



MINUTES OF THE ULTRASOUND ADVISORY GROUP (UAG) HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH APRIL 2013, AT THE OFFICES OF THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS, 207 PROVIDENCE SQUARE, LONDON SE1 2EW

PRESENT:

- Julie Burnage {JB}
- Jean Carter {JC}
- Trish Chudleigh {CC}
- David Cole {DC}
- Vivien Gibbs {VG}
- Gerry Johnson {GJ}
- Crispian Oates {CO}
- Suzanne Poulton {SP}
- Michael Purdon {MP}
- Wendy Williams {WW}

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Valerie Asemah {VA} {Minutes}
- Nigel Thomson {NT}
- Audrey Paterson {AP} {Chair}

Stuart Gall from Medaphor came in and gave a presentation to the group of the abdominal virtual ultrasound simulator.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 AP welcomed all to the meeting and explained that she would be chairing the meeting as the Chair (Elizabeth Chapman) was unable to attend the meeting today. Round table introductions were made.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Liz Chapman and Alison Hall.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8TH NOVEMBER 2012

3.1 Subject to a typographical error in the heading of item 9 the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th November 2012, were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING OTHERWISE NOT ON THE AGENDA

4.1 Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme (minute 4.1)

To note that from 1st April 2013 the Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme (FASP) became part of Public Health England. AP updated the group on the recent changes and a brief discussion was held. It was noted that there had been very little communication from FASP but there would inevitably be a settling down period. AP will be in contact with Annette McHugh who will be lead contact for the obstetric screening programmes in due course. There are at least two major consultations that are on-going.

ACTION: AP

4.2 Sonographer Shortage (minute 4.2)

NT gave feedback to the group. NT had as previously discussed raised the issue of ultrasound training not being delivered as agreed with the RCOG. This was formally discussed at the RCOG Ultrasound Advisory Group (RCOG UAG) meeting in January 2013 which both he and AP attended. NT had previously contacted the RCOG UAG Chair with our concerns.

5. POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ULTRASOUND TRAINING FROM THE NEW LETBs

- 5.1 VG highlighted her concerns over sonographer training following the NHS re-organisation that came into effect on 1st April 2013. The SHA's were no longer in existence, some (e.g. West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside) had been very pro-active in sonographer training. It was noted that NT and AP had been involved with the East Midlands LETB which has taken the sonographer shortage issue very seriously. It is important that links and discussions are opened with LETBs and group members are encouraged to contact them. Please do keep NT informed of any local developments.

ACTION: ALL

6. A NEW RCR ULTRASOUND WORKING PARTY

- 6.1 VG informed the group that she had been invited to join a new RCR Ultrasound working party and the first meeting is due to be held next week, she will be attending. It appears that the RCR is hoping to produce a document indicating what would constitute a quality ultrasound service. The SCoR have not yet been formally asked to be involved in this. AP will follow up with the RCR.

ACTION: AP

7. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1 CO sought the views of the group on the situation regarding direct recruitment to sonography either at postgraduate or undergraduate level from a non-radiography background. There was a brief discussion. SCoR policy can be found at <https://www.sor.org/learning/document-library/developing-and-growing-sonographer-workforce-education-and-training-needs>

8. SONOGRAPHER CONTRACTS WITH INDEPENDENT/PRIVATE COMPANIES and INDEMNITY INSURANCE

- 8.1 SP spoke about independent practice contracts she has been asked to sign which had been previously forwarded to the SCoR for comment. There were problems with the wording of these contracts including whether or not employee or self employed status was held. There was discussion around this issue. It was noted that Society members are covered through their indemnity insurance on a personal member basis only; the scheme does not cover Companies. SP asked whether there could be some guidance on this. NT and AP advised that full details of the SCoR PII are available via the website and are currently being reviewed. There is currently an additional separate document relating to ultrasound indemnity insurance but this must be read in conjunction with the SCoR general insurance advice.

Members were strongly urged to be very careful when entering into any sort of contract (whether it be for employment or services) and to be absolutely certain they understand everything before signing. Members may have to pay for legal advice as required; the SCoR can respond to general queries but cannot give detailed legal advice on individual contracts.

