



MINUTES OF THE ULTRASOUND ADVISORY GROUP (UAG) HELD ON THURSDAY 10TH MAY 2012, AT THE OFFICES OF THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS, 207 PROVIDENCE SQUARE, LONDON SE1 2EW

PRESENT:

- Julie Burnage {LB}
- Jean Carter {JC}
- Elizabeth Chapman {EC} {Chair}
- Trish Chudleigh {TC}
- David Cole {DC}
- Vivien Gibbs {VG}
- Fiona Maddocks {FASP}
- Crispian Oates {CO}
- Suzanne Poulton {SP}
- Michael Purdon {MP}
- Pat Ward {FASP}
- Wendy Williams {WW}

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Nigel Thomson {NT}
- Valerie Asemah {VA} {Minutes}

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and round table introductions were made, especially for the benefit of the visitors from the Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme (FASP); Pat Ward and Fiona Maddocks.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Alison Hall, Gerry Johnson, Teresa Killeen and Audrey Paterson.

3. DISCUSSION WITH FETAL ANOMALY SCREENING PROGRAMME (FASP) REPRESENTATIVES {FIRST TRIMESTER COMBINED TEST}

3.1 The Chair introduced the team from FASP; Pat Ward and Fiona Maddocks to the group who were invited to attend the meeting today to give a presentation on the combined test for Trisomy 21. Following the presentation a 'question and answer' session took place on the issues associated with this test and various questions were posed by the group.

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2011

4.1 With the removal of paragraph 2 from item 4.2 the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24th November 2011, were approved as a true and accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING OTHERWISE NOT ON THE AGENDA

5.1 Sonographer Shortage (10.1)

NT updated the group on the current situation pointing out that sonographers who have no regulatory home can apply to the SCoR Voluntary register to have their names added. It is expected that the numbers of sonographers who cannot obtain statutory registration is likely to increase. Many non-statutorily registered sonographers run into problems when applying for or trying to change their post. The SCoR has recently updated its advice document on sonographer registration. It is difficult to influence policy with respect to the sonographer shortage whilst the whole NHS structure is changing but the SCoR is doing whatever it can to help. This includes the PVRs, support for returning sonographers, MAC consultations and I/R support. The sonographer shortage has been developing since at least the turn of the century.

TC queried the progress of the RCOG training programme. NT stated that there had not been a meeting of the RCOG Ultrasound Advisory Group for some time. It was noted that Christoph Lees had now reached the end of his term of office. To also note that Geraldine Masson is the new Chair of the RCOG Ultrasound Advisory Group.

NB: Post meeting information: The RCOG advisory group is due to meet on 10th July 2012.

5.2 BMUS Liaison Meeting (minute 15.1)

NT informed the group that there was nothing to report at present.

5.3 Any Other Business (minute 17.1)

At the last meeting JB agreed to send the link of the Antennal Care Scoping Guidelines which had just been published, but due to pressure of work she has been unable to do. She hopes to attend a meeting next week and report back to the group.

ACTION: JB

6. UAG PROJECT

- 6.1 JC updated the group on how the project relating to NICE CG107 is proceeding. The University of Hertfordshire was commissioned to produce a literature review on amniotic fluid assessment and umbilical artery Doppler techniques. This has been received and will help to inform the work we are doing. The working party consists of JC, NT, TC and Regina Fernando. The hope is to present the work at the BMUS annual conference in December. To note that at the BMUS conference there will be a 'Meet the Experts-Fetal Doppler session.

7. EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR FERTILITY NURSES PROJECT

- 7.1 VG informed the group that the Royal College of Nurses (RCN) has recently set up a fertility nurses project looking at implementing accredited training programmes for nurses involved in ultrasound scanning of fertility patients. VG and TC have both been invited to join a working party to give guidance to the project.

8. 3D/4D IN CONTRACTED HOURS

- 8.1 NT informed the group of an enquiry that came in from a sonographer whose Trust want their sonographers to carry out 3D/4D souvenir scanning during their contracted hours. Discussion followed as to whether this was a widespread practice within the Trusts as an income generator. NT asked the group to let him know if this practice (within contracted hours) is done within their Trusts. The new aspect here is 'within contracted hours' Many Trusts are already involved in 3D/4D souvenir scanning outside of contracted hours. The necessity for adequate indemnity insurance was discussed.

ACTION: GROUP

9. UKAS GUIDELINES

- 9.1 It is hoped to update the UKAS Guidelines in 2013. A start will be made later this year. EC has agreed to lead with NT and we will call for any other volunteers later this year.

ACTION: NT & EC

10. PVRS UPDATE

- 10.1 NT updated the group on the current situation with respect to the Public Voluntary Register of Sonographers. Update of the register began in March and eventually everyone on the register will be contacted and asked to renew. To date there has been 148 renewals, 41 new applications, 26 had no statutory regulatory home and 2 have been sent for review. Current voluntary registrants are being contacted in alphabetical order.

To note that there were around 950 sonographers on the original register. A query was made by MP as to whether NT has had a conversation with the British Society of Echocardiography. NT responded that cardiac physiologists usually obtain voluntary registration through the RCCP but can also apply to join the PVRS if they so wish.

It was further noted that the Health Professions Council (HPC) does not always appear to be consistent when granting or refusing registration for overseas radiographers who have been involved solely with using diagnostic ultrasound. Some Midwives are also unable to maintain their registration with the NMC if working solely in ultrasound.

11. ADVICE TO SERVICE MANAGERS RE: REGISTRATION

- 11.1 NT informed the group that its publication entitled 'Ultrasound Training, Employment and Registration' has been re-published in a second edition and is available from the document library. This document makes clear the SCoR position with respect to non-statutory registered sonographers, which is to be supportive.

12. ANY QUALIFIED PROVIDER

- 12.1 NT updated the group with respect to Any Qualified Provider. Non-obstetric community ultrasound is one of the services that are able to be selected by commissioners. As far as we are aware Trusts will also need to bid if this type of service is being put out to AQP contract in their area. Full details are on the DH Supply2Health website.

13. STUDY DAYS

- 13.1 It was noted that to date 75 delegates have registered for the study day (10th June 2012) in Birmingham. The programme on 'Ultrasound Service Delivery- Problems and Solutions' appears to be very topical.

14. RECENT CONSULTATIONS (since last meeting)

- 14.1 All recent and SCoR surveys were noted but not specifically discussed.

- CASE Clinical Competency (now closed)
- FASP 18w to 20w 6d, triennial review. Now closed (30/4)
- FASP clip lip/palate pathway. Closes 11/5
- Law Commission Consultation on Healthcare Regulation. Closes 31/5
- Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence Consultation on Voluntary Registers. Closes 10/7

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 15.1 VG queried whether any of the group is using Tristell wipes to decontaminate probes as there have been some undesirable reactions in some staff in Bristol hospitals after it was made mandatory to use it within this Trust. Following discussion it appeared that other members are using this brand of wipes and foams with no problems.
- 15.2 JB informed the group that she had identified around 10 private ultrasound services that were not registered with the CQC.
- 15.3 Fat reduction by ultrasound was brought to the attention of the group. NT will email information about this new trend to the group for info.

ACTION: NT

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 16.1 The date of the meeting was confirmed as Thursday 8th November 2012, to be held at the Society of Radiographers, commencing at 1.00pm (sandwich lunch available from 12.30pm),