

Royal College of Psychiatrists
Volunteering & International Psychiatry Special Interest Group (VIPSIG)
Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday 15 December 2017, The Tamarind Centre, Birmingham

Present

Sophie Thomson (Chair), Madip Jheeta (Finance Officer), Ruairi Page (Secretary), Anis Ahmed, Lena Jawad, Brad Hillier, Vivek Furtado

(Present for AA presentation: Tamarind Centre staff: R Memon, R Burrows, S Farooq)

Apologies

Sally browning, Peter Hughes, Athula Sumathipala

EXECUTIVE MEETING

No specific matters arising. Proceed to general meeting.

GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of last meeting

Discussed and feedback received

Matters arising

ST gave an introduction to the group and described the role/functions of VIPSIG.

BH gave update as to Myanmar work he has completed (Forensic). BH has presented combined work on forensic mental health to the Myanmar Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health and Sports working for United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with UNAIDS, WHO, UNOPS, UKAID and the 3 Millennium Development Goals Fund. This is an ongoing piece of work.

AA presented his talk on “The g00d Nazi and the OtheR R.....”

Sophie thanked AA for his hospitality and his hard work over the last few months towards the VIPSIG group.

AA discussed about the requirement for psychological first aid in Myanmar. AA is hoping to develop a package of training for healthcare professionals in the Rohingya districts.

BH discussed extensive work currently being undertaken with the humanitarian crisis in the region, Discussed the need not to get pulled into the political conflicts in the region. Discussed disappointment in international community's response to the conflict to date.

ST discussed the need to be practical about the situation. Experience shows that there is a need to focus on working in collaboration with the UN or UNHCR to help facilitate support. Discussed need for UN engagement and to organise suitable training. Psychological First Aid- WHO has stated that everybody should be able to provide PFA; this training is not wholly difficult, especially when the motivation is there.

MCF have a large involvement in the Myanmar crisis. Discussed the need for UN organisation of projects to help facilitation.

BH- Following the Haiti crisis, it was evident that is more helpful to link in with broader organisations such as MCSF

ST- Discussed need for professionals working with children (Child Psychiatrists) involvement to help facilitate PFA and other projects in Myanmar.

ST- Discussed mhGAP. Discussed trainings available. Good evidence base showing successes of mhGAP. Discussed requirement for mhGAP training in such areas.

BH- Discussed what mhGAP (Mental Health Global Action Plan) is. 10 key priority conditions. Discussed these conditions. First published in 2007. Available online. Available on WHO website, teaches professionals to signpost and treat mental health conditions, in an algorithmic manner. Recommended attendees of the meeting to look at the mhGAP

AA- Discussed how small interventions can make big differences, used art therapy as an example, discussed specialised curriculums tailored to each area's needs.

Very glad that he had the opportunity to share his feelings about the Rohingya crisis with his presentation.

ST- Discussed thanks to the nurses who attended the meeting, discussed need to involve nursing staff with VIPSIG and that we are looking to recruit more nursing colleagues to the group.

LJ- Introduced herself, ST6 General Adult Psychiatry, is now based in Birmingham following move from London.

ST- Discussed the human rights and global mental health meeting this year, which was very well attended and received very good feedback.

Discussed the mhGAP training weekend. The group have now decided that this is going to be done differently. Firstly as change of location to the Institute of psychiatry in London following no availability of the Education Centre at Springfield Hospital. Secondly there will be a change in the facilitation of the training, with facilitators being from trainees from the Global Health MSC, with 2 possible annual mhGAP training weekends

ST discussed the possible dates for next year's mhGAP training being in May 2018 and September 2018.

ST discussed the possibility to hold one mhGAP weekend outside of London, VF discussed looking into the possibility of running the course at Uffculme Centre (Birmingham) in the autumn of 2018.

The group collectively discussed the newsletter and requirement for improved communication between the editors and the core group.

