

Chief Executive Officer
Richard Evans OBE



CoR
THE COLLEGE OF
RADIOGRAPHERS

**MINUTES OF THE ULTRASOUND ADVISORY GROUP (UAG) HELD ON THURSDAY 8TH
JUNE 2017, AT THE OFFICES OF THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS, 207
PROVIDENCE SQUARE, LONDON SE1 2EW**

PRESENT:

- Alexandra Drought {AD}
- Marc Harder {MH} {Guest}
- Gill Harrison {GH} {Chair}
- Sally Hill {SH}
- Sandra Morrissey {SM}
- Crispian Oates {CO}
- Helen Ong {HO}
- Steve Savage {SS}
- Margaret Taylor {MT}
- Jacquie Torrington {JT}
- Sue Webb {SW}
- Wendy Williams {WW}

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and round table introductions were made, especially for the benefit of guest Marc Harder and new members Sandra Morrissey and Helen Ong.
- 1.2 Marc Harder, NBCP Project Leader from the Stillbirth & Neonatal Death Charity (SANDS) gave a presentation entitled 'National Bereavement Care Pathway (for pregnancy and baby loss)'. A question and answer session followed the presentation. Anyone wishing to contact Marc Harder to find out more about this charity and the national bereavement care pathway can do so at marc.harder@sands.org.uk

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Elaine Gardiner, Steve Herring, Gerry Johnson and Michael Purdon.
- 2.1 To note that Elaine Gardiner, Gerry Johnson, Margaret Taylor and Wendy Williams tenure on the group ends today. The Chair thanked them for their hard work and involvement whilst on the group and hope that they can be contacted in the future as and when necessary.

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3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15th NOVEMBER 2016

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2017, were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA

- 4.1 There were no matters arising.

5. HEE UPDATE

- 5.1 Skills for Health (SfH): NT updated the group informing them that Health Education England (HEE) has been looking at the sonographer workforce situation for the past three years. This is now under the remit of their Integrated Imaging Workforce Group who are looking at both sonographers and radiographers but significant progress is slow. Ultrasound issues are complex and 5-6 strands of work are currently on-going. A career framework is being produced for both sonographers and radiographers by Skills for Health. It is currently at second stage consultation. Some members of the UAG may have been invited by SfH to contribute. SfH use 'levels' which are not the same as AFC 'bands'. The SfH second round consultation is still open for comment via NT, closes 9th June.
- 5.2 Commissioned Report: NT informed the group that HEE have commissioned a report from an educational consultant to look at current undergraduate and postgraduate pathways and to advise on academic levels. Report not yet published.
- 5.3 '200' Initiative: HEE have been tasked by the Secretary of State for Health to provide training/funding for 200 health professionals to undertake growth scans. The numbers of these scans have increased following the publication of NHS England's 'Saving Babies' Lives' initiative. It is proposed that these professionals should ideally be from backgrounds other than midwifery or radiography as there is a shortage of both these groups. Being dealt with in another workstream within HEE. Following a group discussion it was noted that SCoR was not consulted on the '200' initiative until quite late. The group was encouraged to contact NT with any concerns they may have.
- 5.4 CfWI Sonography Workforce Report: NT informed the group that this report was published earlier this year with a large amount of relevant data.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/597697/Sonography_workforce_review.pdf
- 5.5 Apprenticeships: NT gave a progress report on apprenticeships. There is a 'trailblazer group' for medical ultrasound led by a group of employers in Yorkshire and linked to Sheffield Hallam University. The academic level has not yet been finalised, either 6 (undergraduate) or 7 (Masters Level). The apprenticeship 'Standard' is currently being developed. Apprenticeships come under the remit of the Department of Education and require a two to three page concisely worded 'Standard' to be agreed.

6. FASP UPDATE

- 6.1 NT attends meetings of the FASP ultrasound and lab group which meets every six months. JT also attends both as an alternate and additional to NT. The majority of the agenda is concerned with laboratory procedures but there are usually some ultrasound items.

From October 2017 FASP will change the red flag threshold to 0.3 mm from the reference curve instead of the current 0.4mm. The SCoR has concerns that higher Trust management may not appreciate that this is audit and is not disciplinary. FASP have also published a recent blog on ensuring that agency sonographers are included in Trust audit arrangements via DQASS and internal image review via the Screening Support Sonographer. <https://phescreening.blog.gov.uk/2017/04/06/guidance-on-supporting-agency-sonographers-for-fetal-anomaly-screening/>

ACTION: Introduction of change to 0.3mm for red flag to be monitored by all group members, please pass any comments or concerns to NT and JT.

7. CONGENITAL DIAPHRAGMATIC HERNIA PATHWAY (CDH)

- 7.1 There is an initiative by the British Association of Perinatal Medicine to agree a pathway for the care of women whose baby is diagnosed as having CDH, which is one of the FASP 11 auditable conditions. The pathway will be from the point of diagnosis onwards and includes antenatal diagnosis. There is an existing pathway in Scotland. NT and JT are attending group meetings and have commented on and suggested wording for the draft document. The emphasis is on post diagnosis care pathways rather than on actual diagnosis.

