

## Minutes for the Executive Committee of the AAAPC

16 April 2015

1. **Attending:** *Nick Zwar, Ellen McIntyre, Christina Hagger, Sue Pollen, Kirsty Douglas, Emma Warnecke, Jodie Oliver-Baxter, Ngaire Kerse, Kitty Novy.*
2. **Apologies:** *Louise Stone, Suzanne McKenzie, Sarah Larkins, Danielle Mazza, Grant Russell, Liz Halcomb, Phyllis Lau, Michelle Guppy, Alistair Vickery*
3. **Minutes:** The minutes of the last meeting held February 19<sup>th</sup> accepted
4. **Correspondence to and from the AAAPC:** Letter to Minister Lay (attached)
5. **Business Arising:**
  - i. *APCReN-Centre of Research Excellence* .Nick reported on the APCReN steering group meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> April regarding future funding. Terry Findlay unable to clarify if funding available in future The Department of Health and Aging Secretary Martin Bowles might be open to some sort of proposal to fund a facilitating structure for PHC Research like APCReN into the future. The possibility was raised that the AAAPC and the RACGP and others could work together to develop something to put to the Department. Terry to contact Nick Zwar once he had the meeting and if there was openness to such an idea. Nick noted that it all relates to the uncertainty in future government support and lack of clarity in where they intend to go. Ellen McIntyre also mentioned that at the recent CRE network meeting she attended in Canberra Mark Booth said the Department was keen to support primary health care research and recognised the importance of this. Mark also acknowledged that the funding for both APHCRI and PHCRIS finished at the end of the year and so a decision would be made some time this year. Nick was hoping that Mark Booth will talk about the Government position on PBRN's and Primary care research at the conference in July. Still waiting on outcome of a number of projects submitted through APCReN namely Dimity Pond's dementia application and Kim Bennell's CRE on arthritis education in primary care. There is a determination to try and keep APCReN functioning for as long as possible with ongoing funding. The excellent newsletter article on APCReN by Meredith Temple – Smith and Natalie Appleby informed members on the activity and the need to continue to promote at conference.
  - ii. *GP academic registrar update position and report*: Nick had a discussion with Louise Stone who reported that one of the key problems that the Regional Training Providers (RTP) are facing is they are so unsure of their future that it is difficult to get the word out to academic registrars. Many just want to finish training and are not thinking about things that are not essential like an academic post.
    - Louise felt it would be useful for the AAAPC to email Penny Shakespeare expressing again our support for the academic program and our willingness to do whatever we can to assist in sustaining it .Any contribution to the email before it is sent would be appreciated.
    - Nick also mentioned that he had tried to contact Frank Jones and Lucy Walters – no response yet
    - Louise also thought that it might be worth contacting the new minister Susan Ley
    - Kirsty was able to raise the GP academic registrars issue at the senate committee hearing on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. She said none of the senators had heard of the program but some of the senators could see its value and that it was important to maintain it. Nick noted the program still available in 2016 but due to uncertainty there was very little interest and if there are no applicants it will be very difficult to support the argument
    - Louise had suggested that another way of highlighting their importance was to find an example of an outstanding academic registrar who could be highlighted in representation to the minister. Louise mentioned Andrew Pennington a rural registrar who had done some interesting work. He might agree to be the face of why it matters to continue with the program. Nick happy to follow up if the committee thought it was a good idea. All agreed. Kirsty Douglas also knows someone who had done a quality improvement project with the aboriginal service. She

has gone on to become heavily involved in the local pathways program. Nick noted the new minister seems to be interested in both rural and aboriginal health; both these people would be good options.

- Ellen noted that there are 35 registrars in the PHCRIS Research Profiles database. Ellen is happy to write an article in *This Week in Primary Health*.
- Anyway we can draw attention to this issue would be good. Nick's concern is that this program will be lost (collateral damage) and this very important capacity building for primary care research will be lost.

iii. *New Zealand Matters*: Sue noted that the Journal of Primary Health Care is still undergoing changes with the editors and hopefully an update next month. She is unsure if any Australians have registered in the Annual Research Weekend in Otago in September.

iv. *Social Media Strategy* for the AAAPC. It is going along well with 73 followers. Will promote this at the conference and encourage everyone to continue to twitter. Louise and Jodie are talking about setting up a blog with the academic registrars. Kirsty believes that this has started and will check and let us know the site to share.

6. **The Newsletter**: The first edition for 2015 will go out this week with a good selection of articles.

7. **PHC Research Conference**: Christina Hagger reported that the conference is coming together. They had received 323 abstracts and once again thanked the AAAPC for all their help. Despite budget constraints and limitations, she is happy with program. They are having 2 sessions on the Posters - Thursday morning and afternoon. There are a number of additional events including a high speed workshop and several sessions with Mark Booth.

