

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
BRITISH PAEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY ASSOCIATION**

Held on

Wednesday 16 January 2008  
at the Royal Armouries, Leeds

1. Minutes of 2007 AGM

These were reviewed by Dr Pike. There were no amendments and no matters arising that did not appear elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Amendment to constitution – currently para.5c reads “when there is more than one candidate, a postal voting paper will be circulated in the autumn newsletter, to be returned to the Secretariat by 1 December and the result announced at the next AGM”. It was proposed that the clause “by 1 December” be removed. This was voted on and carried unanimously.

2. President’s Report

RCPCH contract: a contract has been signed between the BPNA and the RCPCH.

Indemnity: we now have an indemnity policy in place. There is still a gap relating to copyright protection, but arrangements to cover this are in hand.

JNC: we now have a link with the Joint Neuro-Sciences Council and Colin Ferry represents us on this board.

ACCEA: our recommendations to the 2006/2007 award round were reviewed. Three members applying for Platinum awards, one for a Silver/Gold award and 6 for Bronze awards were supported by the BPNA. Of these, two members were awarded Bronze awards.

Mac Keith Prize winner: the Mac Keith Prize winner this year is Dr Andrew Lux, who was applauded.

RCPCH: there were two issues to highlight in relation to the RCPCH. Firstly, Simon Lenton’s document ‘Modelling the Future’, and secondly Ted Baker’s draft Adjacencies document. Tim Martland is representing the BPNA on this latter group. The BPNA will remain involved in these discussions which are likely to have significant implications for our specialty.

Quality Assurance, Training and Service: the RCPCH is still clear that external visits to units should not occur. There may be some potential in the future for quality assurance of service (rather than training) and Simon Lenton is exploring this with the Health Care Commission. If this develops it would have tangential relevance for the QA of training. Chris Verity emphasised the importance and value of the peer group Visit process.

Patron of the BPNA: this is not being addressed for the time being.

UK CNRC: members were reminded that the purpose of this organisation is to develop an infrastructure and ethos to support national collaborative research. Following discussion and support at past Execs, Council meetings, AGM and the national collaborative research

day at the RCPCH on 12 October 2007 the working group (Mike Pike, Rob Forsyth, Richard Newton, Colin Kennedy) has embarked on setting up a Charity – the UK Children’s Neurological Research Campaign (UKCNRC). The aim of the charity would be to develop and facilitate national collaborative neurological research in children. Six Directors have been appointed including the BPNA President ex officio; the Directors will address the administrative running of the Charity and will delegate the Research agenda to a Steering Group. Five members of the Steering Group have been appointed (with a three year staggered term) including the MCRN Neurology CSG Lead ex officio. An initial infrastructure has been suggested, including a part-time Trial Co-ordinator, IT support, secretarial support and statistical support. The aim would be to launch in July 2008. We hope that the charity will be able to generate income in the future, but in the short term, the BPNA has been asked to provide £40 000 for start-up costs plus £15 000 for a Fundraiser in 2009 subject to the approval of the BPNA Executive Committee. Penny Fallon (Treasurer) was asked for input at this stage and confirmed that our finances allow us to support this initiative. Chris Verity commented that he felt this was the right route and was unable to see a more efficient way to meet the objectives of the charity. A vote was taken and there was unanimous support for this proposal.

Treasurer: Penny Fallon has offered to stand for a second term and was elected unopposed.

### 3. Distance Learning

Richard Newton presented progress on this. The course is now in its fifth year. Thirteen individuals started the course this year, bringing the total number of people who have taken the course, up to sixty. In the next twelve months, the course will become web-based and an updating process will start.

### 4. PET Courses

Helen Cross reviewed these. In 2008 there will be three levels of PET courses. There is an increasing number of attendees year by year. Evaluations of the PET courses are good. So far, two PET3 courses have been run with very good feedback. A number of individuals recently attended the House of Lords to receive a prize in relation to the establishment of the PET courses. The meeting applauded this honour.

### 5. Penny Fallon (Treasurer)

It was suggested that the end of the BPNA’s financial year be moved to the end of March. This would allow the previous year’s accounts to be published in the autumn newsletter. Dr Fallon presented comparative accounts of 2006 and 2007. The costs of the annual meeting remained similar. The salaries we are paying have dramatically increased as have our accountancy fees. It was proposed to increase the annual subscription to £165 a year and this was carried.

### 6. Secretariat

Richard Newton summarised some of the many activities of the Secretariat and emphasised how busy and productive our staff have been. He described the excellent atmosphere in the BPNA office and described how we are meeting our needs as a good employer with regular appraisals and meeting training needs.

