

Meeting of NRCPD Board 14 March 2013

Board Members Present: Huw Vaughan Thomas (Chair), Jim Edwards, Heather Fiskin, Katherine Phipps, Sandra Verkuyten, Jenny White

Secretariat: Paul Parsons, Angela Nunn

Speech to Text Reporter: Jean Gough

Paul and Angela left the meeting while a short private discussion took place between board members prior to the formal board meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Michael Guthrie and Craig Crowley.

2. Declarations of Interest

It was noted that Jean Gough, STTR for the meeting, was a founder member of AVSTTR. A matter of correspondence from AVSTTR would be discussed under item 6.

3. Chairman's Remarks

To be discussed under item 9.1.

4. Minutes of Meeting

The minutes of 2 July 2012 were accepted as a correct record after a couple of minor amendments made to 8.2 iii, 8.4, 8.5 and 9.1.

5. Matters Arising

None. All to be discussed as part of the meeting.

6. Correspondence

A paper outlining three items of correspondence was circulated to members.

Item 1: Letter from Chair of AVSTTR expressing views of verbatim STTRs on:

(a) Fees – professional associations feel registration is important but their members may not renew their registration if fees rise. They wanted to know why fees are increasing.

(b) Benefits of registration – Professionals do not feel they get anything for registration apart from their ID card.

(c) CPD – 12 hours of structured CPD activities will be difficult for STTRs.

It was noted that some of the points raised in the letter had been discussed at the February Practitioners' Forum meeting. Sandra attended that meeting to address some of those issues.

It was agreed board members need to discuss higher level issues with professional associations. Paul and team to consider setting up a strategy away day with a facilitator later in the year (possibly in place of the planned September forum meeting). At this event board members would have the opportunity to share why and how it does its work and its aspirations to become an accredited body to protect the public and enhance professionalism. At the same time NRCPD could extract information from the associations about

what they want. Opportunity for NRCPD to work more closely with stakeholders/colleagues (a) educationally, (b) listening, (c) hand holding, (d) developmental.

Paul to respond to the points raised in the letter from AVSTTR including the following (a) fees – to be considered under item 8.6, (b) benefits of registration - (suggest event mentioned above), (c) CPD – The board agreed that the published minimum structured hours should be maintained at the present time but that this will be reviewed at the end of 2013.

Item 2: Letter from Chair of SASLI. It was agreed Huw to meet SASLI representatives accompanied by either Kath or Heather.

Item 3: Letter from Chair of NRPSI. It was agreed there is possible synergy between the 2 registers and it would be useful to continue to have an exchange with NRPSI. Ted Sangster has agreed to attend the July 2013 meeting. Paul agreed to forward the latest report from NRPSI to members.

7. Operational Matters

In this section the board discusses sensitive information about complaints and other procedural matters. This information is exempt from publication. Since the July 2012 meeting 9 complaints forms have been received about sign language interpreters. 3 have been considered material cases to answer. 2 were received in the last few days and no action has yet been taken on these.

8. Governance

8.1 Register of CSWs

A letter to ACSW was circulated with the agenda. The consultant's recommendations to the proposal were not included. It was agreed that the recommendations should be forwarded to board members to allow this item to be reconsidered at the July meeting. At that time a response from ACSW to the recommendations should also be available.

8.2 Notes of Practitioners' Forum

The draft notes of the meeting were circulated to members for information. It was agreed that a date should be set aside later in the year for broader discussions with the professional associations.

8.3 Update on Code of Conduct Review

A draft Code of Conduct was circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that further work is needed on this before it can be circulated more widely for consultation. Board members will reconsider this after the additional work is completed and it is ready for consultation.

8.4 Criminal Record Disclosure Policy

A draft convictions declaration was circulated with the agenda for consideration. Further legal advice is being sought on the document. It was agreed that once this advice is received, the declaration will be recirculated to all members for approval. This needs to be agreed as soon as possible due to the changes taking place in this area.

8.5 Practice Breaks Policy

A draft practice breaks policy was circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that the practice breaks policy can only be considered further once a 'Return to work' policy is also drafted. This will be sent to members when finalised and both will be considered further at the July meeting. As an interim measure Huw gave the secretariat authority to use their discretion between now and the July meeting when considering requests for breaks of less than a year from professionals taking maternity or other leave.

8.6 Fees Discussion

The fees projection for the next 3 years was circulated with the agenda to allow the 2013/14 fees to be agreed. This was to be reviewed as a result of concerns raised in letters received. The aim had been to bring all communication professionals to the same fee level in 3 years. It was agreed that it was difficult to make a decision on this without seeing the expenditure associated with NRCPD. Jim agreed to send a headline budget for 2013/14 to Huw as soon as possible factoring in the projected increase in fees. Huw to circulate this to members for comment.

9. Strategic Objectives

9.1 2012-13 Objective Setting

The board had agreed a number of strategic objectives at its November Strategy Day. It anticipated developing these objectives at today's meeting. Huw mentioned the private discussions members had had prior to the meeting. As a result of the report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust Public Enquiry members felt they should pause on agreeing objectives. The Professional Standards Authority may be given authority to set up an accredited voluntary register scheme. This could be an opportunity to get NRCPD kitemarked in health and social services.

Objective 4 – achieve increased credibility and authority with key stakeholders by establishing external validation of the registers is most important. It was agreed that the July meeting should be a full day event. Routine business to be discussed in the morning, strategic objectives to be revisited in the afternoon. Paul agreed to circulate to members information from the November 2012 strategy day. Any members unable to attend the July meeting would be required to send comments to Paul by email prior to the meeting.

10. Any Other Business

None recorded.

11. Date of 2013 meetings

Meetings for 2013 are scheduled for:

- Monday 24 June 2013
- Wednesday 25 September 2013
- Thursday 31 October 2013