



Association for Clinical Cytogenetics

<http://www.cytogenetics.org.uk>

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 19th September 2006

Central Hall University of York

The meeting was held in the presence of 45 members.

1 **Apologies**

There were no apologies

2 **Minutes of the AGM held on 13 September 2005**

These were accepted without amendment.

3 **Chairs Report**

3.1 **Professor Paul Polani**

It is with great sadness that the ACC learned of the death of Professor Paul Polani on 18 Feb 2006. He was the Second President of the ACC (1982-1985) and an Emeritus Fellow, and helped to steer the ACC through some of its formative years in terms of training, qualifications and professional standards. Professor Polani was a pioneer in work on human and mammalian cytogenetics. Dr John Crolla has written to Paul's brother to express ACC's deep condolences.

3.2 **Council Election Results**

These were as follows: Karen Thompson (Technologist), Mandeep Bahra, Suzanne McPhee, and Stephen Mountford (Junior Members), and Peter Howard, Sandra Birdsall, Kim Smith and Amanda Dixon-McIver (Ordinary Members).

3.3 **Council – Retiring Members**

Recorded thanks to Michelle Fenlon (first co-opted Technologist on Council), Hazel Harvey-Smith and Chris Wragg (Junior Members), and Lorraine Gaunt (Ordinary Member), for their hard work and immense commitment on behalf of the Association over the past three years.

3.4 **ACC Spring Meeting 2006**

Thanks were extended to all staff in the Great Ormond Street and Kennedy Galton Cytogenetics Laboratories for organising an excellent 2006 Spring Meeting in London. The 2007 meeting is being organised by Sheffield between 16-17 April. Venues for subsequent Spring Meetings are: 2008 Liverpool, and 2009 Edinburgh

3.5 **ACC Council**

The Trustees of Council were invited to propose ideas and principles for restructuring Council, to increase its effectiveness and accountability, and enhance the roles of Council's Committees. A Working Party from Council (led by Peter Howard) then developed these proposals, and these will be presented for approval later in the meeting.

3.6 **Genetic Technologists**

This has been a year of outstanding progress for the Genetic Technologists and AGTC. The VRC became a Limited Company on 8 September 2006, and you can expect it to start scrutinising applications to join its voluntary register soon. The voluntary register must run for at least two years before VRC can petition HPC for regulation of its aspirant professions, including the Genetic Technologists. AGTC has become a formal Committee of both ACC and CMGS Councils, giving it a firm financial basis, and embedding its representation and status on both Professional Bodies. AGTC hosted a well attended Study Day on 28 June 2006 to explain the VRC and Registration. AGTC, ACC-ETC and CMGS-TAB, are jointly working on proposals for Genetic Technologists' pre-Registration training. ACC Council elected its first Technologist Member with full voting rights during 2006. Particular praise must go to Michelle Fenlon, Frankie Shaw and Sarah King (ACC) and Marcus Allen (CMGS, Chair of AGTC). Next year – We might expect AGTC to deliver its own report to the AGM.

3.7 **Heads of Department Meeting**

21-22 March 2006 Newcastle. Covered workforce and training, and strategic issues. Areas where ACC plans to undertake further work include:

- 1) extent and benefits of automation (Angela Douglas lead);
- 2) A minimum national service specification (e.g. types of referral and range of testing);
- 3) agreed statement on 'direction of travel' for Clinical Cytogenetics over the next 5-10 years, with workforce plan;
- 4) increasing ACC's 'voice', particularly in cancer, since we have limited representation on Cancer Networks.

Post HoDs Meeting, Nick Telford is leading a national audit on Cytogenetics compliance with the 2004 Cancer Manual Standards.

3.8 **HCS Career Framework**

Launched by DoH in November 2005, the ACC has undertaken national collaborative work to produce a set of consensus KSF profiles to assist Cytogenetics Departments. A working Party of Council (led by Jonathan Waters) has drafted examples of evidence to support annual KSF assessment and the progression through Gateways. We await progress on the Advisor role announced in the Framework, and evidence that Trusts are adopting the new career stage names.

3.9 **Review of Genetics Reference Laboratories**

Chair of Council has been involved in this review during 2006. The process is confidential, but the outcome will be known well before the current five-year contract period ends during 2007.

3.10 **UKGTN**

Cytogenetics Departments offering UK-wide specialised tests can now join UKGTN. An invitation-to-join letter will be sent to all UK Cytogenetics Services soon.

3.11 **IT in Genetics**

The Manchester Genetics Reference Laboratory has produced draft data exchange standards to facilitate the electronic communication of information between UK Genetics Laboratories. This draft has been created and agreed with input from ACC, CMGS and UKGTN.

3.12 **2005-06 Consultations**

ACC responded to the consultation on diagnostic testing from the National Antenatal Screening Programme (John Wolstenholme lead); and is responding to the three year review of the 2003 Genetics White Paper (Val Davison lead). It has contributed to HPC consultations via ACS.

