

Association of Clinical Electron Microscopists

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 8th July, 2004, Amsterdam

Present: T.Ryder (Chairman), J.Moss (President), A.Curry (Treasurer) and 16 members of the Association

Apologies for Absence: Val James, Brian Eyden, and James Ito

Minutes of the AGM held in Bristol on 3rd July 2003 were approved as a true record (Prop: J.Moss, Sec: A.Curry)

Matters Arising: There were no matters arising

Resignation of Secretary: Elizabeth Curtis announced the resignation of the Secretary, Jill Sparke. The Chairman requested that Dr Curtis convey the thanks of the Association to Jill for the hard work she had performed on behalf of the Association. Nominations were invited to fill the vacant post of Secretary but none were forthcoming.

Treasurer's Report

Alan Curry presented the attached statement of accounts 2004 (Appendix 1)
It was agreed that the accounts be accepted (Prop: J.Moss, Sec: R.Moss)

President's Report:

Jill Moss presented the attached report (Appendix 2) on meetings she had attended on behalf of the Association with ACS, HPC and FHCS

Chairman's Report:

Tim Ryder reported on the latest developments of the National Occupational Standards Project and the Manpower Planning initiative (Appendix 3)

ACEM Annual Scientific Meeting:

Bart Wagner informed members that the 2005 ACEM scientific meeting would be held on Thursday 7th July in Newcastle in conjunction with the Path.Soc. meeting.

IBMS Representative's Report:

Bart Wagner reported on progress in Advanced Practice in Diagnostic EM (Appendix 4) and proposed the development of an EM EQA scheme. It was agreed that the Executive should investigate the proposal.

Information & Communications Officer Report:

Liz Curtis reported on the activity of the Association's web site (Appendix 5) including the site statistics, membership and the image database. A request was made for news items that can be publicised on the home page to help keep the site looking active.

Any Other Business:

Alan Curry thanked the members that had responded to his request for information regarding the survey of EM units in the country. It was agreed that a summary of the survey's finding should be published on the web site.

Date of the Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the 2005 AGM would be held on Thursday 7th July immediately following the annual scientific meeting

There being no further business the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

TAR
8th July 2004

Appendix 1: ACEM Statement of Accounts 2004

Prepared by Alan Curry, ACEM Treasurer, on 5th July 2004

Current balance from latest RBS statement 25 th June 2004	£1706.22
Standing orders yet to be credited to Account	£ 20.00
TOTAL ACEM Balance	£1726.22

Expenses paid out:	
NetBanx (sponsored by JEOL)	£ 146.88
Path Soc speaker expenses	£ 50.00
ACEM committee travelling expenses	£ 87.00
TOTAL Expenses paid out since last statement of accounts	£ 283.88

Appendix 2: The President's Report

Dr Jill Moss reminded us that we are in a period of enormous change, with numerous bodies and committees set up to group, categorize, and monitor all disciplines of health care. As electron microscopists we are included in the Division of Life Sciences in 'Health Care Science' rather than the 'Allied Health Professions'. Dr Moss had attended initial meetings of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and further meetings were being attended by Dr Tim Ryder and other ACEM members. She reported that two days previously she had been informed that the Chief Scientific Officer, Sue Hill, had requested a delay of three months regarding NOS due to concern expressed by some Professional bodies. Immediately following last years AGM Jill attended a Federation of Health Care Sciences meeting and, because of concern by some ACEM members regarding the IBMS Advanced Practitioners grade, had met with Russ Allison and Alan Potter of the IBMS who assured her that electron microscopy could be integrated into their training schemes. Bart Wagner is now following this up. Jill will continue to attend Federation meetings including workshops on Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Scientists. With regard to concern that Clinical Scientists in electron microscopy were unable to register with the Health Professions Council and that the new regulations for HPC registration come into force in July 2005, she attended a meeting with Marc Seale, the Chief Executive. He encouraged the Association of Clinical Scientists (ACS) to form a new modality to accommodate electron microscopists and Jill is hoping that documentation will be ready for approval by ACS and submission to HPC by late autumn this year. Also, regarding new HPC regulations, she informed us that all registrants will be required to prove continuing professional competency for re-registration every two years. Jill reported that a "Pathology Alliance" had been formed three years ago and meetings were taking place between the Royal College of Pathologists, the IBMS, and the Association of Clinical Scientists and that she expected feedback in the future. Jill finished by reminding us that the first phase of the new Health Care strategy was not far off and that it was important to maintain a high profile in order to achieve some recognition and security for electron microscopists. She will continue to attend as many meetings as possible and, since we are still a very small group, encouraged us to try to recruit new members.

