



MINUTES OF THE ULTRASOUND ADVISORY GROUP (UAG) HELD ON THURSDAY 16TH JULY 2009, AT THE OFFICES OF THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS, 207 PROVIDENCE SQUARE, LONDON SE1 2EW

- PRESENT:**
- Elizabeth Chapman {EC}
 - Gill Dolbear {GD} {Chair}
 - Regina Fernando {RF}
 - Wendy Williams {WW}
 - Lisa Wright {LW}
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- Nigel Thomson {NT}
 - Valerie Asemah {VA} {Minutes}

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Elizabeth Chapman, the former UKAS chair who has become part of this group (and was unable to attend the previous meeting) was warmly welcomed. Brief introductions were made.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Julie Burnage, Jean Carter, Trish Chudleigh, Anne-Marie Dixon, Vivien Gibbs, Gerry Johnson, Rosemary Kelso, Pauline Kilbourn, Rosemary Lee, Janis Martin, Crispian Oates, Audrey Paterson and Rita Phillips.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19TH MARCH 2009

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2009 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING & ACTION POINTS NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA

4.1 Elaine Watt *minute 1.2*

It was noted that a letter was sent to EW (from AP) to thank her for her contribution to the group.

4.2 NHS Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme for England Update *minute 4.2*

NT reported that there is nothing further to report at the moment. Updates are regularly posted on the Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme website. The learning resource being developed by Jill Rogers Associates to support the introduction of the 18w – 20w 6d anomaly screening scan was also discussed.

4.3 Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening (England) *minute 4.5*

AP attended a meeting three weeks ago and things are progressing well. It was noted that another 5 pilot sites will be joining the ones already offering AAA Screening. There are Quality Assurance issues that are currently being dealt with by the AAA screening programme team; these include the actual measurement technique for any aneurysm detected. VA to keep as an agenda item for now. There may be further issues arising so this will still be monitored by the UAG.

ACTION: VA

4.4 Scope of Practice in Ultrasound Document – Update *minute 7.1*

It was noted that the above document has been approved at Council and will be added to the website shortly.

4.5 Carotid Ultrasound *minute 9.1*

Due to pressure of work CO was unable to provide an update/article for Synergy, and this is still outstanding. He hopes to be able to produce an update article on carotid ultrasound in due course. It was noted that CO recently attended a study day where his recommendations for carotid ultrasound was widely discussed and very well received.

ACTION: CO

4.6 Fetal Medicine Foundation Accreditation and Re-Accreditation for Nuchal Translucency Measurement *minute 10.1*

NT reported that FASP has produced a further update with the suggestion that the above will eventually be brought within the FASP remit. At the recent Eastern Region sonographer's meeting there was concern over many aspects of the nuchal translucency measurement and first trimester screening in general. There was also concern that there is an increased risk of MSK injury. NT has passed these comments onto Lyn Wigley, Health and Safety Officer and AP.

4.7 Expert Witnesses *minute 13.1*

NT informed the group that this work is ongoing and has not progressed further. Members of the group were advised to contact Audrey Paterson if they were willing to take on this kind of work, or knew someone who would be interested. It was hoped that there would be an announcement in Synergy News before too long.

4.8 Correspondence Group Allied to the UAG (Proposal) *minute 15.1*

NT reported that discussions are still ongoing between him and AP in regard to setting up an email group, but it may be that instead of a correspondence group consultations will be via the chairs of the National and Regional Councils.

ACTION: NT & AP

4.9 To note that the UKAS Study Day is scheduled for Thursday 29th October 2009.

5. UPDATE ON SONOGRAPHER REGISTRATION PROJECT

- 5.1 NT gave the group an update on the sonographer registration project informing them that the Health Professions Council (HPC) is still awaiting the DH publication on extending professional regulation before they make any decision on the sonographer registration project. It is hoped that SCoR will get a response in the autumn. If the HPC says yes, then this will just be the start of the process which could take several years. The group will be kept informed of progress. To date eight hundred and twenty nine (829) sonographers have registered on the Public Voluntary Register of Sonographers.

