

**Minutes of WIPSIG Meeting held at the Royal College of Psychiatrists  
17 Belgrave Square  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006.**

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**Those Present:**

Natasha Bijlani  
Fiona Mason  
Rebecca Horne  
Vivien Deacon  
Hema Ananth  
Lucy Watkin  
Carol Henshaw  
Anne Aboaje  
Jane Mouny  
Helen Crimlisk

**Apologies:**

Ros Ramsay  
Elaine Arnold  
(both had other commitments but did attend between 3 and 4 p.m.)  
Vathsala Ramamurthy (regretfully indicated that she would be standing down as Treasurer due to pressure of work as Medical Director in her Trust).

**Minutes of the AGM** from July 2006 were read and minutes from the Anniversary Meeting in November 2005 were supplied.

Corrections to the Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> July 2006 were that Fiona Mason's name should be added to the list of those who sent apologies.

**Matters arising from Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> July Meeting:**

Vivien Deacon pointed out that she had sent a letter of complaint regarding the timing of the AGM clashing with the Royal College's AGM and therefore reducing the pool of attendees at the WIPSIG AGM. Jane Mouny suggested that we should be watchful to avoid this time-table clash for next year's meeting.

As there was no formal agenda, using the headings from the previous minutes, the following matters were discussed:

The three workstreams for today's workshop would be organisation/ communication, physical health and PMETB, these being the priorities determined at the strategy meeting in May 2006. Fiona Mason had brought 1500 copies of the strategy and distributed the first ten to the WIPSIG committee. It was agreed that the strategy would be sent out with the Newsletter with an introductory article supplied in the Newsletter. The Newsletter will also contain summaries from each of today's three groups.

Vivien Deacon has already offered to write an article on application for clinical excellence awards by women. All other articles for the coming Newsletter should be provided to Natasha Bijlani by the end of December/beginning of January. All committee members should be prepared to submit articles on a regular basis.

Rebecca Horne reported on topics for the Royal College meeting. Both the proposed sessions have been provisionally accepted with four speakers in each session rather than the suggested three. The acceptance of this has yet to be confirmed. The Chairs of these two sessions will be Fiona Mason for Physical Health and Amit Malik for PMETB.

Carol Henshaw advised that the perinatal session will be on the Tuesday of the Annual General Conference, with Carol herself speaking on mood disorders in pregnancy.

### **Communication:**

Helen Crimlisk reported that the website is developing. However, the Email group has been less successful because perhaps some Trusts may block access to Yahoo groups. Helen has suggested as a solution a JISC group for which an academic address would be required. Carol Henshaw offered to supply this and Helen pledged to attempt once again to set up an email group, this time via JISC mail. This would be on the basis of an opt-in situation rather than opt-out (otherwise one could become flooded by too many emails).

Fiona Mason confirmed that the next time we meet for our Spring conference will be on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at St. Andrew's Hospital, Northampton.

There will be a meeting of the Executive and a dinner the evening before the conference, with committee members staying locally. On the day of the conference the finalists for the WIPSIG prize will present in the morning, followed by a full programme in the afternoon on topics relating to female patients, programme yet to be finalised. The programme will be sent by Fiona Mason to Natasha Bijlani for the Newsletter, and to Helen Crimlisk for the website.

At this point, Liz MacDonald and Olivia Protti jointed the meeting.

### **Any Other Business:**

It was noted that we would need a new Treasurer to be nominated and elected, and a new Staff Grade Rep to be co-opted on to the committee.

Executive members were encouraged to promote applications for the WIPSIG prize which had been recently advertised in the College bulletin, closing date 31/12/06.

During the discussions, the WIPSIG mailing list was circulated and updated by those present. Anne Aboaje's name was added as the PTC (formerly CTC representative).

Fiona Mason is in the process of clarifying the roles of the different executive members in terms of leadership, links and whether currently an active member or “sleeper”.

The other new member was Hema Ananth from Hempstead who was welcomed.

The meeting then divided into the three workstreams. We had 90 minutes per group to brainstorm our topics. At 3.45 the group reconvened to feed back from our working groups. Fiona Mason fed back from the Communication Group, reporting that the structure of WIPSIG itself and its Executive Committee would be further refined, with all members of the Executive playing a key role and having certain duties attached to that role.

