

POSTURE & MOBILITY GROUP (PMG)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

6TH JANUARY 2016

BRISTOL ENABLEMENT CENTRE

MINUTES

Present: Clare Canale (CC) - *chair*, Kirsty-Ann Cutler (KAC), Paul Dryer (PD), Richard Earl (RE) – *vice chair*, Susan Gold (SG), Diane Hargrove (DH), Pam Harper (PH) - *treasurer*, **Krys Jarvis (KJ)**, Henry Lumley (HL), Joanne McConnell (JM), Lorna Tasker (LT). **Via Skype:** Helen Critten-Rourke (HCR)

In attendance: **Olwen Ellis (OE)**; **Ffion Lane (FL)**

Apologies: Rasheed Ahamed, **Ros Ham (RH)**, **Paul Harrington**, Alison Johnston, David Punt

1. CC welcomed KJ, chair of the National Wheelchair Managers' Forum (NWMF), to the meeting. Also LT as a co-opted member. LT keen to put herself forward as a trustee in 2016.
2. **Minutes:** minutes of 16th September 2015 meeting were agreed.
3. **Matters arising**
 - i) OE reported on RH's comments on the minutes which had arrived earlier that morning. OE will be able to clarify and respond to some herself - e.g. publication of 2014 accounts, use of acronyms; others will need further clarification outside the meeting - e.g. questions about the proposed Rehabilitation Engineering courses at University of West of England (UWE).
Action OE
 - ii) Ref RH's concern about industry committee members being involved in assessing of abstracts, JM pointed out that the new member in question, Matthew Eveleigh from Sunrise Medical, is an Occupational Therapist (OT).
 - iii) Agreement with RH that there needs to be a clear distinction in the minutes between those who are trustees and any others present. (NB: This has now been actioned, with co-opted members and others highlighted in green above; the rest are all trustees of the group).
4. **Chair's report**
 - i) CC reminded those present that she is standing down as chair of PMG at the 2016 Annual General Meeting (AGM). Chair elect, DH, has been shadowing her for several months.
 - ii) CC feels it is timely therefore to review the strategy of PMG going forward, and DH would prefer this to happen in advance of her tenure as chair which is commencing in July 2016. Agreed that the next Executive Committee (EC) meeting should be devoted to the strategy of PMG, with other business to be covered as swiftly as possible beforehand.
5. **Alliance**
 - i) Since Gail Russell (GR) withdrew from her involvement with the National Wheelchair Leadership Alliance (Alliance), KJ has kindly been reporting to PMG on Alliance activities. She would appreciate support going forward, and recommended that Joyjit Sarkar (JS), an independent Rehabilitation Engineer (RE) working in her area, and a member of PMG, would be ideal in this role. Despite PMG having been told earlier in 2015 that there could be no replacement for GR, KJ pointed out that other members on the Alliance now have replacements, e.g. Karen Pearce from the Motor Neuron Disease Association.
 - ii) There was a debate about whether GR had been on the Alliance as PMG's representative or in her own right. In any event, it was agreed that KAC would be a more suitable replacement for GR than JS, and KJ will raise the matter with Tanni Grey-Thompson (TGT) ASAP. **Action KJ**
 - iii) KJ also reported on the recent National Health Service (NHS) mandate which highlights the wheelchair services, noting however that no commitments have been made on future funding.
 - iv) With the Alliance deciding to continue beyond its original term, KJ reported that NHS Improving Quality (NHSIQ) is no longer in existence to support its activities, but that

Rosamond Roughton (RR), Head of Commissioning at NHS England (NHSE), has allocated £10,000.00 to the Alliance on condition that the money is not used for lobbying. KJ reported that at the last meeting of the Alliance, TGT agreed to meet RR to clarify what the money is for. They also wish to see a copy of the wheelchair service spec that NHSE are working on, plus receive feedback about the data collection and work on tariffs. KJ is of the opinion that the Alliance should create its own service spec.

