Minutes of Rural Forum Steering Group Meeting

Minutes of the Rural Forum Steering Group Telephone Conference held on Tuesday 29 August 2017
Meeting Commenced at 20:00

PRESENT:
Dr Robert Lambourn Chair
Dr Hal Maxwell Scottish Representative on RFSG
Dr Melanie Plant Welsh Representative on RFSG
Mrs Jane Randall-Smith EURIPA Representative on RFSG
Miss Rosannah Jackson Medical Student, Aberdeen University
Mr Keith Wilkinson Regional Engagement Manager, Northern Region
Mr Michael Critchell Medical Student, Aberdeen University
Dr John Wynn-Jones WONCA Representative on RFSG

IN ATTENDANCE:
Paula Lythgoe Rural Forum Administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS</td>
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<td>Rob started the meeting off by thanking everyone for attending and giving a warm welcome to Mike and Rosannah our medical student representatives on the Rural Forum Steering Group.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Apologies were received from Dr Sanjeev Maskara, Dr Steve McCabe, Ms Matilda Sims, Dr Michael Smyth, Dr Chris Williams &amp; Dr Malcolm Ward</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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<td>5.</td>
<td>MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY 30 MAY 2017</td>
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<td>The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 30 May 2017, were agreed to be a true and accurate record.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>MATTERS ARISING/ACTION LIST</td>
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<td>There were no matters arising from previous minutes.</td>
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7. CHAIR UPDATE

Rob briefed the group on recent developments. He has had an article printed in GP Frontline, “Reaching out to Rural GPs” which highlights the challenges faced in rural primary care. There was also the Rural Twitter Chat evening, held last month to discuss rural general practice across the UK. This received good feedback from Helen’s blog.

Rob and Jane attended the Rural Health Event in Leicester on the 19 July delivering a session on Primary Care Challenges and Solutions for Rural Areas. Around 120 delegates attended. Jane reiterated that the day went well. Rob attended a meeting with Professor StJohn Crean and from this discussion has been invited to the UCLAN site at Westlakes Science Technology Park to talk to GP Trainees and Physicians Associates, date has yet to be confirmed. Rob is also writing a short article for overseas doctors. Following on from all of these events this has now raised the profile of the Rural Forum within the College.

Rob reported that Matilda Sims has recently taken on the role of interim National Faculty Manager, Operations until the end of March next year (standing in for Rebecca Hughes). Mark Thomas has taken over from Simon Ashmore as interim Executive Director of Policy and Engagement. The Rural Forum still require stability due to changes of personnel at the College as they currently do not fit into the College hierarchy.

8. FINANCE

Rob informed the group on the Rural Forum budget. Although Rob had a meeting with Simon Ashmore and Nigel Mathers and was informed that the Rural Forum budget stood at around £9000. It was not explained that £8000 of this is to cover Paula’s salary, leaving only £1000 to hold teleconferences and face to face meetings. Previously the budget was around £6500 which did not include Paula’s salary so the majority could be used to fund meetings. The group thought that due to many staff changes at head office there has been some misunderstanding regarding the budget. Rob asked the group if they thought he should contact Steve Mowle to ask for clarification on this. The group agreed that yes, they thought Rob should contact Steve.

The exact date of the next face to face meeting is dependent on one-off funding from the College. An application form has been completed and submitted to Matilda Sims for consideration. While awaiting the decision regarding funding Paula will send a Doodle Poll to the group checking their availability.

9. RCGP CONFERENCE - LIVERPOOL

Rob asked the group if they will be attending the annual conference in Liverpool on the 12-14 October. Hal may be attending. Keith had a banner and posters printed which were displayed at the Leicester conference in July. Rob asked Keith, who is attending the annual conference if these could be displayed? Keith will liaise with Matilda regarding this.

10. RURAL FORUM CONFERENCE/EDUCATIONAL EVENT 2018

A discussion took place to decide if, where and when we should hold the next educational event. The group all felt that these events are very important and that the earlier they are advertised, the better. Although the event held in March this year did not attract large numbers, it was a really useful event with excellent topics covered. It was also live-streamed to enable GPs living in remote areas or those unable to attend to join in. The group all felt that live-streaming was essential. Paula will enquire if Chris Williams is happy to help livestream the event.