- Nick thanked the reviewers of the AAAPC Best Paper Award. The winner this year was Jennifer Walker from the University of Melbourne. The paper was on colorectal cancer screening and nurses having a role in risk assessment. She was delighted and keen on going to SAPC next year.
- Christina thanked Nick and all that he was doing with the NAPCRG Prize and the collaboration with the PHC Research Conference and AAAPC. She noted that we still cannot be definite until the funding is confirmed later this year but is hoping that it will be an ongoing reciprocal prize.

## 8. Other Business

i. *Senate select committee*. Nick thanked Kirsty for attending and also for sending around the summary to the committee.

She found it quite an enjoyable experience but very party political. She noted that pertinent questions were asked by the Greens and Labour senators. Was pleased that the academic registrar's situation was raised and hopes that by opening their eyes to this it will be supported. There were wide ranging discussions around models of primary care, options about blended payments and how you incentivise performance. Her hope was that it opened their eyes to the academic registrar situation. Perhaps we could look at other people who are appearing and see if they could see if they could raise registrar problem.

ii. *Research Workforce Study*. Ellen said there was nothing to report and nothing could be done until there is a decision made about the support to be given by the government for primary care research

iii. *Collaboration with NAPCRG*. Nick was happy to announce that the NAPCRG/AAAPC prize will support the person with a complementary registration and travel cost of \$US800.00. Christina said that PHCRIS hope to reciprocate with NAPCRG winner receiving free registration for PHC Research Conference but contingent on the funding. Christina thanked Nick for all he had done to get the invitation out to members before the cut off abstract deadline on the 17th April. A copy of the abstracts will be sent to Kitty and judging panel to be formed to assess and develop judging criteria. Nick believed that once AAAPC choose the winner it would automatically be guaranteed to be selected for NAPCRG. Nick to confirm this. Nick believes we shall run with it this year and give the members the opportunity to submit abstracts. Kitty to email

members to send in the abstracts and then report to Nick on the response

iv. *NHMRC Panel*. A general discussion on the crisis situation of primary health care representation on this year's NHMRC panels and beyond.

- Nick reported that the NHMRC has made a decision that there will be no panel with Primary Health Care in the name due to the low number of applications coded as Primary Health Care this year. There were 2 panels in both 2014 and 2013 when there were a reasonable number of PHC grant applications.
- This is very worrying as the AAAPC especially Dimity Pond, has put in a lot of work to ensure Primary Health Care was represented.
- Jon Emery was very vocal in his opposition to the decision but Mark Harris did indicate that it was very difficult to make the argument because the number of project grants submitted was substantially smaller
- Nick opened discussion -is it because the success of project grants is so low that people have decided to focus on partnership grants, perhaps we have lost capacity due to all the changes in PHCRED over the years
- He felt grant fluctuation does not seem the answer
- Ellen confirmed that she had data from the NHMRC for 20012-13 but not for 2013-14 but hopes to obtain this soon. She has the data on the number of primary health care projects applications and their success rates this can be found in the AAAPC December 2012 newsletter. She felt that there may have been unintended consequences due to the changes in the PHCRED strategy. Nick noted that people who had success in CRE grants were possibly not pursuing NHMRC project grants
- Ellen has invited the new CEO of the NHMRC panel Anne Kelso to attend a plenary session at conference and is hoping the issues that we have raised today could be addressed.
- Nick 's concern was that the next consequence could be that the NHMRC will not invite primary health care academics onto the panels and assessment of our grants could be left up to those who do not really have the capability of gauging primary care grants. To follow up with Jane Gunn if she is still involved in the research committee

v. *GP vocational training*: Nick asked if there was anything the AAAPC needed to do now that boundaries for vocational training have been released. It seems to be state based in most cases and requests for tenders were not announced. Kirsty Douglas reported that ACT has been put into western NSW which was a surprise. The ACT has had 20 years of patient flow, linkages and medical school impact linkages with Lower Eastern NSW and these long term relationships have been disrupted .Neither the ACT or the ANU had seen it coming and there was no discussion.

vi. *General Practice Research Doctorate*: This will be discussed at the HODs meeting in July and to leave off the agenda

**10. Financial** The membership subscriptions are coming through \$18,942.06

**11. New Members:** Stacey Masters Flinders University

#### ACTION ITEMS

ACTION: Nick to email Penny Shakespeare

ACTION: Nick to email Andrew Pennington

ACTION: Kirsty to contact registrar

ACTION: Ellen to write article in: *This week in Primary Health Care* highlighting the registrar program

ACTION: Kitty to collate the abstracts sent in for the NAPCRAG –AAAPC prize and send to Nick then and then set up small group to assess.

ACTION: Ellen to collect data on NHMRC grant applications 2013-2014

ACTION: Nick to contact Jon Emery and Jane Gunn and get thoughts on the NHMRC problem

ACTION: Possibly need to contact Roy Golding from the NHMRC panel

Next Meeting MAY 21 2015- GOTO Meeting

1.30pm EST: VIC, NSW, TAS, QLD

1.00pm: SA

3.30pm: New Zealand

11.30am: WA