



Association for Clinical Cytogenetics

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

ACC Annual General Meeting

27th April 2009

Draft Minutes

Kim Smith (KS)	Chair
Amanda Dixon-M ^c Iver (ADM)	Treasurer
Katie Waters (KW)	Assistant Secretary

1 Apologies for Absence – Teresa Davies

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 1st April 2008

These were accepted.

3 Chairs Report

During the past year, one of the biggest issues occupying our time was, and still is, Modernising Scientist Careers. The ACC and CMGS wrote a letter of concern to Professor Sue Hill at the DH over the lack of involvement of the professional bodies in early planning of the MSC proposal and programme. We been invited to join the group preparing for the Genetics Pilot and developing the 'Genetics' curriculum – we will be represented by the Chairs and members of ETC and CMGS TAB. I want to bring to your attention that training will be in Genetics and span essential areas of both cytogenetics and molecular genetics. Greater specialisation will occur at later training stages. ACC and CMGS also gave a joint response to the MSC consultation that closed in March. The issues were discussed in great depth at the HoLs meeting in January and our concerns as well as suggestions for alternative structures were fed back to the DH.

We have contributed to writing the 3rd edition Specialised Services National Definition Set No 20 – Medical Genetics services. This is a key reference document used in defining and funding specialist services. The final draft has just been circulated to all HoDs for information and feedback.

In addition we have responded to the House of Lords request for evidence on Genomic Medicine and to numerous HPC consultations on the registration process.

We will be responding to the RCPATH draft 4th edition on 'The retention and storage of pathological records and specimens'.

We had a successful HoLs meeting this year with the first day for specialist topics and the second day shared with CMGS on topics pertinent to both disciplines. We are recognising that the boundaries

between our disciplines is blurring with sharing of technology and a greater recognition of “Genetic services” externally. We are therefore working together more closely, responding jointly where a stronger political voice is required and sharing ideas and practice for mutual benefit.

A working party was established at the HoLs meeting to review workload units for Cytogenetics. Their proposed structure is currently being trialled in their labs and we will shortly hear about the proposed structure and the trial outcome.

The UKGenetic Testing Network has invited Cytogenetics Laboratories to join them. We have discussed how our working practices differ from molecular genetics laboratories, primarily in cytogenetic laboratories offering a standard core service rather than selected specialist repertoires. UKGTN are preparing a process for global acceptance of established core service and will only require dossiers to be submitted for rarer specialist or new services. Involvement with UKGTN will ensure Cytogenetics is involved in and can contribute to any consultations and changes prompted externally by the DH and other bodies.

As Chair, I attend a variety of meetings and am noticing a shift away from consulting directly with professional bodies and Royal Colleges and more emphasis on working with selected groups. The ACC is represented on the UKGTN Steering Group and, via the BSHG, on the Joint Committee on Medical Genetics.

We have been approached by the Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme Steering group to explore the possibility of collating and directly submitting our data on trisomies 13, 18 & 21 pregnancies and births. These discussions are ongoing.

For information, the ACS assessment dates for registration have changed. Several labs raised concerns over the timelag for trainees between completing their four years and having the assessment interview. The date of the first round of interviews in the year has been brought forward to accommodate this. Also please note that HPC has just announced an increase in fees this year. The ACC has awarded three research grants this year to Edinburgh, Liverpool and Cambridge. This now completes the final round of grant funding.

I would like to thank all my colleagues, both people on Council and all other individuals who help and support ACC affairs.

4 Reports from standing committees

4 a) Education and Training Committee report

In many ways this has been a frustrating year for the ETC, and much of it was spent marking time whilst clarity about the Modernising Scientific Careers project emerged. Latterly however the ACC and ETC have been represented at the curriculum development stage of the project and the structure is starting to take shape.

The report will cover the various areas of the remit of the ETC

Membership

Throughout the year the following changes have taken place :-

- Sarah Willis (GT Rep) has completed her term and ETC awaiting nomination from the AGTC for a replacement.
- Paul Campbell has resigned as Study day co-ordinator and a replacement is currently in abeyance pending further clarity around MSC and HSST.

- Val Davison co-opted on to ETC a MSC lead.
- Sian Morgan term has finished and is replaced by Susan Hamilton as representative to RCPATH SAC.

Technical Training

One major venture has been the new joint GT training scheme which went live in Jan 2009, with 14 labs accredited to deliver training. This is a joint scheme with CMGS.

A 'Training for Trainers' course was run in Feb 2009 with 16 participants. Again this was a joint venture with CMGS. The course was oversubscribed and it is intended to run a further course later this year.

Modernising Scientific Careers

Following publication of the document the consultation period now at an end and the outcome of the consultation is currently being analysed. A joint ACC/CMGS response was formulated in January at the joint HoD Meeting and was submitted.

Representatives for both CMGS (Dave Baty and Maggie Williams) and ACC (Gordon Lowther and Eileen Roberts) were invited to form a curriculum development team to look at both the curriculum and methods of assessment. This work is outwith the main stream of the MSC but those from the professions originally involved (Val Davison, Lorraine Gaunt, Ann Dalton and Anneke Seller) are also involved in this work.

The roll out of the Genetics Pilot is still scheduled for the autumn.

RCPATH e-Learning Project

Some modules of this ongoing project are reaching conclusion, and thanks are due to the several people who have put in a lot of time to develop them.

