

**RENAL ASSOCIATION**  
**EDUCATION & RESEARCH BOARD**

**Minutes of Meeting held at the Novotel Hotel, Birmingham Airport  
12<sup>th</sup> April 2007**

**Present**

John Feehally - RA President [chair]  
Mark Macgregor - elected Executive Committee member  
Caroline Savage - Chair, Research Committee

**Apologies**

David Jayne  
Phil Kalra  
Edwina Brown  
Meguid El Nahas

**Notes of last meeting**

The notes of a telephone conference held on 23rd November 2006 were accepted as an accurate record of the discussions. There were no matters arising not included in the current agenda.

The business of the four committees reporting to ERB was reviewed:

**RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

**UK Kidney Research Consortium**

The final version of the paper proposing a UK Kidney Research Consortium prepared by CS. It has also been approved by BAPN. The Chairman agreed to confirm that KRUK have also approved it. **Action: JF**

It was agreed that before the paper was submitted to UKCRN in Leeds, that we should add a specific proposal about membership of a steering group for the Consortium. A likely membership discussed included

Renal Association	– 2 representatives
UK Renal Registry	- 1 representative
KRUK	- 2 representatives
BAPN	- 1 representative
BTS	- 1 representative
BRS	- 1 representative

CS agreed to prepare a draft for approval by partners

**Action: CS**

It remains unclear the extent of national resource which may become available if the Kidney Research Consortium is approved. However peer reviewed renal trials which were placed on the national trial database should have access to national trial resource through UK-CRN. The value of the network of research nurse expertise developed by SHARP was noted and the importance of strategies to maintain and develop these skills was discussed.

ERB supported the view that “proof of principle” of the efficacy of the Kidney Research Consortium could be proved by developing some suitable research proposals. Haemodialysis and chronic kidney disease were being explored as possible topic areas. The need for such pilots to be realistic in scope and deliverability was emphasized.

#### Renal Research Database

Whilst it was considered possible that the research database would eventually be made available nationally (probably through UKCRN) ERB did not feel the time was yet right for this move. CS agreed to approach Alice Smith to discuss updating of the database. Additional fields, particularly grant income, were considered of potential benefit. CS would also approach Neil Turner to discuss how the database might be made searchable, and how direct links to investigators’ publication records could be established. **Action: CS**

### **INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE**

The annual report from Meguid E-Nahas was noted. Although the International Committee remains very keen to see further ISN Sister Centres established in the UK, ERB took the view that the number of such centres was always likely to be small and focused in large renal units with substantial training resources; it seemed improbable that smaller units with largely consultant-delivered service would be able to provide sufficient training opportunities.

The continuing difficulties for ISN and other overseas fellows created by the changes in Home Office regulations in the last 18 months were again discussed. JF expressed optimism that a solution was in sight for sponsorship of such Fellows through the RCP International Medical Graduate Scheme; it was hoped that this solution may be finalised within the next few months.

### **CLINICAL TRIALS COMMITTEE**

David Jayne had given late apologies because of illness, and there were no specific items to discuss.

### **EDUCATION & TRAINING COMMITTEE**

#### Progress of On-line Renal Academy

ERB noted the steady progress of the On-line Renal Academy. JF agreed to circulate the most recent information from Doctors.net.UK about “hits”. **Action: JF**

It was anticipated that the number of modules available would continue steadily to increase commissioned and edited by John Firth. However it was noted that as yet there are no modules in haemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis, and ERB considered this a priority.

#### Review of Undergraduate Nephrology Teaching

ERB noted preliminary information based on current curricula in medical schools represented on the Education & Training Committee which showed the expected dearth of nephrology teaching. It was agreed that the E&T Committee should be asked to undertake a formal survey of all UK medical schools. **Action EB**

#### Identifying junior posts in nephrology

It was noted that the new training arrangements mean that deaneries would have much more complete and reliable information than previously about the number of posts in F1 and F2 grades which offered experience in nephrology. ERB recommended that the E & T Committee should survey to obtain this information..

### MMC & MTAS

The current debacle in the implementation of MTAS was noted, but no specific nephrology issues were identified.

### RA educational activities

The continued success of the Advanced Nephrology Course was noted, and the outcome of the planned second meeting for 2007 in Manchester was awaited with interest.

The success of the Haemodialysis Masterclass organised by Mark MacGregor and Sue Carr was noted, and in particular its success in providing consultant level CME which attracted a majority of consultants among the delegates. ERB supported this as a model for future CME.

### Knowledge Based Assessment - organisation of specialist examination

JF briefed ERB on recent progress. With the RA Treasurer he would soon be meeting with the Federation of Royal Colleges to finalise the business plan. Jonathan Fox had been appointed as Chair of the Examining Board with Jeremy Levy as Secretary. The recent call for applications to become question setters had attracted considerable interest, and some 30 RA consultant members had come forward. Over the next few weeks it was planned to liaise with the MRCP Medical Director at the College to agree which nephrologists should continue as question setters and Board members for Part 1 and Part 2 MRCP [UK], and which should be asked to transfer their commitment to the new specialist examination.

### Synergising Research Efforts

ERB discussed the importance of the Clinical Practice Guidelines Committee and the UK Renal Registry liaising with ERB to identify evidence gaps amenable to research and to consider strategically how best to take these forward. **Action JF**

### New Chair for ERB

It was noted that RA is about to call for expressions of interest for the new position of Academic Vice-President with an election likely to take place in June 2007. It was agreed that future meetings of ERB would be chaired by the Academic Vice-President.

### Date of Next Meeting

Telephone conference planned for 6<sup>th</sup> September 2007 at 5.30pm  
Next face to face meeting date - TBC