7. Helen Cross (President Elect)

Arrangements for the EPNS 2009 in Harrogate were described. A number of clinical themes have been chosen. Colin Ferrie is co-ordinating the social programme.

Neurology/Neuro-disability: we are continuing to forge close links between the two CSACs.

8. Annual Conference (Helen Cross)

The costs associated with the annual conference over the last few years were reviewed. There was a significant difference between the costs in academic venues as compared to commercial venues. The recent Edinburgh meeting was highly regarded and felt to be a high quality meeting as well as being relatively low cost. The problems of 'reinventing a wheel' every year by moving the conference around were described. A proposal was made to fix the annual meeting in Edinburgh for two years and then for two years in London with the host rotating as before – eg Wales could host the first meeting in Edinburgh. This arrangement would be reviewed after a 4 year trial period. Professor Neville raised an issue about lecture theatre capacity and availability in London. Chris Verity spoke in favour of holding the meeting in Edinburgh, commenting on the location of hotels and the fact that the meetings in London tended to be less convivial. Euan Ross spoke in favour of holding the meeting in Edinburgh, highlighting the cheapness of hotels in January. Paul Eunson advised not holding the meeting around Burns Night because of a steep increase in cost. The proposal was voted upon and an overwhelming majority supported the proposal.

9. Sunny Philip (Assistant Secretary)

Manpower report: the last manpower survey was performed in October 2005 and Sunny Philip presented the findings of the report completed in the last few weeks. The rate of expansion of consultant numbers has considerably slowed since 2005. There has been a significant increase in part-time working. Academic posts have stayed roughly steady. There are now 108 Paediatric Neurologists equivalent to 90 WTE. Prediction of new posts in the future is difficult. Taking new posts and retirements together, it is possible that there may be around eight vacant posts in the next three years with a predicted output of 29 SpR's completing their training. Andrew Tandy spoke and contrasted this with the number of vacant neuro-disability posts. Professor Neville asked "what is our strategy in relation to provision of neurology services, not only in tertiary centres, but also in DGH's?" Paul Eunson highlighted the considerable overlap between neurology and neuro-disability, particularly in tertiary centres, and also highlighted Professor Minns's retirement in the near future.

New Members: sixteen applications for membership were reviewed and approved.

10. Rob Forsyth (National Training Advisor)

Five grid posts will be vacant this year. Dr Forsyth emphasised that if a grid post is not filled by a grid trainee in the future because of quality of applicants or manpower constraints, then this will not be lost to general paediatrics in perpetuity. Penultimate year assessments will again be held this year.

There is ongoing work with the College in relation to both competencies and assessment. It is likely that any form of summative assessment of SpR's may take the form of a case-based

discussion and this may also be the model that is suggested for re-evaluation of consultants. He reminded members that his term of office will expire in twelve months time.

11. Carlos de Sousa (Audit and Governance)

No report was available.

12. Karen Horridge (Paediatric Neurodisability CSAC Chair)

A training pack has been developed for neuro-disability trainees. A trainees' day has been held for neuro-disability trainees. There is continuous and close collaboration between the neurology and neuro-disability CSACs. The British Association for Childhood Disability meeting will be held in Derby this year with a special focus on adolescent medicine. Ramesh highlighted issues around tertiary neuro-disability.

13. Isobel Heyman (Child Psychiatry)

Isobel gave her apologies. It is proposed that a joint psychiatry/neurology meeting be held in York in 2009. Isobel has agreed to collaborate on this.

14. Peter Baxter (Editor DMCN)

Mac Keith press celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year. The impact factor of the journal is staying constant despite an increasing number of published articles. There is now an electronic submission process with six to seven weeks to decision. Electronic citations are now possible prior to the print copy being published. Six books were published in the last year.

15. Future Meetings

Birmingham 2009: BPNA is in the final stages of planning.

York 2008 – Sameer Zuberi will be co-ordinating this. This will be Sameer's last York meeting and applications for his post are sought. MP thanked Sameer for all his help on the York meetings and he was applauded. Any members who are interested in taking over the organisation of the paediatric neurology session at the York meeting should contact the secretary.

16. Any Other Business

Frank Besag suggested the organisation consider a teaching programme for overseas trainers.

Mike Pike thanked the Executive, Colin Kennedy and Richard Newton for all the hard work and support they had provided over the last two years.

Helen Cross thanked Mike Pike for all his hard work and the leadership he has given to the organisation during his term of President.

2009 AGM:

National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull on Wednesday 28 January 2009 at 5.00pm