

RENAL ASSOCIATION

EDUCATION & RESEARCH BOARD

Notes of Telephone Conference 23rd November 2006

On the call

John Feehally [chair]
Edwina Brown
Meguid El-Nahas
David Jayne
Caroline Savage

ERB met by telephone and the following issues were discussed.

Clinical Trials Committee

The Committee last met in Harrogate, and continues to receive a small number of trial protocols for review

A one-day renal clinical trials meeting is being provisionally planned for the first half of 2008; Martin Landry [Oxford] is a potential host. This is being planned to coincide with release of early data from the SHARP study. Early data from ASTRAL will also be available in early/mid 2008, and Phil Kalra had been provisionally planning a meeting to allow presentation of ASTRAL, and also results from STAR (a Dutch study on atheromatous renovascular disease reporting around the same time). It was agreed to co-ordinate plans to make the best use of these opportunities.

ACTION: DJ and PK to liaise and plan for 2008

Research Committee

RA Research Survey

The Renal Association Research Survey has recently been completed and published on the RA website. All Board members agreed to look at the survey results and offer comment to CS on how the information should best be used. **ACTION - All**

UK NHS Clinical Research Network

There have been further discussions with representatives of UKCRN involving CS, JF for RA and representatives of Kidney Research UK. The Renal Association/KRUK document proposing a national renal research network had found some favour with them, but it had been agreed that it should be re-drafted to fit with current NHS R&D policy and strategy. In particular we would be asked to call our proposal a consortium rather than a network.

There did seem to be optimism that, if the renal community got good clinical trial protocols independently funded, that the research net infrastructure would be available to help us deliver the trials.

David Jayne proposed that we should also prepare a derivative document aimed at potential pharmaceutical partners to give them more understanding about the extent and coherence of research planning in the renal community.

**ACTION: CS to redraft the proposal for resubmission to UKCRN
DJ to develop a document for the pharmaceutical industry**

EU Framework 7

The possibility of developing a UK RENAL consortium to make an EU Framework 7 bid (closing date August 2007) was discussed.

ACTION: MEN to develop early plans

International Committee

2006 has been a good year with a significant increase in the number of ISN Fellowships awarded to host centres in the UK.

There are now five ISN Renal Sister Centres in the UK – Cardiff/Nanjing, Sheffield/Bangladesh, Sheffield/Nigeria, Guy's/Romania, Oxford/Minsk. Barriers to developing further sister centres were discussed

- Identifying the necessary time and resources within units against other many priorities was seen to be a difficulty.
- Current registration and immigration changes, limiting the role of clinical fellows to the role of observer status only, is also a significant disincentive. It was agreed that the Renal Association on its own is unlikely to make any impact on these changes which are being actively addressed by the College and Postgraduate Deans.

The achievements of those involved in the ISN Sister Centre and Fellowship Programme will be disseminated through regularly highlights on the RA website and in e-news.

ACTION: MEN to lead dissemination

Education and Training Committee

MMC

MMC moves steadily forward, interviews for new trainee positions will take place in the first half of 2007 for a first August 2007 transition date. There are still no reassurances on appropriate arrangements for flexible trainees or for those who might of necessity take time out of their posts within year (for example for maternity leave). Arrangements for those wishing to undertake a period of full time research are also unclear.

Renal curriculum working party

A joint working party of the Renal Association and the Renal SAC has been established, and will shortly begin work with EB as chair.

Knowledge based assessment for trainees

Developing plans for a knowledge based assessment for trainees continue. JF reported on a recent meeting between specialist societies and the Federation of Royal Colleges. The Colleges intend to develop such knowledge based assessments in partnership with specialist societies, and the Renal Association will be taking an active part. The financial and organisational basis for the partnership is still under discussion. The machinery and organisation of MRCP UK would be the structural basis for the assessment which would be a 200 question multiple choice. Question setting groups would need to be established in the first half of 2007; considerable existing RA expertise was noted through MRCP[UK] experience including CS, Jonathan Fox among others. Appropriate questions developed through the MRCP question setting arrangements were already being banked for the specialist knowledge assessment. PMETB will have a number of requirements of the assessment including full coverage of the new renal curriculum.

An appellation such as MRCP [Nephrology] for successful candidates was under consideration. In the longer term it is thought likely this assessment will also provide part of the machinery for consultant re-certification.

ACTION: President and Treasurer to lead negotiations with the Federation of Royal Colleges

Courses

Advanced Nephrology will now take place twice in 2007 in London and Manchester. The January 2007 course is already close to its registration maximum.

A CPD programme for the Brighton meeting has been planned.

A haemodialysis course aimed at consultants is being planned for spring 2007

Next Meeting

There will be a face-to-face meeting of the Board in March 2007, probably in Birmingham, and dates will be circulated soon. A telephone conference will also be planned now in order to find a date in September/October 2007.