See also: <https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/downloads/files/mbrace-uk/reports/Perinatal%20CDH%20Report%202014%20Full.pdf>

8. TAMBA INITIATIVE

- 8.1 NT updated the group on the Twins and Multiple Birth Association (TAMBA), an association which is trying to improve the monitoring of twins and higher order multiples during pregnancy. There is concern that the NICE guidelines are not being followed, particularly with respect to the post FASP period growth scans. See NICE CG 129 and the associated Quality Standards. AD has been working on this with NT and there is a meeting planned for 15th June in London. Both NT and AD will be attending. TAMBA have a range of educational material available for patients and professionals on their website and have held a recent study day in London.

9. SCoR DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING ADVISORY GROUP

- 9.1 NT updated the group on the newly formed Diagnostic Imaging Advisory Group (DIAG) which is an umbrella group looking at the wider provision of imaging. A representative is needed from this group. As for most advisory groups there will be two meetings a year. Anyone wishing to join DIAG should please email NT. SW also attends meetings.

ACTION: ALL

10. RECENT STUDY DAYS

- 10.1 NT gave an update on the recent study day entitled ‘Recent Advances in Obstetric Ultrasound’ which was held on 22nd March 2017 in central London. The speakers and programme were organised by AD with administrative support from NT and SCoR Conferences. The day was very successful with over 100 attending. There has been very positive feedback received. A repeat day will be held on 29th November 2017. This will also be a pilot for live on-line streaming and links via social media to allow a wider audience who may be based anywhere. This aspect will be contracted to a specialist company.

11. PVRS

- 11.1 NT updated the group on the Public Voluntary Register of Sonographers (PVRS) informing them that the renewal window opened on 1st March 2017 and closed at midnight on 30th April 2017. There were 328 renewals via the webform and 51 through PDF. CPD audit was introduced for the first time, procedures worked well. Eight voluntary registrants were selected randomly from those who do not also hold statutory registration (5% sample). Submissions were assessed by GH who is a SCoR CPD assessor. 1 renewal is still pending due to the audit. There are currently 141 sonographers on the voluntary register who have no statutory registration. Overall total including new applicants since 1st March 2017 is 473. The voluntary register is not accredited by the Professional Standards Authority and there are no plans to do seek this due to the high costs and potential risks for the organisation. <http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/accredited-registers/find-a-register>
- 11.1.2 The renewal procedures were widely advertised on the website, in Synergy News, social media and direct e-mail to all voluntary registrants. All non-statutory registered voluntary registrants who had not renewed by mid-April were individually contacted.
- 11.1.3 NT stated that over the two year period to March 2019 the numbers would rise through new applications to well into the 600’s possibly even 700’s. NT reiterated that sonographers do not have yet have a statutory register due to coalition and current government policy. See <http://www.hcpc-uk.co.uk/aboutregistration/aspirantgroups/>

12. SCoR PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

- 12.1 NT updated the group informing them that changes to the SCoR professional indemnity insurance (PII) will be happening later this year. A memorandum has been distributed to SCoR local representatives. As soon as full details of the changes following agreement with the underwriters and solicitors are available they will be shared. If anyone has any questions they should contact Elizabeth Robinson LizR@sor.org or NT. SW will also be present during Council discussions and can also be contacted directly.

ACTION: ALL

13. EXPERT WITNESSES

- 13.1 NT gave an update to the group informing them that as the profession moves further into advanced specialist areas the number of expert witness requests increases. The Society receives regular requests for expert witnesses and we do not have enough. A no charge study day with legal training firm Bond-Solon presenting was held last year and this will be repeated this year in October (October 19th). Anyone wishing to become an expert witness should complete the registration of interest form at <https://www.sor.org/node/14792>. The no charge study day will only be available to those who have fully completed this form.

ACTION: ALL

14. UAG WORK PLANNING

- 14.1 NT asked the group for ideas of work which they felt would be good and feasible for the group to undertake. NT noted the SCoR/BMUS Guidelines for Professional Ultrasound Practice (see 16, below) do not contain any information relating to obstetrics. NT wondered if a ‘resource’ type work providing relevant and current links would be of value. Primary scanning and patient management advice would be a possibility but would require major consultation with professionals and with the public.

ACTION: *All to consider*

15. CONSULTATIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

FASP- Piloting of Down’s, Edwards’ and Patau’s syndrome e-learning resource. Closed 20th January 2017.
Skills for Health first round consultation (see agenda item 5 above). Closed 8th May 2017
National Screening Committee- vasa praevia. Four yearly review. Closed 4th June 2017
Skills for Health second round consultation closes 9th June 2017.

16. PUBLICATIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

SCoR/BMUS Guidelines for Professional Ultrasound Practice. Revision 1. December 2016
https://www.sor.org/sites/default/files/document-versions/bmus_scor_ultrasound_guidelines_1.pdf

17. UAG MEMBERS RETIRING

- 17.1 It was noted that Elaine Gardiner, Gerry Johnson, Margaret Taylor and Wendy Williams tenure on the group will come to an end on June 30th 2017. Thanks were given to them for all the hard work they have done whilst on the group. Thank you letters will be distributed to them all, prepared by VA in the first instance.

ACTION: *VA*

- 17.1.1. Wendy Williams will continue to be an Assessor for the PVRs.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 18.1 There was no other business.

19. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 19.1 Dates of future meetings have been agreed as:

- Thursday 2nd November 2017
- Wednesday 6th June 2018
- Thursday 1st November 2018

All being held at SCoR HQ and starting at the usual time of 1.00 (with refreshments available from 12.30pm)