

**Minutes of the Australian Health Economics Society
Annual General Meeting
6pm, 1 October 2010
THE GRACE HOTEL, SYDNEY**

(Subject to ratification at 2011 AGM)

The President of the Society, Denzil Fiebig, declared the meeting open at 6.05pm.

Present: Jenny Watts, Denzil Fiebig, Lisa Gold, Mike Shields, Tony Scott, Henry Cutler, Marian Shanahan, Anthony Harris, Grace Lordan, Glenn Jones, Elizabeth Savage, Beverley Essue, Jane Hall, Bruce Hollingsworth, Alison Hayes, Rachael Morton, Paula Lorgelly, Sue Gargett, Richard Milne, Philip Clarke, Denise Doiron, Laurel Hixon, Jing Jing Li, Jon Karnon, Michelle Cunich, Tom Lung, Ashley McAllister, Richard Norman, Rosalie Viney, Kirsten Howard, Michelle Evans, Kees van Gool, Bonny Parkinson

Apologies: none

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was moved by Elizabeth Savage and seconded by Grace Lordan that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. The motion was carried.

President's Report

The President noted that the Society continued to move along smoothly and was in a sound financial position with a growing membership. The AHES Executive continues to meet regularly throughout the year via teleconference and deal with issues as they arise through these discussions. The Executive has continued to meet expectations in delivering at least three issues of the AHES electronic Newsletter each year. Information that cannot be held over until the next newsletter continues to be circulated via email to the membership.

This year AHES has again received conference sponsorship from Pfizer. This sponsorship is again for one year (2010) with no guarantee of renewal. This sponsorship allows AHES to invite an international keynote speaker to the conference. The President thanked Pfizer for their support.

In 2009/10, AHES had sponsored the inaugural Health Econometrics workshop through a sponsorship of \$1,500 to support studentships. The President felt that this inaugural workshop was a great success and the second workshop will be held in 2011 on the Gold Coast (all information is available on the web). The President reminded the membership that support from AHES is open to all worthy causes, especially those aimed at supporting students and early career researchers. Any support from AHES will be provided for one year only, with the possibility of renewal.

In 2009/2010, AHES received a request for nomination to the 5th Community Pharmacy Funding Agreement. Due to the very short timeline provided, the President consulted with the Directors of CHERE and CHE and nominated Anthony Harris (who was also nominated by another party).

The President reminded the membership of the AHES Research Prize, which will be awarded next year for a paper published in 2009 or 2010. All eligible papers published in Health Economics or the Journal of Health Economics will be automatically nominated. Members are requested to nominate further eligible papers. Further details are provided in the minutes of the 2009 AGM.

The President thanked the local conference organising committee of Marian Shanahan, Rachael Morton, Alison Hayes and Beverley Essue for conducting the conference organisation for this year.

The President thanked the AHES Executive for their continued input.

The votes of thanks were supported by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report

Jenny Watts tabled the 2009/10 financial report and presented the 2010 Treasurer's report (see Appendix A).

The Treasurer reported that the Society was in a sound financial position. The 2009 Hobart conference had 109 registrations and the conference venue costs for that conference were relatively low. Both the high attendance and sponsorship from Pfizer Australia aided the financial position of AHES in 2009/10 FY.

The 2010 conference has attracted 120 registrations and the Society currently has 143 members for the 2010/2011 financial year. Pfizer Australia again provided sponsorship for the Sydney conference.

Election of Office-Bearers

Nominations for candidates for election as officer-bearers of the Society were called for in the second issue of the 2010 newsletter. By the due date of 23rd September 2010, the following nominations had been received by the Secretary:

- President: Rosalie Viney
- Vice-President: Michael Shields
- Secretary: Lisa Gold
- Treasurer: Jenny Watts
- Public Officer: Henry Cutler

According to the rules of the Society, these positions were declared elected.

This left three vacant posts on the General Committee. Nominations were called for these positions at the AGM. The following three nominations were received:

- General Committee: Adam Gordois. Nominated by Lisa Gold, seconded by Julie Ratcliffe.
- General Committee: Jing Jing Li. Nominated by Jenny Watts, seconded by Lisa Gold.
- General Committee: Tony Scott. Nominated by Jane Hall, seconded by Rosalie Viney.

According to the rules of the Society, these positions were declared elected.

AHES Travel Scholarships

Mike Shields reminded the membership that the aim of the AHES Travel Scholarships (up to two scholarships, of up to \$1,500 each) was to encourage young researchers, especially from the Asia-Pacific region. For the 2010 AHES Travel Scholarships, one scholarship was awarded: to Huang Wei of Peking University. The Vice-President noted that there had been an increased number of late

submissions this year and asked the membership for ideas to improve our advertising of these scholarships.

