



**MINUTES OF THE ULTRASOUND ADVISORY GROUP (UAG) HELD ON THURSDAY 21ST
NOVEMBER 2013, AT THE OFFICES OF THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS, 207
PROVIDENCE SQUARE, LONDON SE1 2EW**

PRESENT: Julie Burnage {JB}
Liz Chapman {LC} {Chair}
Elaine Gardiner {EG}
Gill Harrison {GH}
Crispian Oates {CO}
Suzanne Poulton {SP}
Wendy Williams {WW}
Gill Yaz {GY} {Guest}

IN ATTENDANCE: Valerie Asemah {VA} {Minutes}
Nigel Thomson {NT}

Gill Yaz from 'Shine' (Spina bifida, hydrocephalus, Information, Networking, Equality) came in and gave a presentation to the group relating to the scanning terms used to describe features of babies with spina bifida and the problems that the use of these terms can cause.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the group and round table introductions were made, especially for the benefit of new members, Elaine Gardiner and Gill Harrison, and guest Gill Yaz.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from David Cole, Alison Hall, Gerry Johnson, Audrey Paterson, Michael Purdon and Margaret Taylor.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25TH APRIL 2013

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25th April 2013, were approved as a true and accurate copy.

4. MATTERS ARISING OTHERWISE NOT ON THE AGENDA

4.1 A new RCR Ultrasound working party (minute 6.1)

NT informed the group that a joint RCR/SCoR working party is currently looking at ultrasound standards and a report is due out early next year, hopefully in January. The working party is being chaired by Paul Spencer, a consultant radiologist.

Due SCoR process will be followed in the production of this document which will eventually need to be approved by Council.

There will be recommended standards for reporting, audit and equipment, along with other aspects of quality assurance included.

4.2 UKAS Guidelines update (10.1)

NT gave an update to the group on the UKAS guidelines. This is 'on hold' until the RCR/SCoR document (4.1) is completed and BMUS have published an expected document on equipment quality assurance which was due towards the end of the year. Once the content of these is known a start can be made on updating the UKAS Guidelines. These can incorporate the many documents that have been published by the SCoR since 2008 and hopefully will be a fairly swift process.

NT stated in response to a question that old, outdated and unsuitable ultrasound equipment should not be used as it could put a sonographer's registration at risk if no comment made to an employer or no action taken and machine then continued to be used.

4.3 Any other business (minute 17.2)

At the last meeting it was noted that Jean Carter {JC} had an invitation to submit an article for ultrasound. No further update from JC to confirm if this is indeed going ahead.

5. REPORTING TEMPLATES

Alison Hall was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting to discuss this agenda item, she sent her apologies.

- 5.1 Concern was raised that the Leeds school is under threat of closure and there was a discussion about sonographer numbers and training in general. Following this discussion it was agreed that LC as the Chair of the UAG will write to Richard Evans/Audrey Paterson to express concerns on this issue as this will further add to the sonographer shortage problem. LC also agreed to discuss with Audrey Paterson whether a formal letter should be sent to the relevant LETB for the Leeds area. LC will draft and circulate letter to the group for comments before sending to Audrey Paterson

ACTION: LC

There are also other ultrasound courses that may be threatened either with closure or with suspension of intakes for a period.

6. 'QUALITY' OF ULTRASOUND EXAMINATIONS

- 6.1 NT informed the group that the RCR/SCoR Standards document currently in production had been initiated originally by the RCR due to concern that the quality of some ultrasound examinations and the associated report was not as good as they perhaps could be. This is a problem affecting both providers and sonographers. Sonographers have a duty to inform providers they are working for if they are having difficulties with aspects of service delivery.

If no changes are made following internal review and discussion, or if their views are not taken into account or dismissed the sonographer might consider contacting the CQC (England) as all providers have to be registered with them.

- 6.2 JB raised the recurring issue of the denial by the CQC with respect to 3D/4D baby scanning boutiques who provide no report and use unqualified staff that they have to register when she referred one to them. SCoR published information can be found at <http://www.sor.org/news/sor-statement-entertainment-scans> NT stated that the CQC have recently stated that these providers do have to register with them (England only).

7. PRIMARY BSc DEGREE IN ULTRASOUND BRIEFING DOCUMENT

- 7.1 For note as this have been previously circulated and has been published in the SCoR document library. It is a briefing document outlining the areas that will need to be considered should an HEI and local organisations be considering introducing a primary degree course in ultrasound.

8. NEXT STUDY DAY

- 8.1 NT asked the group to send him any ideas they have for the next study day as soon as possible.

ACTION: ALL

9. RECORDING OF IMAGES DOCUMENT

- 9.1 NT informed the group that this is the final call for any comments on the 'Recording of Images by Patients during Diagnostic Imaging' document that has been circulated previously. All departments should have their local policy on display. It is hoped that this document can be published by the beginning of December 2013.

10. LETBs and LETCs

- 10.1 NT gave an update to the group informing them that in England LETBs and LETCs are the primary point of contact for funding for sonographer training although there is no specific mention of sonographers by any LETB. The devolved countries will have their own funding pathways but lack of money is a major problem as far as sonographer education and sonographer numbers are concerned. The LETB is the main point of contact.

11. FASP

- 10.1 NT informed the group that FASP has new staffing, and is now part of Public Health England being linked with a group of other non-cancer screening programmes. He is due to attend a meeting related to FASP DQASS on Tuesday 26th November 2013 where he will enquire about Down's pick-up and false positive rates. He further asked the group to please let him know if there are any issues they wanted to raise.

12. PII

- 11.1 NT reminded the group that there is a large amount of information and briefings around Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) on the website which can be found here. <https://www.sor.org/being-member/professional-indemnity-insurance/pii-guidance-members> UAG members will be aware that when legislation is complete statutorily registered members must by law have PII in place. For many this will be provided by an employer but those working independently will need to sure of their insurance position. Warren has issued a series of briefing articles which have recently been published in Synergy News.

It was noted that there is also a set of FAQ's on Sonographer registration on the website that have been written specifically for the forthcoming renewal.

13. RECENT CONSULTATIONS (since last meeting)

- 13.1 NT gave an update on recent consultations. It has been a fairly quiet period, the main one has been a National Screening Committee consultation on vasa praevia that had been circulated to the group previously. It is likely that screening for high risk cases will be introduced but there is much work to do before this becomes a reality. AMP attended a recent meeting organised by the NSC to discuss.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 14.1 NT informed the group that he had an appeal from the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) requesting 'mock up' CPD profiles to put on their website, as they do not currently have any from radiographer sonographers. NT explained that this would be straightforward for those who are keeping good records or for those who were audited last time round. If permission is granted the HCPC will carry out the editing. Anyone who is interested should please view www.hcpc-uk.org/registrants/sampleprofiles/ and he wanted to ask if anyone on the group would be willing to provide some.

It would be excellent if this group can help, so please let NT or VA know if you are willing.

ACTION: GROUP

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 15.1 The date of the next meeting has been agreed as Thursday 15th May 2014, commencing at 1.00pm (lunch available from 12.30pm).