Workforce Data

This continues to be collected, published, and sent to the Workforce Development team at DoH. This will continue to be a valuable resource, particularly in light of one of the stated aims of MSC which is to be able to more accurately workforce plan.

Finally,

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have either served on, or worked with and for the ETC and its various activities over the last year, for the commitment and contribution they have made on behalf of the membership of the ACC.

4 b) Professional Standards Committee

Changes to BP guidelines

It is possible to propose an amendment to the guidelines via the ACC website. These proposed changes will be considered and categorised by the Chair & Deputy Chair of PSC who will make a decision on minor changes or will pass proposals for major amendments to the original authors for consideration.

Array BP – The ratified guidelines were published in early 2009.

Solid Tissue BP – The results of the questionnaire has been circulated and is now being used to help draft the BP guidelines.

Prenatal BP – The amalgamation and updating of the AF and CVS BP guidelines (also incorporating Fetal bloods) is almost complete and should be available soon.

CLL BP – Guidelines have been drafted after discussion at a workshop in October 08 and should be available for comment at the end of April

4 c) **Membership Liaison Committee**

MLC Restructure

The MLC has undergone a restructure with a view to involving the wider membership in the issues that affect the profession.

To reflect this we will be looking for input from members on the issues discussed at Council that will have a large impact on members

- Registration
- CPD
- Modernising Scientific Careers.

Registration

A new sample registration portfolio has been posted on the ACC website. This portfolio was successfully submitted to the ACS. See the ACC website for further details.

The newer portfolio includes more emphasis on the post A-grade period of training. This is in line with what assessors would like to see.

The MLC provided an input into the ACC's response to the document "The future of the healthcare science workforce. Modernising scientific careers, the next steps: a consultation".

Careers

Members of the MLC have represented Cytogenetics at two Northgate Careers Fairs.

If you know of any careers events near you, let us know.

MLC has also completed Career Profiles for some University Careers Departments

National Pathology Week 2008

The MLC contacted the network contacts to encourage participation in National Pathology Week 2008

A handful of events were organised which involved cytogenetics.

Talk to Msc students: 'Working as a Cytogeneticist'

Participation in a Pathology Skills Workshop at the Royal College of Pathologists

Producing a poster, lecturing to the public and recording a genetics video for school children

4 d) **AGTC report**

Current representation on ACC Council

- Anne Reilly – Elected 2007
- Ros Allen – Elected 2009
- Beverley Royston – Co-opted 2006

Registration update

Over the past 12 months the AGTC have been promoting the importance of registration.

Presentation at the 2008 Spring Conference by the AGTC Registrar, 'How to Become a Registered Technologist' Forwarded to Trainers and Lab Contacts for use by individual labs.

The number of registered technologists has significantly increased over the last 12 months.

April 2008 - 43 registrants.

April 2009 – 76 registrants.

- 44 cytogenetic technologists
- 32 molecular genetic technologists.

Routes to registration

A degree and 3 years competent practice.

A degree and successful completion of the National Training Programme.

3 years experience and 3 years competent practice.

3 years experience and successful completion of the National Training Programme

Registration with HPC

Registration with the HPC requires fulfilment of 10 specific criteria, relating to the establishment of a voluntary register and the training and educational aspects of the profession.

HPC also require that all aspirant groups 'have at least one established professional body which accounts for a significant proportion of that occupational group.'

For the process to move forward it is vital that at least 25% of registrants are also members of their Professional Body.

Current data suggests that 12% of GTs are members of the ACC, but these are not necessarily registered.

National training programme

January 2009 – Introduction of the National Training Programme for Genetic Technologists.(Career framework 5)

Backdated to include new starters from January 2008, providing they can prove equivalence of training.

Eligible to apply for voluntary registration upon completion of the National Training Scheme.

Modernising Scientific careers

Consultation document which will define the future training and career pathways for ALL healthcare scientists.

Pilot schemes are due to commence in October 2009 for both Practitioners (GTs) and Trainee Scientists.

The proposed changes may mean that unregistered staff may be adversely affected, therefore it is advisable that those who are eligible to register do so.

5) Treasurers report

The accounts were presented by the retiring Treasurer, Dr John Wolstenholme.

The Financial statements for year ended 31 December 2008 were presented.

Adoption of Accounts The accounts were audited by Wilkins Kennedy. The accounts remain healthy and were adopted unanimously

Travel Awards There have been no requests for Travel Awards in the last financial year. Dr Wolstenholme expressed disappointment at the lack of interest in these awards

Research Project Grants Three research project grants have been awarded in the past year, to the laboratories in Cambridge, Liverpool and Edinburgh. The funds allocated to these Project Grants have now been used up. Five awards have been in total.

Reappointment of Auditors

The proposal to re-appoint Wilkins Kennedy as Auditors was agreed unanimously.

Dr Amanda Dixon-McIver formally took over the post of ACC Treasurer on 1st January 2009. All matters regarding the ACC Accounts should now be addressed to her.

6 Correspondence

None received

7 Matters arising from AGM on 1st April 2008

None

8 Any other business

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the death of Rob Morgan. Rob was a senior member of the Leeds laboratory, a National Officer of the Federation of Clinical Scientists and a member of Council for many years, helping us as Assistant Secretary. Rob was always positive and cheerful and always willing to help his colleagues and will be very much missed by everyone who knew him.

9 Date and venue of next meeting

12/13th April at ACC Spring Conference , Oxford