Ideas presented at the AGM included:

- Separately advertising with iHEA just for the Travel Scholarship, i.e. separate from the general call for papers
- Advertising on the AHES webpage
- Targeting people that are linked into Asia-Pacific networks such as Anne Mills
- Approaching Asian Health Economics societies, Nepal Health Economics Society, etc.

Conference 2011 and beyond

The President reported that the new process of deciding on AHES conference locations was instigated in 2009 and this immediately led to an exception, as described in the minutes of the 2009 AGM. As a result, the 2011 AHES conference will be held in Melbourne, with Bruce Hollingsworth and colleagues at CHE as the local organisers. In the AHES newsletter of early 2011 there will be a call for expressions of interest for hosting the 2012 AHES conference.

Jenny Watts reminded the membership that the 2011 AHES conference will fall on the Thursday and Friday before the AFL Grand Final in Melbourne. The Friday and Saturday nights of this week are “black-out” dates for hotels in Melbourne, meaning that accommodation will be hard to find for the Friday night. Flights in and out of Melbourne are also likely to be affected. In discussion the option of moving the conference to the Wednesday and Thursday was raised and Bruce Hollingsworth agreed to follow this up with the keynote speakers.

The location of choice for the 2011 conference is the Westin Hotel, but best price rooms at this venue would be \$250 per night. An alternative, of lower quality, would be the Rendezvous Hotel, with best price rooms at \$180 per night. Jenny Watts asked for feedback from the AGM on this choice. The majority view of the AGM was to go with the Westin Hotel, with the proviso that sources of student accommodation would also be sourced and publicised on the AHES website. All members were reminded of the need to book travel and accommodation early for the 2011 conference; this will be reiterated in AHES newsletters in 2011.

AHES and iHEA

Bruce Hollingsworth reported on iHEA developments as the AHES representative on the iHEA Board. He had met with Bill Swan and Tom Getzen in the US and had been involved in testing the submission systems for the 2011 iHEA World Congress, but nothing else had happened yet. The other regional representative to date is Bob Elliot from HESG, UK. There will be a meeting of the iHEA Board in 2011 and all queries should be directed to Bruce Hollingsworth.

Denzil Fiebig supported Bruce’s efforts to be a pro-active regional representative with iHEA. Given the effort that Jane Hall went to in establishing this role for regional representatives, it was important that the role was productive. Bruce will contact Bob Elliot and the other regional representatives as these are announced to find out how they are progressing.

At the 2009 AHES AGM, Jane Hall reported on the discussions in iHEA around moving to an annual conference. The weight of opinion among the iHEA membership – when surveyed – was against this, although iHEA will move to sponsor regional conferences in their “off” years (i.e., when there is no World Congress). The European Health Economics conference in Dublin in 2014 will be the first

example of this. Bruce Hollingsworth reported that iHEA were especially keen to support organisations in the African and Asian regions.

Paula Lorgelly talked to the agenda item on an affiliate session on Australian/Australasian topics at the 2011 iHEA World Congress. The deadline for this session is 15th December 2010 and AHES may submit more than one proposal. Bruce Hollingsworth volunteered to co-ordinate such submissions and it was agreed to post a call for submissions in the next edition of the AHES newsletter (to go out in Spring 2010).

Jane Hall reported on progress for the 2013 iHEA World Congress in Sydney. This will be held at the Sydney Convention Centre from Sunday 7th July to Wednesday 10th July 2013. Planning is underway with a small committee of 6-8 people being convened under the joint leadership of Jane Hall and Denzil Fiebig, representing the co-hosts of CHERE and AHES respectively. Bruce Hollingsworth is the third member of this committee as the elected AHES representative to iHEA. One more AHES Executive member and two early career researchers (one each from AHES and CHERE) would be recruited to this initial committee.

The first deadline for the 2013 planning committee is to present at the 2011 iHEA World Congress in Toronto (in July 2011). For this, we need to have an agreed theme for the 2013 conference. Past themes have been: Bridging health and economics (San Francisco); Explorations in health and economics (Copenhagen); Harmonizing health and economics (Beijing); and Transforming health and economics (Toronto). To date, the only requirement for Sydney 2013 is that we do not use the words “health and economics” (!). Suggestions for Sydney 2013 include “New World of Uncertainty: health economics 50 years on” or “Uncertainty in the New World: health economics 50 years on” as 2013 is the 50th Anniversary of the publication of Arrow’s article. No bright ideas were forthcoming at the AGM, so this topic will be raised in forthcoming AHES newsletters, with a deadline of Christmas 2010 for ideas and comments.

AHES written submission

Tony Scott spoke to the two pre-circulated motions included as Appendix B. The topic was that AHES should have a more active role in bringing more funding into health economics in Australia. This was not about lobbying on a particular topic or issue, only about increasing the prominence of health economics in the region as a whole.