- v) Agreed that NWMF and PMG should write a joint letter to RR expressing their concerns about the way things have transpired since the Wheelchair Summits. KJ and KAC to draft the letter. British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA) to be invited to be included in the joint letter. **Action KAC/KJ**
- vi) HL asked that everyone bear in mind that the wheelchair services are not a priority for commissioners, and that it's down to them, not NHSE, to make the changes the Alliance is asking for. He is hoping that RR will visit the Bristol Enablement Centre during 2016; if she does, he will take the opportunity to discuss with her the concerns raised today.

6. Education & Training (E&T)

- i) KAC reported on behalf of the E&T committee, as GR has now resigned from the EC (she wishes to stand down as chair of E&T as soon as possible also). KAC had chaired the last meeting of E&T, which took place on 11th December 2015, and is considering whether or not to take on the role of chair.
- ii) KAC reminded everyone that Lisa Ledger left E&T in September 2015, which means the committee no longer has a direct link to Higher Education. Agreed that OE should contact Dr Ailie Turton, OT and Senior Lecturer at UWE, who is peer reviewing one of the PMG research applications currently, to see if she would be interested in getting involved with the education and training side of things at PMG. HL to consider who we might approach at Health Education England also. **Action OE/HL**
- iii) KAC and FL reported on the recent OT Show which had been a great success for PMG, with over 70 new members signing up at the event. GR's presentation went very well, but was poorly attended because it was right at the end of the second day. Her other presentations on behalf of Careflex had better time slots and were well attended.
- iv) OE expressed her concern about PMG's limited resources for participation in these external events, where there is such reliance on volunteers committing their time to support the activities. NWMF and E&T have already recommended that, at this year's Naidex, NWMF and PMG should only be involved in the professionals' day, when the two organisations will collaborate to provide a programme of training. Publications & Marketing (P&M) committee are in agreement with this. Agreed by all. Agreed also that any future involvement by PMG in external events should be discussed at the strategy meeting. **Action CC/OE**
- v) JM kindly offered to do a presentation for the Naidex programme, as she will already be there with Ottobock. **Action FL**
- vi) KAC reminded everyone that the issue of accredited training has been discussed many times by both E&T and EC. She reported that E&T have not produced the business plan requested of them at the last EC meeting. It was felt that it would be an extensive piece of work, which may well be rejected by the EC given their apparent lack of appetite for accredited training. E&T would like clear guidance from the EC as to what PMG wishes them to provide in terms of training.
- vii) Agreed that this should be a key part of discussions at the forthcoming strategy meeting, and CC asked E&T committee members and others to bring ideas to that meeting, keeping in mind PMG's limited resources. **Action All**
- viii) Agreed that collaboration with other organisations, such as the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine (IPEM) and the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO), should also be re-visited. OE reported that tentative discussions have taken place with Motivation, in relation to the World Health Organisation Guidelines and their Wheelchair Service Training Packages. OE actioned to follow up with Motivation. All in agreement that finding a way of educating wheelchair service providers using the NWMF competencies is highly desirable. **Action OE**

7. Finance

Prior to PH's Treasurer's report, CC noted that, as all financial matters are brought to the EC for ratification, there is no real imperative for a separate PMG finance committee. All agreed that PMG finance and executive business should be amalgamated, taking effect immediately.

- i) PH provided the meeting with current figures in the bank accounts held by PMG, totalling £206,046.72 that day, but she advises caution. Although the reserves are high, there will be fairly large financial commitments before funds come in again; also, every year, PMG now has to pay substantial deposits to secure the following year's conference venues, as well as the current one.
- ii) PH reported that, since the last meeting, the 2014 accounts have been posted on the PMG website, as well as on the websites of the Charity Commission for England & Wales and of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).
- iii) PH reported on a meeting she recently attended at OSCR, where she learned that PMG cannot be registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with them. Therefore PMG remains as a charity in Scotland. She also reported that PMG has been officially de-registered as a charity in England & Wales, and is now only a CIO within this jurisdiction. PH has also attended a course run by OSCR on recruiting of trustees.
- iv) PH confirmed that Value Add Tax (VAT) payments are up-to-date.
- v) **Aldermore:** following up on her report at the last meeting that there was a need for an account at a third bank in order to stay within the limits of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, PH reported that she has recently set up an account with Aldermore bank.
- vi) **Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC):** PH described an extremely difficult meeting she recently had at HSBC in Edinburgh when trying to sort out PMG business with them. DH wonders if there should be a formal complaint.
- vii) PH reported that the payroll software will be purchased once the formalities of employing the new accountant are in place. **Action OE**
- viii) FL to look at the government scheme for workplace pensions which comes into force in August 2017. **Action FL**
- ix) OE tabled a financial schedule for consideration by the EC, including budget requests from all the PMG departments. All requests approved. OE and PH to produce an annual budget for PMG based on the figures. **Action PH/OE**