3.13 **CPD**

Members were reminded that HPC will start to audit CPD of a random sample of Registered HCS from 2008. Clinical Scientists will start to be audited from 2009, with review of a two year period (i.e. 2007-2009). Therefore, please ensure that you are collecting/keeping evidence of CPD from 2007.

3.14 TP stands down as Chair at this AGM. He thanked all those he had worked with, who had made his time in office easier. He welcomed the new Chair, Kim Smith.

4 **Resolutions**

1. In rule 10.3 to amend the first sentence to read: "Every Candidate for general Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Ordinary Member, Junior Membership and Technologist membership of the Council shall be nominated in writing by two members qualified to vote in such an election".

Passed unanimously

2. In rule 10.3.5 to amend the Rule for Junior Membership to "...must be employed as a Clinical Scientist at Band 7, or a pre-Registration Clinical Scientist Trainee, or equivalent on University or MRC scales"; and Junior Members shall resign their Membership of Council; "...following promotion beyond Band 7 or its equivalent in University or MRC employment.

Passed unanimously

3. In Rule 10.3.8 to add the sentence: "One year prior to the end of the Chairman of Council's term of office, Council shall undertake an election to either 1) Re-elect the existing chairman for a further period of office (see Rule 10.3.7); or 2) Elect a Deputy Chairman who shall become the next Chairman of Council.

Passed unanimously

4. To renumber 14 and 14.1

Passed unanimously

5. To add rule 14.2: The following Officers of Council shall form an Executive that is authorised to agree and take decisions about matters that require actions prior to the next meeting of Council: Chairman, Deputy Chairman, General Secretary and Treasurer.

Passed unanimously

6. To add rule 14.3: Council shall approve the Chairman of the following Committees of Council, and shall replace the Chairman if necessary: Education and Training Committee, Professional Standards and Best Practice Committee, Scientific Committee, and Strategic Development Committee (the former two Committees are Standing Committees of Council; the latter two Committees are formed and disbanded as required). The following two Committees of Council shall approve their own Chairman: Junior Liaison Committee, and the Associated Genetic Technologists' Committee. The membership of all Committees of Council, and all changes in membership, shall be notified to Council at least annually.

Passed unanimously

7. Proposal for Change of Name from:

Association of Clinical Cytogeneticists
to
Association for Clinical Cytogenetics

Passed unanimously

The changes will be presented to the registrar of Friendly Societies.

5 **JLC report**

The report was delivered by Fiona Harding

5.1 **BSHG meeting 2005**

The JLC thanked Peter Howard for his presentation in the JLC session. Concerns were expressed at the attendance at the session.

5.2 **Spring Meeting 2006**

JLC thanked Teresa Davis presentation on MRCPPath, which was well attended and informative. JLC canvassed junior members to discover how many were sitting MRCPPath and the availability of study groups. JLC will try to link MRCPPath candidates to available study groups.

- 5.3 **BSHG 2006**
Presentations from TP and HHS. Again this was poorly attended
- 5.4 **Cytogenetics Career Factsheet**
JLC were asked to review and suggest changes.
- 5.5 **Restructuring of Council**
A member of JLC sat on the re-structuring sub-committee. It was proposed that the JLC subcommittee met separately to council. The JLC produced a draft remit for JLC and are now working on a final draft with KS.
- 5.6 **ETC**
Simon M^cCullough will sit on ETC as a JLC representative.
- 5.7 **Liaison with laboratories**
This has continued with the distribution of job adverts, ACC Council minutes and other appropriate material. The list of laboratory contacts has been updated.
- 5.8 **Membership changes.**
Three new members have been elected:-
Suzanne M^cPhee (Glasgow)
Mandeep Bahra (Oxford)
Stephen Mountford (Kennedy Galton)
The three outgoing members are HHS, CW and ADM.
- 5.9 From the floor Norman Pratt pointed out that there were few Junior Members present at the AGM. He pointed out that they need to be active in the profession and their poor attendance at the AGM was disappointing.
- 6 **Education and Training Committee Report**
This was presented by KS
- 6.1 **Pre-Registration training - "A Grade"**
A course was run for internal assessors, and there should now be one in each laboratory.
The updated national training programme was launched on 1st Sep at a meeting of all lead trainers. The programme has been:
- Simplified
 - FISH & pertinent molecular techniques integrated into all modules
 - Emphasis placed on experimental design and planning
 - Data analysis focused on a single substantial audit useful to service
 - Case studies replaced by case scenarios to test the trainee's case handling skills
- All documentation is on the ETC website.
- Gavin Cuthbert, together with administrative help from Trish Sewell, is co-ordinating the programme and trainee progression. The process of Gavin undertaking all first assessments is working well and ensures standardisation across all trainees.
- 6.2 **Post-Registration Training**
Three study days have run this year:
- Molecular Cytogenetics in Leeds
 - Haematology Cytogenetics in London
 - Genetic Technologists Update day in Birmingham
- Planned study days for the next six months are:
- Microarrays in Cardiff
 - Oligoarrays in diagnostic practice in Oxford
 - Sex determination & patient management in Newcastle
- NOWGEN (Manchester based Knowledge Park) will also be running a two day course on Molecular Genetics for Cytogeneticists and depending on it's success is willing to offer more courses.
- 6.3 **Technical Training**
The Genetic Technologists have produced a draft training programme linked to their scope of practice and National Occupational standards. This will be discussed at the next ETC meeting and a national training programme should be launched in the near future.
- 6.4 **Workforce**
ETC continues to collect workforce data from all UK labs and provides workforce planning information to the Dept of Health Workforce Review Team.
ETC is also represented on the RCPATH Clinical Scientist Workforce Planning Group, which provides more global information to the Dept of Health on Clinical Scientist numbers.
- 6.5 **Careers**
ETC continues to disseminate careers information to Universities and respond to all individual enquiries about joining our profession.
- 6.6 **New Members**
A member of JLC has joined ETC. They will work on specific projects and will provide a link between junior members and the ETC. The RCPATH HST has also joined ETC and will liaise with and support MRCPATH study groups. She will also provide a further link to RCPATH on training issues.
- 6.7 **Modernising Healthcare Science Careers**
The Chief Scientific Officer and Skills for Health (SfH) are discussing changes to training structures with the professions. The aim to produce a more widely trained workforce that is more flexible to future changes and to unify, as much as possible, the large number of specialist professions in clinical science in the NHS.
To date, SfH and DH have identified the preferred changes to be:
- Change to three year training programme, ending in registration.
 - Delivery by both NHS labs and Universities such that the training programmes are quality controlled against academic