After a discussion around dates, trying not to clash with other educational events it was decided that early February 2019 is when the next rural event will take place. After two conferences in Penrith and two in Glasgow it was suggested moving the event further south to Shropshire Educational Centre, Shrewsbury or Albrighton, West Midlands. Jane will enquire if the education centre is available. Paula will check with Mel re: Albrighton and enquire about their availability.
The key to the event attracting larger numbers is to open it out to as many health professionals as possible including, nurses, paramedics, nurse practitioners, physicians' associates and medical students. Mel and John both have contacts with Keele University and Imperial College Hospital who are keen on promoting rural. They will both contact their sources and let Paula know as soon as possible to enable her to send out the save the date.

11. MEDICAL STUDENTS

The group discussed how to engage medical students in rural general practice. John informed the group that there is a WHO Forum on Human Resources for Health due to take place in Dublin 13-17 November 2017. The forum encourages young doctors and medical students to attend. Jane briefed the group on Keele University, that although the university is keen on training students in rural areas there is lots of pressure to go into hospital medicine.

Rob asked Mike and Rosannah if Aberdeen University encourage medical students to savour or consider rural general practice as a career. Mike informed the group that yes Aberdeen do encourage rural general practice.

John is due to attend a meeting in October with Professor Dai John at Cardiff University to discuss a rural training programme at Cardiff University. John is also involved in the Rural Student Network, Rural Seed which is hosted by Brazilian student, Mayara Floss. John asked Mike and Rosannah if they would like to be added to the group to put them in contact with other rural students.

Student engagement will be added to the agenda of the face to face meeting.

12. FACULTY PLANNING

Documentation has been circulated to the RFSG on Faculty Planning. Rob has read the College Strategic Plan 2017-20. The Rural Forum are already achieving many of the 8 objectives. The College are looking for zero-budgeting for 2018-19. Paula was uncertain if the Rural Forum must complete a Faculty Plan. Previously this has not been the case. Keith will clarify with Matilda.

13. FACE TO FACE MEETING (STRATEGIC MEETING)

Hopefully with funding from the College the Rural Forum Steering Group will be able to hold a face to face meeting. The group would like to hold the meeting on a Saturday in November. Paula will circulate Doodle Poll.

14. EMAIL FRANCES GERRARD

Dr Frances Gerrard, Director for Community Based Learning at Cardiff University had emailed Paula in July. The email enquired if the Rural Forum could help in any way with linking up medical students. Currently even cities are struggling to recruit placements for medical students, but it is crucial that students engage with rural practices. In many parts of the world students spend a year in rural GP practices. The group would like to continue this discussion at the face to face meeting and invite Frances to either attend in person or by telephone conference.

15. MALCOLM WARD RETIREMENT FROM STEERING GROUP

Malcolm had sent an email to say he plans to retire from the Rural Forum. Both Rob and John expressed their thanks and gratitude to Malcolm for all his hard work on behalf of the Rural Forum.
16. EURIPA FORUM, HEALTHWATCH & COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCILS

Jane reported: The 7th Annual EURIPA Rural Health Forum will take place in Crete from 2nd - 4th November 2017. More information is available on the web site at www.euripaforum2017.eu. The original flyer is attached. The theme is "Rural Renaissance" and the abstracts are currently being evaluated. The final programme will be published shortly. We look forward to welcoming everyone in Crete.

From Healthwatch Shropshire:

Many Healthwatch across England are exploring the application of the NHSE Accessible Information Standard. The Standard exists to provide people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss with information that they can easily read or understand as well as any communication support that they need. All organisations that provide NHS or adult social care are required to follow the new standard. It applies to GP practices. It is a legal requirement.

There is information on our web site at http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/accessible-information-standards

Fragility of neurology services - Healthwatch is interested in patient experiences of neurology services and also the impact on primary care where local neurology services are no longer available and patients are being referred out of county, in some cases over considerable distances which is even more of a challenge for rural areas.

From Wales:

Wales still retains Community Health Councils (Healthwatch is the latest incarnation in England) and there is currently a consultation out (closing 29th September) on their future. The consultation is wider than just the CHC and focusses on quality and governance in health and care services. The White Paper is attached for information. It needs rural proofing.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

John informed the group of an excellent article in Nature Journal about a fresh approach to rural development with ‘bottom up’ approaches. John will circulate to the group.

18. DATE OF NEXT TELEPHONE CONFERENCE/FACE TO FACE MEETING

Face to Face Meeting in November or early December.

CLOSE