Jane Hall supported the motion, noting that if we lobby as individuals then we are dismissed, but if we lobby as a group then we have more power. It was also important that the AHES membership feel that there is a process that any AHES support has gone through to be assured that such support reflects the Society as a whole and not any one interest group.

Many members felt that the motion was already covered by the rules of the Society and that there was no need for a separate vote. However, Tony Scott reiterated that the purpose of the motion was to formally set down a process for submissions on behalf of AHES. Issues raised by other members included a potential impact on travel costs if members were travelling to represent AHES on these matters. There was also a concern about where the boundary lay between action to support health economics as a whole and particular lobbying issues. Overall, however, the AGM was in support of these motions.

An amendment to the first presented motion was agreed, for the motion to read:

“That the AHES membership encourages the Executive to seek and submit written submissions to government or other enquiries or reviews, with the aim of promoting health economics in Australia.”

This motion was proposed by Tony Scott and seconded by Jane Hall. The motion was passed.

An amendment to the second presented motion was agreed, for the motion to read:

“That the President, Vice President, or volunteers from the membership of AHES should, on behalf of and with the endorsement of AHES, be able to informally meet face to face with government and funding agencies and other organisations, to promote the interests of health economics in Australia”

This motion was proposed by Rosalie Viney and seconded by Jane Hall. The motion was passed.

Any other business

No other business was raised.

The President declared the meeting closed at 7.10pm.

APPENDIX A

			TOTALS
Opening Bank Balance (1/07/2009)			\$ 26,874.33
Revenue			
Interest		\$ 16.05	
Membership 2009/10 (N=143)		\$ 4,680.00	
2009 Conference (Registrations=109)		\$ 43,320.00	
Sponsorship (Pfizer Australia)		\$ 13,200.00	
Other		\$ 430.00	
Revenue Adjustment		\$ 1,956.88	
GST Refund		\$ 1,644.74	
Total Revenue			\$ 65,247.67
Expenditure			
2009 Conference Total			\$ 38,737.06
- Venue	16,538.60		
- Dinner	\$ 8,274.00		
- Other	\$ 2,497.96		
- Speakers	\$ 10,822.00		
- Executive dinner	\$ 604.50		
2009 research prizes Total			\$ 3,160.67
- travel scholarship x2	\$ 2,160.67		
- junior prize	\$ 500.00		
- best paper	\$ 500.00		
Prizes (plaques)	\$ 757.70	\$ 757.70	
2010 Conference Deposit	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	
Internet Hosting 2010	\$ 328.00	\$ 328.00	
Bank Fees and Charges	\$ 1,928.30	\$ 1,928.30	
AMEX/Diners Charges	\$ 33.13	\$ 33.13	
Refunds	\$ 560.00	\$ 560.00	
Total Expenses			-\$ 46,754.86
Closing Bank Balance (30/06/2010)			\$ 45,367.14
Closing Bank Balance (27/09/2010)			\$ 91,209.44

APPENDIX B

Proposed Motions for the AHES Annual General Meeting

1. *“That AHES should be able to submit written submissions to government or other enquiries or reviews, with the aim of promoting health economics in Australia.”*

2. *“That the President, Vice President, or volunteers from the membership of AHES should, on behalf of AHES, be able to informally meet face to face with government and funding agencies and other organisations, to promote the interests of health economics in Australia”.*

Proposed by Anthony Scott, The University of Melbourne

Background.

There are many instances where it would be useful, for health economics as a whole in Australia, to have single voice. In the past individual members have lobbied with varying effect, but it would be better to have a single and more forceful voice. Many other organisations and societies often make written submissions to enquires or reviews, or informally meet with government and funding agencies, to promote their interests. AHES should be able to do the same.

Example:

- 1) NHMRC consultation on the Partnerships for Better Health Centres for Research Excellence. There were many submissions about how these centres should be set up, but none from health economists.
- 2) Productivity Commission Enquiries on health topics.
- 3) Submissions to ARC ERA panel about the ranking of health economics journals.

The proposal is not for AHES to take a particular stand on a policy issue, or to promote one centre over another, as this would require a level of agreement from the membership that may be difficult to achieve.

Submissions would generally promote the role, importance and relevance of health economics to health policy issues, or issues relating to research funding. The objective would be to promote the relevance of health economics and argue for more funding for health economics research.

Process.

1. Any member of AHES can suggest to the Executive that a written submission should be made to an enquiry, or meeting be organized. This should be in the form of a written proposal setting out the nature of the submission and proposed content.
2. The AHES executive will approve whether it is appropriate for such a submission to be made.
3. Any member, or group of members, of AHES can volunteer to write such a submission, or attend such a meeting, with the approval of the AHES Executive.
4. The draft of written submissions would be reviewed and approved by AHES Executive.