

# HEOPS

Higher Education Occupational Physicians / Practitioners

**Minutes of the HEOPS Executive Committee Meeting  
9<sup>th</sup> May 2019  
Occupational Health Department, University of Bristol**

In attendance:

Ali Hashtroudi (Chair) via telephone (AH)  
Patricia Southwell (Treasurer) (PS)  
Philippa Hawkins (Secretary) (PH)  
Gary Malcolm (webmaster) (GM)  
Aileen Stewart (AS)  
Max Hill (UCEA Rep) (MH)  
Mike Hagan (host) (MHa)

Meeting commenced at 18:20

1. Apologies – Blandina Blackburn
2. Minutes of HEOPS Executive meeting September 2018

Reviewed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes:

Promotion of HEOPS – AH to action

Guidance on Standards for Fitness to teach OH clearance – AH was making good progress with this, however the Teaching Unions have stalled progress currently, inability to progress this further unless the Unions change their stance. NASBTT concerned with School-based training but therefore come under the LA and perhaps ALAMA should progress this issue rather than HEOPS.

USHA Fieldwork document – MH requested HEOPS comments on the document received, but hasn't seen these. AH will provide these to MH on receipt of email. First meeting (MH) was fine, noted that there were strong

opposing views held by members. AH – MH to give an update to the members tomorrow.

**Action** – AH to send HEOPS comments to MH

Amendments to constitution – Discussion held on use of the term Practitioners and whether reference to Physicians was required for the HEOPS membership. MH raised that if we are struggling with numbers, with the profession broadening in this way anyway, so was support of this proposal. Discussion centred on including those who are clinically active within OH in the HE sector. AH raised that the SOM have already opened their doors and widened participation. As we are becoming a more diverse field, that we should enable other professions to join HEOPS. The constitution as it stands doesn't block people from joining so would recommend dropping Physicians and including everyone under the banner of OH practitioner – agreed

Under Associations to include the Faculty, SOM and Council for Work & Health and remove the TU association.

**Action** – PS to incorporate agreed changes to constitution

4. Reduced numbers of members attending meetings – plan going forwards

The Membership of HEOPS is growing, although a number of members are inactive and not contributing. MHa We now have 35 attending the meeting tomorrow, but there is no one attending from universities local to Bristol, whose OH Services are outsourced. The Exec agreed that 35 is probably the average number attending recent meetings. The frequency of meetings was discussed – MH and others agreed that twice a year keeps HEOPS profile raised and changing this to once a year would be a long time between meetings.

The Exec discussed whether the pattern of alternate meetings North / South of the UK should be reviewed as availability of both hosts for and attendance at meetings held in the North was down on those in the South. AH proposed that we move forward based on where volunteers come from rather than seeking to continue as previously - agreed.

## 5. Finance

PS outlined that the balance of monies is currently £5,500. However to maintain this level, we have usually received a profit from meetings in previous years. We were therefore able to make quick decisions on affording the expenses for this meeting. The last two meetings have broken even – and we are not expected to make a loss this time.

Discussion about whether we should increase the meetings charge – not accepted. PS outlined that we spend very little, so we can support HEOPS members attending as Reps, on HEOPS behalf, where their host Employer is not able to. MH raised that the website needs investment, the current running cost for the website is low. Discussion over the benefit of becoming a subscription membership – not accepted due to increased administration necessary to achieve this. Discussion on costs for tomorrow – HEOPS rely totally on revenue from meetings. PS plan for increased revenue for next meeting, at a London location, we could advertise through our associations (e.g. SOM, COHPA etc) and raise money to spend on website replacement. No idea of cost as yet (outstanding item for GM) – GM to approach Simon Wilson (HEOPS web designer) to establish what he can do and provide a quote. AH queried whether we require three quotes before replacing web presence? GM requires agreement on what we need on the website; we should create a mock-up and then consult with members over what they prefer. MH reminded the Exec that as the website is our public facing presence, it was fundamental to our branding and how people view HEOPS and our guidance – currently this portrays an old fashioned view. GM added that it was easy to upload documents but otherwise requires programming language to amend the website itself. AH felt that we require a bigger conversation about what we should have. MH suggested scoping out how much it could cost and then decide whether it is viable. Exec to review other websites for similar groups and consider whether we want to go down these routes, PS added we can then approach web designers and ask for quotes.

**Action** - Exec members to review alternative websites – to share and consolidate views by email.

**Action** – GM to obtain quotation from Simon Wilson

a. Speakers expenses

AH queried whether we should set a limit on expenditure for speakers? AS felt it was difficult to set a limit. AH hadn't realised that one of the speakers tomorrow is travelling from Europe, having expected that one of their team would be travelling from Belfast where the work was undertaken, when the invite was extended. Discussion held on the merits of whether to set a limit or not. MHa suggested that guidance could be developed for those organizing the meeting conference to include: how to recruit speakers; addressing any expenses query; setting out the process for agreeing expenses and inviting local speakers where possible. AS suggested that we should be aware if inviting or recommending speakers of potential costs from the outset. MH suggested that we should expressly state that we have limited funds and are a not for profit organisation that focuses on clinical evidence. That we would cover reasonable expenses but that we would appreciate if they could limit their expenses to a reasonable amount.

6. Exec engagement

AH raised that we recruited new Exec members after the York meeting, but some didn't have any engagement with the Exec after joining. Generally we don't have a concern about engagement from existing Exec members, generally AH does get a response from a couple of members when he emails. He has asked those non-participating Exec members to leave the Committee. We have 8 members of Exec, constitution states 10-12 members with 4 OHP and 4 practitioner members. PS will amend to 5 officers ideally with 5 – 7 additional co-opted members. What constituted a meeting to be quorate was discussed at the Reading Exec meeting in Jan 2018, where it was agreed to be 4 members present (including via teleconference, video-conferencing) one of whom must be an Officer (Chair, Secretary or Treasurer).

PS has communicated with AH today that she is leaving the University of Surrey end of Sept 2019, and is not taking another job within HE sector. AH thanked PS for her contribution, as a very valued member of the Exec – will raise with the members tomorrow and seek a volunteer. If no one volunteers, then will take up PS generous offer to continue in some roles, but will not be clinically active. AH/AS raised whether we could have an Honorary membership, for those previous members who have contributed a lot to HEOPS and the Exec, such as Alan Swann, Nigel Wilson and now PS. AH queried whether a change to the constitution was required to enable this. Agreed to create the opportunity within the constitution to meet the membership category in this situation whilst adhering to the membership principles already agreed.

7. Review of HEOPS guidance

The previous guidance was developed by members of the Exec and then approved by the whole Exec. Discussion held whether this approach should involve the full membership but AH/AS felt it would create too much of a delay.

**Action** – Exec members to provide comments by end of May, if all okay then upload to website.

8. Meeting venue, date and topic for Spring 2019

**Action** - AH will ask for volunteers tomorrow – approach someone if no volunteers – perhaps UCL or Imperial for next meeting.

9. AOB – Liz Murphy OHP (Newcastle) is the jiscmail forum moderator, in line with the constitution proposal received that she should be invited to join HEOPS – agreed.

**Action** – AH to invite her to be a member of the Board.

Meeting concluded 19:50