

Society for Social Medicine

MINUTES OF THE 50TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL MEDICINE, HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS ON WEDNESDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2006 AT 17:00 HRS

31 people attended the meeting and it was chaired by Ian Harvey.

1. Minutes of the 49th AGM held in Glasgow

The minutes were agreed.

2. Any matters arising not specified below

No matters arising were identified

3. Honorary Secretary's Report

The report is attached. This included details of the current membership, the submission of abstracts for this year's meeting, other meetings that have taken place during the past year and changes to the committee. A question was raised about whether the number of new members and number of abstracts submitted were increasing or were stable. It was reported that these are fairly stable and so members are asked to suggest ways to increase these, such as ideas for one-day meetings, flyers and other advertisements.

4. Honorary Treasurer's Report

The Society's finances were read, checked and reported as healthy. The amount paid to EUPHA for subscription to the EJPH has decreased substantially since the journal went electronic as we now pay per member subscribed. It is probable that many members do not realise they are eligible for access to EJPH and that this should be publicised more explicitly in the newsletter with instructions of how to register. The Society has a surplus in the account and ways of investing this were discussed. One idea is to offer free places at the ASM to local NHS and voluntary sectors. Another is to extend the number of free student places offered (this year there were 19) and to extend this to include young researchers.

5. Report on EUPHA

Alastair Leyland has now taken over from Carol Orchard as EUPHA representative for the Society. He reported that as of the beginning of 2006, EUPHA had 46 member associations from 39 European countries, representing some 12,000 public health experts. The EUPHA sections have expanded with a new section on public health genetics and a further 5 sections have been proposed. At last year's conference in Graz, there were nearly 800 participants and over 460 presentations. This year's conference will be held in November in Montreux, Switzerland and the main theme is "Politics, Policies and/or the Public's Health". The 2007 conference will be held in Helsinki, 2008 in Lisbon.

6. Report on IEA European Federation of Epidemiological Societies

- a) Cork 2007 – Robert West reported that the 2007 ASM in Cork will now be a joint meeting with IEA Europe, as the previous hosts have had to pull out. The European board has agreed to help with refereeing, share of profit/loss.
- b) EYE (European Young Epidemiologists) - an informal group has been set up under the wing of IEA Europe to encourage young researchers.
- c) Dictionary of Epidemiology - John Last is retiring and the new editor, Miquel Porta (and OUP), are inviting contributions by e-mail. This was mentioned in the newsletter.

- d) 'CIOMS' - an international committee has written guidelines for the good conduct of epidemiological (public health) research, similar to the guidelines for clinical research. However, these may have no legal, statutory or regulatory status. This will be raised in a future issue of the newsletter.
- e) NGO status in European Union – this was proposed to allow IEA Europe and member societies (including SSM) early access to the development of policy and law. The estimated cost to SSM would be 1000 Euros p.a. This motion was passed, subject to review at a later date, if deemed to be not working well.

7. *Election of Chair-Elect, two Ordinary Members of the Committee and Honorary Members of the Society*

Diana Kuh was agreed as Chair-Elect. Cindy Cooper and Mark Gilthorpe were elected on to the committee. Stephen Frankel, Elizabeth Russell and Alison McFarlane were elected as honorary members.

8. *Electronic communication within the Society*

- a) An online registration system was piloted this year, but facilities for paying online are not yet available. Mark Gilthorpe asked whether Society money could be used to fund developing this along with an IT student. This motion was passed.
- b) Aileen Clarke reported that the Society has email addresses for approximately 75% of the membership. It was discussed whether money should also be used to improve the current database and to obtain the remaining addresses (and check the validity of the existing addresses). This motion was passed.
- c) The issue of having an electronic newsletter rather than a paper copy was also discussed. There did not seem to be a consensus on this and were the committee to consider this at a future date then a ballot of the membership would be needed.

9. *Voluntary Register for Public Health Specialists*

Aileen Clarke reported that the Voluntary Register has now been running for two years. As of June 2006, there is the opportunity for defined groups to register and SSM members may want to consider this. There was also a workshop on this subject at the ASM.

10. *Future scientific meetings*

The dates for future ASMs are as follows:

- a) ASM 2007 - Cork
- b) ASM 2008 - Southampton
- c) ASM 2009 - Newcastle
- d) ASM 2010 - ???

There is also a one-day meeting taking place in November on the use of ethnicity in health research. Members can suggest topics for future meetings or can organise meetings under the umbrella of SSM. Anyone wishing to organise a meeting should contact the Treasurer, Aileen Clarke, as financial subsidy may be available.

11. *Any other business*

- a) A question was raised about the next ASM in Cork and whether delegates would have to pay in Euros and incur a conversion charge. It has not yet been decided how payment will be made and the committee will investigate this issue further.
- b) The subject of conference clashes was raised. There seem to be a high number of conferences around the same time as our ASM. The Society does liaise with a few other societies about dates but it was suggested that this should be widened in order to try and avoid clashes.