6. SONOGRAPHER REPORTING AND THE SUPPORT REQUIRED

- 6.1 RF updated the group on Sonographic reporting. The group discussed whether SCoR should give guidance on what they consider to be good quality reports. It was suggested that local protocols and guidelines may need tightening up; and a distinction might be made between band 7 and band 8a in terms of reporting. This was discussed further in relation to the AFC job matching procedures. It was agreed that NT and RF draft a paper to outline good reporting practices and to give guidance on the questions raised by Regina's paper.

ACTION: NT & RF

7. RECENT CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 NT updated the group on recent NICE consultations:

With regard to the NICE Ovarian Cancer Scoping, no action was needed but the comments from NICE on the stakeholder's feedback were interesting, showing they have consulted widely. NT thanked the group for their involvement and contributions to these consultations. SCoR feedback to formal consultations will be published on the website.

8. MEETING WITH BMUS ON 27TH APRIL 2009

- 8.1 NT updated the group on the recent meeting held between BMUS and SCoR at which ultrasound safety was one of the items discussed. It was felt that SCoR should follow the BMUS safety statements as they are clear and concise – NT will check with AP whether this action has to go to Council for approval. It was noted that Doppler is often requested by patients in the first trimester to listen to the fetal heart. The safety considerations of this were discussed.

ACTION: NT

9. ULTRASOUND COMPUTER SIMULATOR

- 9.1 The group discussed the new computer based ultrasound simulator, information on which has been distributed with the minutes. It was agreed it was different from previous simulators, but its usefulness will need to be evaluated.

10. REQUEST TO VIDEO OBSTETRIC ULTRASOUND EXAMINATIONS

- 10.1 The issue of parents wishing to videotape obstetric ultrasound scans was raised and it was felt that some sonographers may not be entirely happy with this. Ultimately local Trusts should agree their own protocols, taking into account the issues involved, local guidance and take advice from the Trust's legal department if required. SCoR need to produce a protocol. NT agreed to reword the statement taken from the now archived 1995 document entitled 'Guidance for Obstetrics and Gynaecology Ultrasound Departments' and email to the group for comments.

ACTION: NT & GROUP

11. NATIONAL ULTRASOUND STEERING GROUP MEETING

- 11.1 NT informed the group the National Ultrasound Steering Group was a short term group on which SCoR had representation. One of the agenda items at its final meeting in June related to endo-probe cleaning regimes. There is great variation throughout the UK and both the Australian and American regimes are much more intensive than is usual in the UK. Paul Dubbins, who was the chair of the NUSG, is following up with the National Imaging Board. Further research is really needed into this area.

12. INDEPENDENT PRACTICE GROUP

- 12.1 NT informed the group that the Independent Diagnostic Practitioner Association (IDPA) wound up about 6 months ago. In its place it is hoped that an email correspondence group could be set up. To date only a few members has shown interest. NT will email group with the relevant details.

ACTION: NT

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13.1 NT informed the group that the Essex Cardiac and Stroke Network have a local initiative on carotid ultrasound and they are hoping to train sonographers who are already currently employed in departments in the East of England SHA. NT will try to circulate this information to the group as it was posted in an ultrasound department and not directly to him.

ACTION: NT

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.1 It was noted that in view of a change to the number of meetings (throughout the whole of the SCoR) the UAG will now only have 2 meetings instead of the usual 3. The next UAG is scheduled to be held on Thursday 26th November 2009. NT will discuss with AP with regard to timings and formats of future meeting. Urgent business can still be conducted via the internet or teleconference.

ACTION: NT

Note: The date of the next meeting is now confirmed as **Thursday 26th November 2009** with the following meeting being held on **Thursday 25th March 2010**.