Minutes of Rural Forum Steering Group Meeting

Minutes of the Rural Forum Steering Group Meeting held on Saturday 27 February 2016 at 10:30 in Ash Room, 30 Euston Square, London NW1 2FB

PRESENT:

Dr Malcolm Ward  
Chairman
Dr Chris Clark  
English Representative on RFSG
Dr Rob Lambourn  
English Representative on RFSG
Dr Sanjeev Maskara  
First5 Representative on RFSG
Dr Hal Maxwell  
Scottish Representative on RFSG
Dr Mel Plant  
Welsh Representative on RFSG
Mr James Roberts  
Membership Experience Manager, RCGP
Dr Michael Smyth  
Northern Ireland Representative on RFSG
Dr Chris Williams  
Scottish Representative on RFSG
Mrs Lifa Zvimbande  
Regional Engagement Manager, Northern Region

IN ATTENDANCE:

Paula Lythgoe  
Rural Forum Administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Ward welcomed the group. Each attendee gave a brief introduction to the group informing them where they are based and their role within the RFSG.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</td>
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<td>Dr John Wynn-Jones &amp; Rachel Morris</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</td>
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<td>The Chair asked those present to be aware of their personal interests and to declare them if relevant to items discussed.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>INFORMATION GOVERNANCE</td>
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<td>The Chair reminded members present to be diligent regarding data security and information governance.</td>
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5. **NOTES – RFSG TELECONFERENCE – 9 NOVEMBER 2015**

The Minutes of the previous Telephone Conference, held on Monday 9 November 2015, were agreed to be a true record.

**Matters Arising**

a) Rob had brought along a copy of the College 2016-17 Clinical Priorities document which had been recently circulated to Faculties. The Clinical Priorities document had been discussed at great length at the teleconference and the RFSG had agreed on the top three which related specifically to rural general practice.

Interestingly the top two agreed by the RFSG concurred with other Faculties, Devolved Nations, Groups, Committees and also with Individual Members. These were:

1. Fatigue
2. Promote GP as a Career

Malcolm clarified that the listing in the notes of 9 November was rather confusing and that in fact the top three listed 5, 3 and 8 should have read as priority 1, 2 and 3 etc.

b) A further meeting has yet to be scheduled with ACRRM and the RCGP of which the Rural Forum has been invited to contribute. A discussion took place regarding the fact that 40% of UK GPs who have taken a career opportunity to work in Australia for more than two years are at present unable to return to work in the UK. Currently the system in place is that a break of more than two years requires the GP having to shadow another GP for 6 months unpaid and also having to resit the RCGP exam. This system is not encouraging GPs to return to work in the UK. The group discussed ways in which this could be addressed. It was agreed that Chris W and Mel will participate in the next teleconference along with Sandy Mather, RCGP and Steve O’Neill from Workforce Engagement. The group also thought that a GMC rep should be present. It is hoped that a less rigorous route could be planned for future returnees.

6. **MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

James Roberts, Membership Experience Manager joined the group to explain about his role and the RCGP strategy on improving membership experience. James informed the group that the College needs to be driven by its members and gave a great presentation after which followed a lively discussion within the RFSG. The RFSG asked if it would be possible to have a copy of James presentation. The group realise that the way forward is social media and that a Twitter account should be launched. Chris Williams agreed to set up the Twitter account. Lifa is also keen for the RF to have a Facebook account. At present there are no volunteers to administer Facebook. It was agreed that the Rural Forum will start with a Twitter account and if successful open a Facebook page and link the two. Paula will liaise with Lifa regarding this.

The group all felt that by utilising the Rural Forum Discussion Googlegroup to engage with member is all part of the membership experience.
7. **MEDICINES OPTIMISATION IN RURAL AREAS**

Chris Clark reported on the Medicines Optimisation Short Life Working Group which is due to finish next month. Chris is representing the Rural Forum and the Dispensing Doctors Association. The idea is to improve medicine optimisation in rural practices by getting pharmacists involved and to provide continual medical education for pharmacists and dispensers. Chris emailed two documents to Paula to distribute to RFSG for their comments. (Please note: these documents are for RFSG only). It was suggested that if pharmacists are to work in general practice to gain experience in diseases they could have legal protection through CNORIS NHS Indemnity (clinical negligence and other risks).

8. **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The future of the Rural Forum and the RFSG was discussed including revisiting the Terms of Reference with new additions to be included.

- RF to hold annual conference education event.
- AGM to be annexed to the event.
- RFSG member period of office 3 yrs. Can offer themselves for re-election.
- Members invited to offer themselves for RFSG ahead of the AGM (notice period)
- 1/3rd of Steering Group to stand down each year and offer themselves for re-election if they so choose.
- AGM elects/re-elects RFSG members for next 3 years.
- Chair to serve 3 years, elected by Steering Group. If no contenders Chair may submit for re-election by SG.
- AGM can be used to sound members’ views on RF direction and future planning.
- Factor details of new bank account eg. administration

9. **RURAL FORUM SEAT ON COLLEGE COUNCIL**

Lifa is very passionate that the Rural Forum should have a seat on College Council and if the RF are to have ‘Faculty’ benefits they should have a seat and be a voice for rural issues.