ST discussed the website. Key contact is Mark Turner from the College

BH discussed the need for a VIPSIG website subgroup

BH discussed arranging a meeting to discuss our plans for the website, to be held between BH, PH and ST, and Mark Turner (RCPsych)

ST discussed the need to engage more with psychiatric trainees, in particular for ideas around website, new projects etc.

ST discussed the role of a VIPSIG Communications Officer- ST stated would like PH to carry out such a role. She asked the group present and there were no other volunteers put forward or suggested.

ST discussed the role of the communication officer, which would be to promote Global mental health and the VIPSIG with key roles of the officer being networking, webpage development, and the primary role with social media pages.

BH discussed the idea of creating a small group which would form a communications team. LJ mentioned speaking to PH to see what his ideas were about the formation of the Comms group.

RP discussed the need for us to link social media pages to the website for those who don't have access to social media.

MJ- on the topic of finances, discussed that he will chase £2000 from general adult faculty.

On discussion regarding a PFA and Humanitarian mhGAP conference this year- AA discussed such a course would be essential.

ST discussed that Lynn and Peter Van der vogal run an autumn PFA course, and that the VIPSIG will advertise this.

On discussion regarding an annual VIPSIG Conference 2018- General consensus was that the annual conference was very successful when previously done.

MJ- Thought that the general topic of "Refugees" would be a good idea. Last conference- MJ discussed that the conference was very popular, and well attended. Jane Mountry did a fantastic job organising it.

BH is also pro us organising a further annual conference. Discussed that there is a lot of work going on at the moment around refugees and mental health, and that this would be a good focus for the conference. Discussed the idea of also focus on an international forensic psychiatry element and refugee mental health. Also discussed topic of Transcultural psychiatry/culture bound syndromes, would be interesting.

VF- Discussed Global mental health, global health funding opportunities, and that he would be certain he could help us find presenters for the conference with his academic colleagues (via Warwick University etc), Also discussed currently lots of work being done around refugees and mental health. VF stated that he could give the group a list of people being part of a global health funding meeting. Discussed global mental health being a priority for the INHR.

AA- likes idea of pairing up with transcultural special interest group.

BH- Discussed that he is currently engaged with work around refugee mental health with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine- discussed there is lots of new work being done around the topic.

MJ- Discussed there being loads of ideas for themes for the 2018 conference. One being Refugees/culture bound syndromes/forensics. However MJ felt that the broadest idea would be to make topic on refugees. Also discussed the possibility of JM being interested in organising given the success of the last conference.

BH, RP, LJ discussed getting together to help organise conference.

ST discussed having been approached by HEE to present on volunteer work, and assessment of it's impact

BH mentioned that he will be seeing JM tomorrow night, and will mention to her about possibility of involvement in setting up the next conference.

LJ- Discussed UCL have global health department who we could approach for speakers.

Date for VIPSIG conference → Agreed end of September, based at college, discussed need for full CALC event, costing £2000/

MJ- Discussed always had good attendance, would be favourable to do it via CALC.

ST agreed with this, MJ and BH discussed attraction of not doing own admin when group runs trainings outside of the college.

MJ- Would like to add that last year's conference was a great success.

AA- discussed opportunity for QR coding for feedback for our conferences. AA uses google drive to store feedback which has been generated by QR coding.

ST- on topic of PFA/HIG conference, Discussed previously ran via a morning PFA, and afternoon HIG conference in the past, ST discussed can be quick training with clinicians based in the UK. Discussed adhoc idea for PFA conference.

AA discussed increased insight from good speakers who incorporate real life experiences into the trainings.

MJ- Thinks we should repeat same format as last PFA conference.

ST: No requirement for outside speakers with the PFA/HIG as can be run in house.

MJ: thinks a further PFA/HIG conference would sell out very easily.

ST: Previous charge to attend PFA/HIG conference was £100 and it still sold out.

BH: Agrees with idea to follow format from last year's PFA event

ST: Will ask Louay E-T if he would like to arrange the PFA event again following last year's success

BH: Discussed need for VIPSIG cluster groups from each HEE region

Would think it would be a good idea to set up regional reps who could promote the group in each region.

