Neonatal Society Committee Meeting – 13th October 2006, Meeting Room, RCPCH

Present
Professor Andrew Whitelaw, President (chair) A Whitelaw
Professor Andrew Wilkinson, past President AW
Professor Anne Greenough, Treasurer AG
Dr Nikki Robertson, General Secretary NR
Dr Andy Lyon, past General Secretary AL
Dr Anoo Jain, Meeting’s Secretary AJ
Dr Helen Budge HB
Dr Howard Clarke HC
Dr Alison Forhead AF

Abbreviations
NNS = Neonatal Society
NS = Nutrition Society
ESPR = European Society for Pediatric Research
BAPM = British Association of Perinatal Medicine www.bapm.org
BMFMS = British Maternal and Fetal Medicine Society www.bmfms.org.uk
BAPS = British Association of Paediatric Surgeons www.baps.org.uk
ANNP = Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioners www.annp.org.uk
NPEU = National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit www.npeu.ox.ac.uk

1. Apologies
All members of the committee were present and there were no apologies.

President’s introduction
A Whitelaw welcomed all at the meeting and shared with the committee his memories of the first paper he presented to the Neonatal Society in 1976.

2. Notes of the meeting held on 7th October 2005
It was agreed that these were an accurate reflection of the discussion. The point about funding of committee members to attend NNS Meetings was raised. The statement which was recorded in the 2005 meeting minutes was reiterated and all agreed it stood as being correct: “Funding for committee members, in particular basic scientists and non-clinical academics, who do not have access to study leave budgets or other sources of funding, to attend meetings of the Society, will be at the discretion of the Treasurer and President”

The Treasurer (AG) confirmed that travel expenses were available for junior members attending and presenting at NNS meetings. These expenses cover standard class travel within the UK only. If coming from overseas the expenses cover travel from the point of entry to the UK. AG confirmed that most juniors claim for expenses and in addition the committee also claim for expenses.

3. Matters arising
a. Links to other societies
i) Proposal for joint 2008 meeting between NNS, BAPM, BMFMS, BAPS, ANNP, Neonatal Nurses Association, Royal College of Midwives, McDonald Society/Obstetric Anaesthetists.
A proposal for a joint meeting called "Perinatal Medicine UK" in 2008 from Neil Marlow, President of BAPM was discussed. Closer links with other societies had been discussed by the committee last year and was supported. AW suggested that
links with the BAPM should be on a quid pro quo basis, i.e. the NNS should be established as the bona fide research arm of the BAPM, attendance at NNS meetings should be an important part of training in neonatology and it would be desirable for the BAPM to support the NNS by emphasising the importance and worth of trainees coming to the NNS to present research. AL mentioned that he will raise the issue of having the NNS recognised as part of training with the Executive meeting of the CSAC.

NR mentioned that Professor Sunil Sinha had been approached last year and had agreed to host the 2008 Neonatal Society Summer Meeting. The committee all felt that we need to ensure he is happy that his potential meeting in Middlesborough is cancelled or postponed to allow the Perinatal Medicine UK meeting to take place. AG said she would be happy to discuss this with Professor Sinha.

For the proposed 2008 Perinatal Medicine UK meeting, a possible meeting venue could be Glasgow. AG mentioned that this is an expensive venue; approximately 700 participants would be expected according to Prof Neil Marlow. The meeting would span 3 days with plenary review lectures on each of the following topics: Fetal Medicine, Maternal Medicine and Neonatal Medicine. Free papers would be presented in parallel sessions. The NNS part of the meeting would be run by the NNS and would be the “Scientific basis for Perinatal Medicine”. AL mentioned that one of the advantages of this joint meeting would be the opportunity to advertise the NNS; in particular as the NNS has little obstetric participation. This might encourage more obstetricians to take part as active members.

The timing of the Perinatal Meeting UK 2008 was discussed. AW said that the proposed meeting date needs to coincide with the usual date of the NNS summer meeting. There may be a need for a compromise, however to fit in with the BMFMS meeting. Late May/early June may be the date required to suit all societies. AW suggested that the label of the meeting “Perinatal Medicine UK may disenfranchise the Irish colleagues.

It was generally felt that the concept of a joint meeting had many advantages – the 2 main ones being to improve neonatal and perinatal science and attract members.

The involvement of the Neonatal Nurses Research Network with the NNS was raised as being important. Andy Leslie (currently working part time at the NPEU as a research nurse and part time in Nottingham as an ANNP) leads this Network and around 40 nurses are involved.