standards and the awards are an academic qualification.

- Training to be as broad as possible across all healthcare science and groups (e.g. life sciences, physical sciences and physiological measurement)
- Scopes of practice for technical staff, clinical scientists at the point of registration and at Consultant level are defined and these set the endpoints for training programmes.

Cytogenetics and Molecular Genetics have been merged and ACC and CMGS have been asked to draft a 'Genetics' training programme and to also identify which topics can be taught across all science disciplines and all life sciences as part of a general national training structure.

All professions have expressed concerns that by broadening training as well as reducing the training period, individuals may not be adequately trained for registration.

This information has been circulated to all HoDs and further updates will be circulated as the situation progresses.

6.8 Following questions from the floor KS pointed out that there would be workforce planning to identify the number of consultant posts and to try to match this to trainee posts. Genetics does not have a high number of consultant posts, as we are in Regional centres. The profession needs an increase in consultant (not HoD) posts.

7 **Professional Standards Committee report**

Presented by Edna Maltby

7.1 **Activity 2005-06**

- Publication of guidelines for running workshops 2005
- March 2005 workshop on guidelines for prenatal diagnosis Bristol
- Workload activity data collected for 03/04 and disseminated 2005 (on-line approach)
- A draft of the revised 2001 guidelines sent out to HoDs in Oct 2005; six revisions before presentation to council in Sept 2006
- Revised guidelines, CVS and Haemato-oncology presented to Council for ratification September 2006.
- Minor details to be amended on all before ratification; need final draft of postnatal to be agreed for consistency with general guidelines
- September 2006 workload activity collection for 04/05 and 05/06 instigated.

7.2 **Future Work**

1. General guidelines will be cross-referenced to specific guidelines.
2. Haematology disease specific areas and smaller specialties to be developed.
3. Guidelines will be reviewed annually and document control instigated.
4. UK wide audits to be introduced.

7.3 EM thanked all those in the profession who had contributed. She particularly thanked the members of the PSC for their time and efforts – Rod Howell, Zoe Docherty, Ros Hastings, Fiona Ross and Sarah Ryley.

8.0 **Treasurers Report**

8.1 **Adoption of Accounts**

The accounts were audited by Wilkins Kennedy. Copies of the financial statement were made available to members at the meeting. The accounts showed a healthy surplus, some of which was due to unique events and such large surpluses are not sustainable.

Proposal to adopt accounts

Proposed by Val Davison

Seconded by Lorraine Gaunt

The accounts were adopted unanimously.

8.2 **Reappointment of Auditors**

Proposed by John Crolla

Seconded by Steve Williams

Passed unanimously

8.3 **Travel Awards**

Four requests were received, all were granted and received £250 each.

8.4 **ECA**

JW reported that he is also to become treasurer of the ECA.

9 **Correspondence**

There was no correspondence not dealt with elsewhere.

10 **Matters arising from the AGM held on 13th September 2005**

There were no matters arising.

11 **Any Other Business**

Norman Pratt on behalf of the members present thanked Tony Parkin for his work as Chair of the ACC.

The meeting closed at 3:40pm

Next Meeting BSHG 2007