8. Best Practice Guidelines (BPGs)

- i) PD expressed his concern about the BPGs being out of date. He is particularly concerned about the transport one, given that it is being referenced so widely, even by the Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). LT reported that all the BPGs are being referenced regularly. OE to ask Iain McConnell to check how many times the Transport BPG has been downloaded. **Action OE**
- ii) PD wants a process put in place for reviewing the guidelines, and that ideally this should be done every 3 to 5 years. OE reported that Barend ter Haar stated at the last P&M meeting that PMG does not have the right to authorise reviews, as the BPGs are the intellectual property of the international teams who produced them. Agreed that PD will contact the authors of the transport BPG in the first instance and report back on progress. **Action PD**

9. Conference Committee

- i) JM reported that there have been 3 meetings at Birmingham International Convention Centre (ICC) since the last EC meeting, with planning for the 2016 event progressing well.
- ii) Feedback from the 2015 event has been analysed and fed into the planning for 2016. The main outcome is that there will be no return to Leeds unless the parking situation can be resolved, which is unlikely.
- iii) In terms of delegate accommodation for 2016, FL has secured a deal with Travelodge which means that booking packages will be offered again in 2016. Breakfast to be provided within the exhibition at ICC for all attendees, because the breakfast arrangements are different at each Travelodge.

- iv) Delegate prices have also been reduced this year to compete with the European Seating Symposium (ESS). CC feels that everything possible has been done to mitigate against the risk posed by ESS, and there is no telling how it will go.
- v) Provisional 2016 programme is now on the PMG website.
- vi) Sponsorship will be done differently this year, with all sponsors paying a flat rate of £3,500 rather than sponsoring specific items. This provides an opportunity for more companies to sponsor than in previous years.
- vii) The conference book is to be re-named "Conference Proceedings & Exhibition Catalogue 2016" with a divider in between the two sections.
- viii) JM described an experimental activity for 2016, taking place on the Monday afternoon near the registration area, where early arrivals can discuss various topics in an informal setting. Working title for this session is "Speed Networking" although it doesn't describe the activity well; "Drop-in surgery" has since been suggested. EC and E&T members will hopefully be involved. JM asked everyone to suggest "hot topics" that they feel would be worth including in this session. **Action All**
- ix) In addition to the 3 meetings above, JM reported that she had joined OE and FL on a site visit to Telford Conference Centre on 21st December 2015 to check its suitability for the 2017 event. OE and FL had then travelled on to Harrogate to view the facilities there. Cardiff and Birmingham are still in the running too, with a final decision to be made shortly. CC feels that Belfast should not be ruled out for some sort of PMG event in the future.
- x) **Chair of Conference Committee:** JM reported that nobody had come forward to replace her as chair of the conference committee in 2016 - her term ends in July 2016. JM has therefore agreed to continue for another year, on condition that she should not be expected to attend Finance and EC meetings. Now that the finance business has been amalgamated with EC business, the situation is slightly improved. OE pointed out that the chair of conference has to attend more than the planning meetings in a year, with site visits and the event itself also in their PMG calendar. CC thanked JM on behalf of PMG for volunteering to stay on, and wondered if there needs to be a vice-chair post.
- xi) SG reported that she may be able to consider putting herself forward for the role of conference chair; JM mentioned that HCR has recently intimated that she may be able to consider the role too.