A series of linkages would be created from within the psychiatric field, for example the other SIGs, and from organisations beyond the Royal College, such as Women Mental Health leads in every Trust. A substructure outside of the executive committee would be created, consisting of Link members. The leads from within the Committee working on behalf of subgroups for our chosen topics this year will work outside the three annual meetings of WIPSIG communicating with members of their subgroup. They will provide a written report to the Secretary of WIPSIG two weeks before each meeting, together with input to the Newsletter, which will serve to update everyone on progress.

The Communication Group had further discussed the proposal for a JISC mail group. This would be open to the wider membership of WIPSIG. The purpose of this discussion group would be a broad-based group on women’s issues and would not be for the business of the Executive Committee itself. The Communication Group proposed and endorsed the formation of three email subgroups for the three chosen workstreams. Fiona Mason agreed to write up the discussion from her subgroup as a proposal.

Olivia Protti reported back on behalf of the subgroup focusing on physical health needs of women accessing mental health services. The group had had many ideas and proposals. They had spent time discussing producing leaflets for psychiatrists and their patients as a guide to the physical health needs of women patients, and also CPD packages. They also proposed to organise a Women’s Health Within Mental Health Conference.

There had been a proposal to write an article for Advances in Psychiatric Treatment Journal entitled “Knowledge and Pathways to Care”. A skeleton proposal was to be drafted by Carol Henshaw and to be forwarded to the current editor of Advances in Psychiatric Treatment. The second main proposal to produce a leaflet for clinicians, recommended on A4 size leaflet when unfolded, with six columns of information and would cover topics such as contraception, psychotropic medicines and their side-effects, planning a pregnancy, coping with pregnancy and the various issues faced by women at different stages of their life cycle.

The wider group strongly urged Olivia to promote these topics to Nick Brown, Gareth Halsgrove and Dinesh Bhughra, to be included within the competency based curriculum, which is currently being finalised.

With regard to the leaflet, Ros Ramsay advised that the proposal should go to the Public Education Committee, with which she was connected, in order for the information to be placed on the College website. In addition, sponsorship would be needed to produce the leaflet. Members were encouraged to volunteer names of charitable organisations linked with women’s health (but which were not drug companies), to provide this sponsorship. Issues related to the leaflet would have to be notified to Deborah Hart at the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Finally, Anne Aboaja fed back for the PMETB subgroup, lead Elaine Arnold. A considerable amount of the group's time had been spent clarifying the current MNC changes to training for full timers and Anne Aboaja had produced a pictorial diagram of the proposed training structure for 2007. There had followed a short discussion of 20 minutes with Elaine Arnold present, regarding the points within the training at which female trainees would be affected, and particularly those working flexibly.

Questions were posed about how flexibles would apply for flexible training in the future and whether they would be required to have identified a job share partner before applying. If a trainee took maternity leave, how would cover be provided for that trainee, an issue which for many years in general practice was a major stumbling block but which could in future become a problem in hospital medicine from 2007, as flexibles would no longer be supernumery. Questions were posed on how flexibles would increase or decrease their number of sessions and where would their funding come from?

As well as funding issues, geographical problems were discussed with the proposed buddy system, seemingly designed to help couples, but not necessarily those with domestic commitments within a specified geographical area, whether they be married or single.

A point which was strongly emphasised was that flexible trainees should be eligible to undertake their competency assessments at the same time as full timers, which would serve to hasten their progress through the training scheme, but if they chose to take longer than their full time counterparts they should not be penalised for doing so; for example a half time trainee should be allowed to take twice as long to get through all the stages within a particular specialist training band.

It was agreed that these proposals should be fed back to Dinesh Bhughra as Dean of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Finally, there was a proposal by Elaine Arnold to ask the Royal College to monitor the numbers of women being successfully granted specialist status through Article 14. We would need to know the numbers of men and women applying, the percentage of women successful, and numbers of those exceptional cases where PMETB had overruled the College on rejecting specialist status, as has happened recently with the Royal College of Surgeons.

This meeting of the Executive Committee ended at 4.30 p.m. on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006, with a reminder that our next meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at St. Andrew's Hospital in Northampton,