IBMS
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Appendix 3: Chairman's Report

NOS Project

Since the AGM 2003 the NOS Assessments have been piloted.

Cross-discipline workshops have been held, these

1. Reviewed the comments of the pilots
2. Addressed possible duplication across the standards
3. Addressed possible gaps in the NOS framework

The NOS project was due to be completed by June but this has been delayed by the Chief Scientific Officer, Sue Hill, for an unspecified period.

Manpower Planning

There is now general recognition by DOH, RCPATH and others that manpower planning within healthcare science is virtually non-existent. This has resulted in a lack of succession planning and hampered the development of training programmes.

A workforce review team has therefore been set up to look at Healthcare Science and develop strategies for workforce planning.

A representative from each discipline in HCS, including EM (represented by TR), has been interviewed. The results of the collation of information has been presented to the "Workforce Numbers Advisory Board" (WNAB) who have made the following recommendations:

1. A strong message should be sent to strategic health authorities (SHA), Care group workforce teams (CGWT) and other stakeholders about the crucial contribution healthcare scientists make to service delivery
2. Increased resources should be made available in almost all HCS groups for the foreseeable future
3. There is concern about the lack of information currently available about the HCS workforce. It is recommended that the "National Workforce Information & Planning Programme (NWIPP) be commissioned to research alternatives for obtaining improved data.

Appendix 4: IBMS Representative's Report

Advanced practice in diagnostic EM

Following approaches by ACEM members - the IBMS have had a number of meetings this year to work on the portfolio of competence in diagnostic electron microscopy.

Meetings have been attended by histological and virological electron microscopists. Progress is slow but steady. EM is one of many disciplines hoping to follow in the footsteps of cytology. Once most of the necessary paperwork is completed, the RCPATH will be approached by the IBMS.

Diagnostic histological electron microscopy EQA (external quality assurance)

As one of the requirements for an advanced practitioner in EM, an EQA scheme should be participated in where one exists.

I would like to have a go at running a histological EM EQA scheme. I propose two runs a year – one technical one interpretative. I am looking into ways of freeing up some of my time to make it possible.

Appendix 5: Webmaster's Report 2004

1. Site statistics

In the 11 months to June 2004 there were 8137 discrete visits and 20,960 pages served, so on average each visitor looked at 2.5 pages.

Renals remain most popular search term.

In view of this, perhaps there could be grounds for expanding this area.

Our page on nemaline myopathy comes in at no. 8 on a Google search.

Last years most novel search term was BW, this year it is AC!

2. Membership

A significant part of the site is the membership database. With the introduction of the online payment facility, most of ACEMs membership administration will be done via this database.

There are currently 115 contacts on the database; after accounting for a number of people who have retired.

Of the 115, 58 people have access to the members' area of the site, having paid some form of membership/joining fee in the past. Currently 19 of these are paid up members. (Although the main payment month is July - so numbers may increase shortly). We will be sending reminders to the lapsed members, giving the option to pay either online or by other means. This 'roll-out' of the online payment facility must be gradual to avoid costs, but will be available to all members in time.

3. For those who have never visited... items in the members' area include:

The discussion forum - everyone is still reluctant to use it. It does have the facility for uploading images.

Programmes of previous ACEM meetings, together with some abstracts. Most abstracts include references.

Thanks to all of today's speakers for their abstracts, these are now up on the website.

The list of current members and their speciality. (Note: the list of members given in the password protected area of the site represents only those who are up to date with their payments.)

The facility to update your contact details.

4. The image database

All the programming and infrastructure for the image database has been in place for some time, when the editing / review procedure gets underway, more images can be uploaded.

5. news items

I would be grateful for any relevant news item that could be publicised on the sites' home pages. This will keep the site looking active!