the Audit and Risk role. Since then I have been very engaged in understanding Internal Audit and have strived to design a program that is future focused and very closely aligned to our Strategic Plan.

What's the coronavirus drama effect on you?

Our internal audit plan was put on pause – the internal stakeholders required for scoping and engagement planning were very heavily invested in business continuity and response programs of work. Our internal audit resources were redirected to support risk and governance processes. We are getting back on track now and looking to initiate new foundational work this coming quarter.

Working from office or home?

Working from home and loving it. Saving 15 commuting hours a week has been great. Flexibility to come and go as my work requires – networking with staff locked down in New Zealand and working with IIA members from around Australia. The technology available is making this all very possible from home.

How has coronavirus changed the way you work?

We committed to an agile work environment before Covid-19 hit our shores. Covid-19 just increased the pace of change. I have been working remotely now for two-three years – at least two-days a week.

What risks would you say are heightened by coronavirus?

Procurement risk – we have had an increased demand in personal protective equipment, reagents, swab sticks etc. Finding and sourcing new suppliers that meet Australian standards has been very challenging. Accessing sufficient ICT equipment to ensure employees can be agile and work safely from home. Technology risk – ensuring everyone has access to the right technology to work remotely. Ensuring secure remote access through our firewalls has been reliant on a third party supplier who was faced with their own business continuity problems.

What is the biggest challenge facing internal auditors?

Maintaining contact with other parts of the business. The corridor consults are a thing of the past now. I have instigated a Friday “how is it going?” call to key stakeholders across NSW Health Pathology to stay in touch and catch up with those I no longer see as much. Also I have extended it to others that I would not normally talk to unless there was a problem. So, in a way Covid-19 has increased my networking circle.

What has the IIA–Australia been doing lately?

Loving the online courses. As a participant I have found this model of delivery a huge success. Enabling me to build knowledge and my CPE without having to be away from work was great.

What is your most memorable internal audit moment?

Having an independent assessment through IIA-Australia and securing a 97% result in our inaugural quality assurance and improvement program in 2017.

What are you working on at present?

Tender for co-sourcing internal audit services

What are you reading at present?

Maria Arpa 'Mindfulness at Work' and for some lighter reading CS Lewis 'Selected Literary Essays'.

What is on your desk right now?

I keep a very tidy desk – always assuming I may not be here tomorrow to clean up after myself. So today I have my tea mug and water bottle on my desk.

Concert or event you would most like to attend?

The School of Life Summer School in London.

What would you change if you could?

Improving the tone of the final report. We use external service providers to deliver our audits. When reflecting on the tone of draft reports I often ask the authors to consider the following points when drafting reports:

- Is it True?
- Is it Helpful
- Is it Inspiring?
- Is it Necessary?
- Is it Kind?