The issue of who takes liability for this meeting was raised - following on from the recent experience with the joint meeting with the NS. AW stated that the RCPCH and the ESPR both delegate all liability to a commercial company. AJ wondered if this would increase the cost of the meeting if we use a commercial company. NR offered to get a quote from KENES – the company that currently runs the meeting organisation issues for the ESPR.

**Action points:**
1. Reply to Neil Marlow that the committee of the NNS are interested in the concept of a joint meeting.
   
   AJ will represent the NNS views at the BAPM A Whitelaw and AJ

2. Discuss with Professor Sinha whether he is happy that the potential NNS summer meeting in Middlesborough is postponed or cancelled to allow the joint meeting to take place AG
3. Obtain a quote from Kenes for the organisational aspect of the NNS meetings

3a ii) Autumn Joint Meeting with the Nutrition Society in Cambridge, 11-13 December 2006

HB reported back on the various meetings she has had with the NS over the forthcoming joint meeting. She was thanked very much by the NNS committee for her dedicated work in negotiating the best outcome for the NNS. The financial liability was an area of debate with the NS committee – the financial liability that has been agreed for the NNS to take on for this meeting is £3,000. HB reminded everyone that the final deadline for registration for this meeting is the 23rd October 2006. AL was asked if he could send round an e mail to advertise this to the NNS members.

Sponsorship for the meeting was discussed. Although the Royal Society of Medicine has supported this meeting there appears not to be any sponsorship. The Chiesi sponsorship was discussed – Chiesi has provided a 3 year sponsorship of £3,000; this comes to an end in 2007 and AWhitelaw will write to Jonathan Hamilton-Keays to ask if this sponsorship will continue. If Chiesi want a stand at the joint NS-NNS meeting, the NNS will need to pay £600, however it is not yet definite whether they will want a stand. The Chiesi lecture (that given by Olav Oftedal on Adaptive Lactation Strategies) at the joint meeting cannot be titled as such on the programme, however the Chair person introducing the speaker can say that the lecture is supported by Chiesi.

From the NNS members, 11 abstracts were accepted or which 5 will be oral presentations and 6 will be posters. These sessions will run contemporaneously. Each oral presentation will last 10 mins with 5 mins for questions. Each poster will last approx 6.5 mins. The NNS and NS free papers will be fully integrated in the programme. Dr Anthony Williams has agreed to introduce session 4 on Mineral metabolism/body composition and the NNS need to decide whether we refund his registration fee. The publication of the NNS abstracts will occur in the usual format in a booklet put together by SMA and those accepted for publication will be published in Early Human Dev. Olav’s Oftedal’s abstract will accompany the NNS abstracts. The NS abstracts will be published in the “Proceedings of the NS”.

There needs to be a slot at the Cambridge meeting for the accounts to be presented to the NNS members. Unfortunately Prof Greenough cannot be there and another committee member will need to do this in her place. Three pages of the accounts need to be presented and paper copies need to be available for members to take away if they desire.

The conference dinner will take place on the evening of Tuesday 12th December 2006. It is usual for the NS to have table plans and the NNS were advised they might like to also do this. It is the custom for the NS to pay for the dinner of those chairing sessions. During dinner, there will be a showing of a DVD related to Elsie Widdowson. A Whitelaw felt it would be appropriate to also have a more personal short speech about the memories of Elsie Widdowson.

**Action points**

1. AL to send round reminder to all NNS members for this meeting registration deadline
2. A committee member needs to present the accounts to NNS members at the Cambridge meeting

3b. Advertising
It was felt that in addition to the posters advertising the NNS, a poster should be sent out a couple of weeks before a meeting, advertising the 2-3 invited speakers. The free registration should also be advertised. We need to target the current Grid Trainees (the RCPCH have their details) and also Basic Science Depts.

**Action Point**

1. Poster to be sent by email to all members by general secretary (NR) - members will be asked to place poster on notice boards and pass on to colleagues who might be interested.

**3c. Archiving**

AJ is currently archiving last year’s meeting booklets. In addition he is investigating Website archiving with the Wellcome Trust.

**3d. Student prizes and encouragement for young investigators. (see under section on finance)**

**3e. Suggestions for speakers for meetings in 2007**

Suggested speakers

A Whitelaw:

Floris Groenendaal, The Netherlands (Brain and neuroprotection and MRI)
Eli Saliba, France (Brain and experimental models)

HC:

Jeff Whitset proposed for the Tizard Lecture at the Summer 2007 meeting
Larry Nogee proposed for the Widdowson lecture in Nov 2007

NR

Anthony Costello to speak on the Millenium Development Goals and perinatal issues
NR proposed to ask him whether he could give the McCance Lecture at the Spring 2007 meeting on 15th March 2007.