There may be implications for CQC registration if working as a sub-contractor and not as an employee (England only).

JB outlined the insurance requirements that applied to her company.

9. PVRS UPDATE

- 9.1 NT updated the group on the PVRS upgrading which completed on 31st January 2013. Currently there are 740 on the register of whom approx. 120 have no statutory regulatory home. The current voluntary registration period will end on March 1st 2015. There are at present no plans to seek voluntary register accreditation with the Professional Standards Agency (PSA). This is very expensive and will require a full disciplinary and complaints procedure to be in place which would potentially be a risk for the SCoR. AP and NT will monitor the situation. The situation with respect to a possible equivalence route for some sonographers to obtain statutory registration as clinical scientists via the Academy for Healthcare Sciences (AHCS) will also be closely monitored. The AHCS may also allow a route for voluntary registers associated with them to gain PSA accreditation.

As far as MP was aware the Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP) has as yet not expressed any plans to seek accredited voluntary register status.

10. UKAS GUIDELINES UPDATE

- 10.1 The group discussed the UKAS Guidelines and volunteers were needed to lead on this update. It was hoped that they would be able to be published later this year. WW volunteered to help and other members of the UAG have expressed an interest in the past. A 'Scoping' meeting will be held in due course.

ACTION: AP and NT

11. PLANNING THE NEXT STUDY DAY

- 11.1 NT updated the group. The next study day will be held on 22nd May 2013 at SCoR HQ based on the successful study day held last June in Birmingham. This has sold out and a follow-up study day has been planned for November 2013. To note that Alison Hall and the MSK Special Interest group will be running a 'hands-on' MSK study day on 18/19th May. This has also filled all available places. Anyone interested in running a study day in 2014 should please let NT know.

Suggested study day topics included:

- Education and Workforce
- Medaphor simulator

ACTION: ALL

12. UAG SUCCESSION

- 12.1 AP updated the group on UAG succession reminding them that in line with Council policy membership of advisory groups is reviewed every July. Five UAG members are due to reach the end of their term of office on 30th June 2013 but if they wished to stay on the group were encouraged to apply. VA has full details of how to do this, please contact her.

It was noted that Teresa Killeen (Northern Ireland) has just resigned from the group.

13. ACADEMY OF HEALTHCARE SCIENCES AND POSSIBLE ROUTES TO REGISTRATION

- 13.1 This was discussed along with item 9.

14. RECENT 'EXAMINATION TIMES and APPOINTMENTS' DOCUMENT

- 14.1 NT drew attention to the publication of this document and thanked them for all their comments.

15. RCOG GREENTOP 31 (for information)

- 15.1 There has been a recent update to this document which relates to management of the small for dates fetus and includes ultrasound recommendations. Some may have an effect on departmental protocols. The SCoR was not formally consulted.

16. RECENT CONSULTATIONS (since last meeting)

- 16.1 Current consultations:

- NICE Draft lower urinary tract quality standards (closes 14th May 2013)
- NICE Draft quality standards, multiple pregnancy (closes 3rd May 2013)
- NICE Draft sideline Acute Kidney Injury (closes 29th Apr 2013)

Closed, since last meeting:

- NICE Urinary incontinence in women, draft guideline (closed 19th Mar 2013)
- FASP on-line consultation on care pathways for gastroschisis and exomphalos (closed 8th Feb 2013)

No major consultations this period.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 17.1 WW informed the group that the poster JC and the UAG sub-group created for BMUS received lots of interest and the group in general felt it would be really very useful if they could have a copy, so very positive feedback. A4 copies were available for group members to take away and extra copies can be obtained via NT.

17.2 JC then informed the group that she has had an invitation from BMUS to submit an article for 'Ultrasound'.

ACTION: JC

17.3 At the last CASE meeting it was noted that accreditors are needed and VG asked if anyone on the group would consider volunteering. VG also queried if anyone received the CASE newsletter.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

18.1 To note that the date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 21st November 2013, to be held at the Society of Radiographers, commencing at 1.00pm (sandwich lunch available from 1.230pm).