RP happy to start work into regional VIPSIG groups. Would like to implement videolinking into future VIPSIG meetings.

ST- National advisory committee have commissioned a position for VIPSIG/global mental health to give us more backing in the RC. Royal college have focussed on global mental health at increased rate recently.

ST- Discussed current size of group is that there are 2640 current VIPSIG members. Discussed the need to get the ship in shape, improve communication amongst members.

MJ-On discussion of VIPSIG involvement with the 2018 International congress, discussed it now being too late to apply for workshops.

BH- stated that if it was something the group would be keen on pursuing that it would be worth contacting the organising committee

ST- Discussed Adrian Worrell, head of policy and college centre for quality improvement, retiring soon

ST- On discussion of the Volunteering handbook- that this should be up on the website

College in Australia have commented positively on our handbook and website.

On discussion of VIPSIG/GP link- MJ discussed the project of mhGAP training for GPs, taking a bit of time to organise, but currently awaiting accreditation, 1 year accreditation, official training for GPs, MJ suspects the project will be popular.

Following on the back of very positive feedback from GPs at mhGAP weekend, Psychiatrists who have attended our mhGAP weekend should be able to cascade/offer training to fellow GPs re: mhGAP training, working on the same ways as overseas to promote link between psychiatrists and GPs.

MJ- Promoted idea of doing an mhGAP training for Royal College of GPs

ST- Issue is that there is no certified trainer for mhGAP, no current WHO body to accredit certified trainers for mhGAP.

MJ- Thinks simplest idea is to replicate our mhGAP weekend for GP attendees.

ST- Purpose of GP training would be for CPD, focusing on mental health in primary care, using mhGAP,

BH- Discussed potential conflicts between mhGAP treatment regimes and NICE guidelines for GP trainings.

MJ- Need to make it clear that the mhGAP is based at low and middle income countries, international slant

MJ- Would like to do the conference once, give it a go, see feedback.

ST would like to read contract and speak to Elen Cook about support being done at the College with college admin support.

PROJECT UPDATES

ST has to write annual report on projects.

RP updated about Malawi project and his recent involvement/teaching trip in November.

LJ- Discussed her observations of psychiatric clinics in Cambodia.

ST discussed the recent idea of presentations at VIPSIG meetings- that these have been successful- has asked LJ if she would like to present at the next meeting

MJ- Attended emerald project at House of Commons, Updated them about VIPSIGs work

BH discussed Kurdish mental health projects in the UK at the House of Commons also (CEFTUS).

AA- Has written to the International Committee for partial travel grant for 2 psychiatrists to UNHCR (£500 each) for Myanmar project.

BH- Update on Burma. First part, 2 days training in Myanmar with Prof A Sumaphathala, Professor Keele University, Orientation day and Research day- Introduction into planning research projects, mhGAP clinical training (2 separate places), part of an ongoing evaluation, meetings with University of Medicine One, supporting psychiatry curriculum in Myanmar, discussed Rohingya

College of medicine there have asked for help developing curriculum, and developing research skills,

ST- THET conference Global Mental Health Project, very enjoyable conference, Kings College did a really good course on teaching psychosocial techniques

BH- Suggested database for people who have attended mhGAP attendees, for involvement in projects

FINANCES

MJ: Discussed VIPSIG Finances being very healthy. That the group do have available funds; that we may need to use these for mhGAP orientation weekend as Springfield Hospital venue is being redeveloped.

ST- Numbers of VIPSIG are still growing, largest SIG of the college

ST used funds to organisationally, following approval from the Financial Officer, to help fund the GPs in Burma who helped with the mhGAP training

ST- Talked about library of videos that VIPSIG could use for training

MJ discussed idea of creating a book of volunteering opportunities

MJ- Would like to keep SIG finances available if there is a drastic need to dig into the funds.

Future events

Dates of next committee meetings

Next meetings-

2 March 2018- Venue TBC

15 June 2018- Venue TBC

19 October 2018- Venue TBC