

HEOPS Meeting – Glasgow University - Report – 16th May 2008

Gordon Hamilton (Glasgow) gave an excellent presentation on the potential impact of a flu pandemic on Glasgow & the role of OH services in planning & managing this. Applying national pandemic planning assumptions to a University population brings home the message of just how disruptive a pandemic could be and emphasises the importance of contingency planning. Gordon's presentation can be easily adapted for use in other institutions.

Nigel Wilson (Liverpool) introduced us to the new HEOPS website www.heops.org.uk <<http://www.heops.org.uk>>. Still in its infancy, but ripe for development and helping us raise our profile. We discussed whether it should be open to all or have a members-only section. Consensus was that, at this stage in our development, the website content should be open to all. The e-mail discussion forum & members-only file area this provides (more anon) are sufficient for our needs at present.

Steve Doherty (Glasgow) presented an unusual case of someone appealing against being assessed as unfit for classified radiation work because the person failed to disclose potentially relevant health issues. The appeal was allowed on the basis that the issues, if disclosed would not have been excluding factors and that there was mitigating factors relating to non-disclosure.

Fiona Hassell (Glasgow) spoke on the variety of health screening & health surveillance programmes in place at Glasgow for vocational students and research activities, highlighting the difficulties, most marked with veterinary students, of attempting to assess fitness when there are no agreed standards to assess against. Her presentation provoked a discussion around 3rd party medicals— clearing researchers for work in other institutions. People reported different experience of CERN, with some being unable to obtain dosimetry information on their staff whilst others were provided this by return (so don't take no for an answer!) An there is obviously, as yet, no national agreement on the screening needed for a Research Passport.

After lunch, **Kate Venables (Oxford)** presented her draft paper on OH Service level provision. There was considerable discussion about whether the proposed staffing algorithm applied well to all types of university, or whether a more complex approach would be better. Dr Venables undertook to look at this again & produce a further draft for comment. Several members wanted to see points on non-staffing issues from the recent HSE guidance listed as bullet points.

We concluded with a discussion on the future of HEOPs. There was general agreement that we should formalise our structure, with formal election of an executive to ensure continuity and to take responsibility for representing the views of HEOPs. To provide everyone with the opportunity to participate in election, it was agreed that the election would take place at the autumn meeting, with part of the day given over to an AGM. In preparation for this **Alan Swann (Imperial)** offered to conduct a membership survey to verify who of those on the mailing list were still active and eligible for membership.

The possibility of introducing a membership fee to provide HEOPs with some funds for running the website & underwriting meetings was also discussed. The consensus was that this would be useful, but that it should be a fee per institution, rather than per individual. The current executive was charged with putting a proposal forward to the AGM.

Alan also agreed to circulate information on how to access the file store on our JiscMail archive.

The next meeting of HEOPs will be hosted by Oxford University on **Friday, 14th November**.