10. Publications & Marketing

- i) DH reported that the P&M committee hadn't met again since EC's last meeting in September 2015.
- ii) The website is making good progress, with training of PMG staff and volunteers arranged at Toucan for later in the month. OE reported that James Foy has suggested Toucan themselves do the bulk of the migration from the old website, given the tight deadlines and huge amount of content. OE actioned to get a quote for this work from Toucan. JM added for comparison that Iain McConnell charges £20ph for his PMG work. **Action OE**
- iii) P&M oversaw the planning for the OT Show in November 2015, creating a multiple choice "posture" quiz and advising on the image for the associated large poster, plus agreeing the prize of a chocolate hamper for the winner. FL reported that the free vegan chocolate buttons went down very well, encouraging footfall to the stand. KAC noted that the stand looked very professional, feeling this helped the footfall. The chance of winning a free place at 2016 conference also encouraged people to join PMG at the stand, using the specially created paper forms provided, rather than promising they would join online later. As mentioned above, the main issue was finding enough volunteers to help over two days. FL thanked for her work in organising and managing the stand.
- iv) Social media presence is continuing to increase at a steady pace.

11. Research

- i) OE reminded everyone that concerns were raised at the last EC meeting regarding the dearth of applications coming through to the PMG research fund. As reported in the minutes however, 7 proposals were subsequently submitted, with 3 being invited to full application; these are currently being peer-reviewed.

- ii) CC feels it is still worth the Research committee considering other ways of using the funds, although the small studies should remain at the core. DH wondered if there might be value in running a Research Masterclass.
- iii) OE reported that there has been no development with the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) fellowship, and no further communication from Simon Fielden (SF) about it. SF had instigated the idea of a wheelchair service employee applying for the fellowship, and PMG were happy to promote it to the membership. KAC to follow up with SF. LR feels it should be promoted again, but to be explained more fully this time. **Action KAC/OE**
- iv) OE reported that there may be one PMG funded project ready for presentation at the 2016 conference, although unlikely.

12. Strategy & Policy

- i) CC, OE and HL gave the background to the creation of this separate sub-committee devoted to PMG strategy and policy – it had come out of the period of discussions with the Department of Health (DH) around the time of their Any Qualified Provider (AQP) drive. HL has been chair throughout, but has had very little to do since the Alliance came into being, with GR being the PMG representative on that. Linda Marks, PMG External Adviser at the time, participated in the discussions with the DH alongside HL and David Porter.
- ii) Agreed that the strategy and policy decisions of PMG should now revert to the EC, with the option to create working parties, as and when required, for particular issues.
- iii) HL emphasised that there needs to be a concerted effort to educate commissioners, given it is they, not the civil servants, who decide on the funding and management of the wheelchair services. Also that NWMF and PMG can only focus on the wheelchair services in England at this time. Agreed.
- iv) KJ feels that NWMF and PMG have been politically reactive rather than proactive, whereas other charities have built up their influence in government circles. DH wonders if this is an area where PMG should now be spending some of its reserves.

13. Any other business

- i) HL gave a resumé of the Rehabilitation Engineering degree course at UWE which he has been instrumental in getting in place; he will forward updates for distribution. HL will be attending the next meeting of the Rehabilitation Engineering Services Management Group (RESMaG) to discuss their possible involvement. **Action HL**
- ii) **PMG representation from Northern Ireland (NI), Scotland and Wales:** CC noted that when she stands down as PMG chair in July, there will be nobody from NI on the PMG EC. Agreement that there should be at least a report from all 3 countries at every meeting. CC to contact Lynda McCullough (LM), Lead OT at Northern Trust Wheelchair Service, to ask if she would be interested in being PMG NI representative. LM has previously expressed an interest in PMG involvement to both JM and OE. LT happy to represent Wales; SG already has this role for Scotland. **Action CC**
- iii) CC will shortly be looking at the terms for PMG trustees within the new constitution, and will check who needs to come off the EC at the July 2016 AGM. **Action CC**
- iv) **Promotional letter by the company Ableworld (passed on to PMG from KJ) in which they imply that PMG has standards of training which they (Ableworld) are meeting.** Agreed that DH should contact Louise Mason at Ableworld, requesting that the letter be withdrawn immediately, and for such claims not to be included in any future promotional material by the company. **Action DH**

14. **Next meeting - Strategy Meeting, 11th April 2016; location NI, venue tbc. Action OE**

Clare Carroll

PMG Chair, 26th January 2016