The way forward with this is for Malcolm to put a robust case and send this to Maureen Baker before the next Executive Management Team meeting.

Chris Williams has applied for a seat on College Council due to commence in November this year for a three year term and if successful will represent sessional and rural GPs. The group would like to offer their support and enquired if it would be possible to canvass the Rural Forum to ask if they will vote for Chris through the Discussion Googlegroup. Lifa will enquire if this is possible as the section on canvassing in the Information for Candidates paperwork is unclear.

10. **FINANCES**

The Rural Forum bank account is now officially open with all signatories having access to Internet banking. Lifa is due to attend a meeting on the 7 March to discuss Rural Forum finances.

Paula reported that the recent Minor Surgery Update course had been very successful making a surplus of over £1700. The plan is to hold a two day Minor Surgery Course and half day Joint Injections Course, which will boost the RF funds.
11. **RURAL FORUM CONFERENCE**

After much discussion it was decided that the next Rural Conference should take place April 2017 at the Beardmore Hotel near Glasgow.

Malcolm suggested that Professor Tony Young could be invited to present his TV Pro plug in device. As he is promoting his device it was suggested that this should be self funding and he would not receive any fee or travel expenses.

Other suggested topics were:

- CPR – Basics Scotland to teach Basic Life Support
- Acute Emergencies which present in General Practice
- Child Protection
- X-Rays and ECGs

The next telephone conference will discuss topics and speakers for this event.

12. **EDUCATIONAL/RURAL GP TRAINING INITIATIVE**

Malcolm is still waiting for a definite answer from the Scottish Government as to whether they will help fund this initiative. It is expected that a response will be sent out in the near future. Mel informed the group that there had been a lot of interest from GPs in Wales. Initially the Welsh Government did not support this initiative although this may possibly change.

13. **MEDIA TRAINING**

The RCGP are running day courses on Media Training. The next dates are:

For anyone interested please contact Lifa. Rob, Mel, Sanjeev, Michael and Chris W are all interested in attending.

14. **SUCCESSION PLANNING**

This was covered under Item 8 Strategic Planning

15. **RCGP NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

Chris Williams submitted the Call for Conference Ideas to the College late last year. The topic he intends to talk about is the NHS Highland’s Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship which is a one year placement for 4th year students. The students will follow patients from appointment to pre operation, into hospital and then home visits after discharge. Five students are due to start in the Highlands in August this year. A decision will be made by the end of March as to whether the application for conference ideas is successful.

16. **CQC**

Malcolm has received an invitation from Maureen Baker to attend a CQC meeting along with CQC Chief Executive, David Behan due to take place on Wednesday 9 March 2016, 1.30-4.00 pm at 30 Euston Square. The CQC are undertaking a consultation on their 2016-2021 strategy to which the College will be submitting a written response. Malcolm is unable to attend, but Rob will attend in his absence. CQC currently applies to England practices only.
ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that the University of Aberdeen Remote and Rural Conference in Inverness, 23-24 May link sent in agenda would not open. This needs to be checked.

John Wynn-Jones was unable to attend today’s conference, but had sent an update to Malcolm which has been circulated to the group.

Campaignmaster: the next Campaignmaster is due to be launched on Thursday 26 May 2016. Can you please send any articles of interest to Paula.

There are various Faculty Workshops being held around the country. Malcolm is keen to attend the Glasgow workshop due to take place on Wednesday 20 April. He will check his diary for availability.

There have been a number of GPs, students, practice nurses who would like to join the Rural Forum Discussion Googlegroup directly rather than the conventional way of joining the Rural Forum through the College and then being added to the Googlegroup afterwards. To police who is joining the Googlegroup (GG) it has been decided that should someone try to join the GG directly Paula will email to ask them to join the Rural Forum through the College system and then add to the GG later.

The Rural Forum currently have no representation from AiTs. Malcolm will write to Antoinette Hoyte at the College to ask for an AiT with rural interest/background.

The RFSG was contacted late last year by Professor Elizabeth Mason-Whitehead from Chester University regarding a proposed MSC in Rural Health and Medicine. She was asking for any advice or input with this programme. The group discussed this and agreed that out of courtesy we should respond.

From time to time the Rural Forum are asked to advertise for partners/sessional GPs in practices. The group would like to clarify if they can advertise on the Rural Forum web page. Lifa clarified that we cannot advertise on the web page, but can on a Facebook page.

Paula has been contact by Hammaad Tariq, Physician Associate Student whose masters dissertation is focussing on GPs in Rural Areas. Hammaad has enquired if the Rural Forum would help by completing a short questionnaire on physician’s assistants and if they would be useful in rural general practice. Physician’s Assistant posts started in the USA for diagnostic training. The Royal College of Physician’s website have a job description of this role. The group thought Hammaad’s questionnaire could be rolled out to the discussion Googlegroup.

DATE OF NEXT TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

Paula to send Doodle Poll for next telephone conference