**Action point**

1. NR will invite Anthony Costello. Depending on his availability, AJ will invite other speakers.

**4. Neonatal Society Finance**

AG highlighted that income from subscriptions has fallen again over the past year. The speaker bill has gone up considerably and catering costs have also risen. Secretarial and postage costs have decreased. Accountancy costs have increased very slightly. There is only a very small surplus of income in the last year. The Society has around £75,000 in the bank so there is no immediate problem but we need to keep an eye on the capital. The interest on the capital will be ploughed back into the capital. As the NNS earns > £10,000 a year but gives educational grants, it can continue to be considered a Charity.

The possibility of raising the NNS subscriptions was also discussed – the last raise was in 2001. This may need to be considered next year especially if we want to increase our student prizes and support elective programmes for students and develop the Website (see section 7).

Chiesi are half way through their 3 year sponsorship of £3,000 over 3 years. This ends in 2007.
There was a discussion on how we could use some of the NNS funds for Student prizes as we are keen to encourage new members. There was much discussion around the possibilities. The decisions for further NNS prizes were as follows:

A. Competitive grant to support a student (either PhD or medical student) to visit a laboratory (which must not be the usual place of work) or a hospital on an elective. The prize is for up to £500. There will be 2 awards made each year - the deadline for submissions will be the last day of January and July each year. The student would be required to present the data or elective experience (after returning from the visit) either as a poster or oral presentation at one of the NNS meetings when the prize winner would be presented with a certificate. Applicants need to submit the following to the general secretary by the respective deadlines:
   (i) 1 A4 page outlining the proposal (e.g. what the student's objectives are for the visit. This may include observing or learning a technique)
   (ii) Summary of the Budget
   (iii) A short CV (one page)

B. Best presentation from a trainee or junior scientist
The best presentation will be awarded with a certificate and £50 at the NNS meeting after all the free papers and before the final invited talk at the end of the meeting.

These prizes will start from 2007.

Action point
1. When the committee have agreed with the prize summaries, a description will be written by NR to be included on the NNS website. A poster will be circulated in early 2007 to advertise these prizes.

5 and 6. Abstracts and Meeting Secretary's report
AJ outlined the changes he wishes to make to the guidelines for abstract submission and formatting to include the statement that every abstract must have ethics approval. Also to state that revision may be necessary once the abstract has been presented and before it is accepted for publication in Early Hum Dev.

AJ stated that the citation for the abstracts from the
Summer 2005 meeting: Early Hum Dev 2006;82(9):609-622
Autumn 2005 meeting: Early Hum Dev 2006;82(9)623-636
We are awaiting the citations for the Spring and Summer 2006 meetings.

AJ stated that the cost of hiring the lecture theatre at the RSM is increasing significantly. He proposed the committee to consider the Kennedy Lecture Theatre at the Institute of Child Health, London for the March and November 2008 meetings. The cost of hiring this venue is considerably less than the RSM. This was thought by all committee members to be a good idea and the facilities are excellent.

7. Website
AL stated that the current website is hosted by Clevermed. The NNS are considering moving the website to Repeat Media (the company that currently hosts the BAPM) as Clevermed do not do Web design. Clevermed are happy to transfer the domain name to Repeat Media. Currently with Clevermed, the e mail distribution list only accepts AL’s e mail address.

This move will cost the following:
1. Redesign and the transfer of pages currently on the website £650
   (This will be less if all the abstracts are in pdf format)
2. Updating site £22/hr
3. Hosting site £75/annum
4. Set up the e mail list for NNS committee £650 + VAT

AW wondered if the website could end with “.ac.uk” as it is an educational website. AL said he could investigate this.

In summary, setting up the website will cost £1300 + VAT
This could happen within a few weeks.
If necessary we could put up subscriptions to cover this in the future.

**Action point**
AL to move forward with the website transfer to Repeat Media

**8. Committee**
New Members: It is the responsibility of the committee to nominate honorary members. Distinguished members who have retired recently or who will retire in the near future are:

Neil McIntosh (May 2007 due to retire)
Rodney Rivers - already retired
Henry Haliday - already retired

It has been difficult in the past to identify Honorary Members and the current list on the website is not up to date.

The membership address list is held by the meeting secretary, treasurer and general secretary. We need to formulate this into one master list in the future.

**Action point**
A Whitelaw to write to these potential Honorary Members

**9. Any other business**

The committee was thanked for a productive and efficient meeting.

HC was congratulated on his recent appointment as Chair of Child Health in Southampton.

Next AGM will be at the November 2007 meeting

**Date of next NNS committee meeting: 28th September 2007 12.30 – 17.00, RCPCH**

18.10.06 amended 25.10.06
N Robertson
General Secretary NNS
London