

**Minutes of the Australian Health Economics Society
Annual General Meeting
6pm, 29 September 2011
THE WESTIN HOTEL, MELBOURNE**

(Subject to ratification at 2012 AGM)

The President of the Society, Rosalie Viney, declared the meeting open at 6.00pm.

Present: Jenny Watts, Rosalie Viney, Lisa Gold, Mike Shields, Joanne Epp, Henry Cutler, Bonny Parkinson, Anthony Harris, Emily Lancsar, Paula Lorgelly, Richard Norman, Jane Hall, Philip Clarke, Tony Scott, Rohan Sweeney, Yuejen Zhao, Bruce Hollingsworth, Angelo Iezzi, Janelle Seymour, Jing Jing Li.

Apologies: Denzil Fiebig

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was moved by Bonny Parkinson and seconded by Henry Cutler that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. The motion was carried.

President's Report

The President thanked the AHES Executive and their Committee for their support and assistance to her as incoming president and noted that the Society continued to run successfully over the year and maintained a strong financial position. The AHES Executive communicates regularly throughout the year, mainly via email with a few teleconferences; most items deal with the conference but also other matters as they arise. AHES has delivered three issues of the AHES electronic Newsletter in 2011 so far, with other material distributed by Lisa Gold in the interim.

This year AHES has continued to participate in the organisation of the 2013 iHEA conference, with teleconferences and emails as well as a face-to-face meeting at the 2011 iHEA conference, where AHES members were especially helpful in staffing the Sydney 2013 booth.

AHES has received two important sponsorships for the Conference this year – we are delighted to have received sponsorship for the Conference from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (Platinum sponsorship) and also very pleased that we have been able to continue to receive sponsorship from our long time supporter, Pfizer.

In terms of other activities, AHES had supported the second Australian Workshop on Econometrics and Health Economics (AWEHE) through a sponsorship of \$1,500; the Executive supports similar sponsorship of this event in 2012.

Following on from decisions made at the 2010 AGM, AHES has become more active in the policy arena, particularly as it pertains to promoting health economics and health services research and its contribution to policy. This has involved a number of activities, initiated by members and with the input of the Executive and the Committee. We have iteratively developed a structure and process for undertaking these activities. So far this has involved:

- A letter to Hon Nicola Roxon MP regarding piloting of Coordinated Care in diabetes and the need for input of health economics in the design and evaluation;
- Input by members to the ERA ranking process;

- A survey of members (undertaken by Philip Clarke and Ed Fitzgerald) in regard to ranking and standing of journals (reported in the previous newsletter); and
- A letter to Hon Nicola Roxon MP regarding need for capacity in health technology assessment, cosigned by several senior academics in health economics.

These activities are on the Agenda for this meeting and it would be useful to review the process and how members perceive these activities.

In 2010/2011, AHES also received ad hoc requests to provide media comment on economics issues. Where there was a suitable AHES member and the topic seemed appropriate we have suggested individuals and asked them if they were willing to participate.

The AHES research prize will be awarded at the conference closing session. This is a two yearly prize. After the first prize in 2009, a decision was made that all papers published in JHE and HE in 2009 and 2010 would be eligible, and other papers could be nominated. In total 16 papers from JHE and HE met the eligibility criteria and there were two other papers nominated as well. This is a very pleasing indicator for the high quality of health economics research being undertaken by Australian researchers. A two-stage process was undertaken for selection of the research prize, given the large number of papers. An initial shortlist was developed by two members of the AHES Executive, and then the papers on the shortlist were ranked by the Judging Committee (consisting of these two members (the AHES President and the IHEA representative) and two other members (Denzil Fiebig and Janet Currie). The papers were of very high quality overall. The President was very grateful for the excellent input from the other members of the Panel who were extremely willing and diligent in their efforts.

The President noted that, as the iHEA conference will be held in Sydney in 2013, consideration needs to be given to the timing and location of the 2013 AHES conference. This will be debated later in the AGM, with a call for expressions of interest to follow (subject to the later debate).

The President thanked the very active local conference organising committee of Jing Jing Li, Jenny Watts and Bruce Hollingsworth as well as other members of the Executive for organising such an excellent conference this year. The 2012 AHES conference will be held in Darwin, with Yuejen Zhao and Rosalyn Malyon as local organisers.

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 2010/11 financial report and presented the 2011 Treasurer's report (see Appendix A).

The Treasurer reported that the finances of the Society were healthy, with 159 memberships and 128 conference registrations processed this year. The AHES conference is getting a bit more expensive to stage each year, although the estimated closing balance of \$40,000-50,000 remains strong.

The Treasurer was asked to clarify what her idea of an appropriate closing balance was; she answered that the current level of the balance was appropriate in that it meant AHES could continue to sponsor events such as the Econometrics conference as well as offer an increased level of student scholarships for the AHES annual conference.

It was moved by Jane Hall and seconded by Tony Scott that the Treasurer's report be accepted. The motion was carried.

Election of Office-Bearers

Nominations for candidates for election as officer-bearers of the Society were called for in the third issue of the 2011 newsletter. By the due date of 22nd September 2011, 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
- General Committee: Jing Jing Li
- General Committee: Joanne Epp

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

This left one vacant post on the General Committee. Nominations were called for these positions at the AGM. There was considerable willingness among the membership to volunteer for this position. After some discussion, the following nomination was received:

- General Committee: Yuejen Zhao. Nominated by Jenny Watts, seconded by Bruce Hollingsworth.

According to the rules of the Society, this position was declared elected.

AHES Travel Scholarships

Michael Shields reminded the membership that the AHES Travel Scholarships were introduced some years ago with the explicit aim to encourage people from overseas to attend the AHES conference. In previous years AHES has not been too successful in achieving this aim but this year we had four applications which were all of a reasonable standard. Although the guidelines for the Travel Scholarships are for up to two scholarships, of up to \$1,500 each, this year we decided to offer scholarships to all four applicants: Liu Dan of the University of Bonn; Rumana Huque of the University of Dhaka; Suparna Pal of the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum; and Srinivas Goli of the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai.

The Vice-President noted that the decisions this year had raised two issues for discussion at the AGM:

- How many scholarships to offer; and
- What level of scholarship to offer (given that \$1500 was insufficient to cover many air fares).

Jane Hall agreed that the amount of the scholarship should be increased to cover the budget in terms of return airfare and a reasonable level of accommodation. Philip Clarke pointed out that AHES could do more to strengthen links with Scholarship recipients by circulating the details of students to AHES members in advance so that students could arrange a longer stay in Australia, combining the AHES conference with a visit to relevant AHES members' organisations. The President noted the consistency of membership views on these topics and moved that AHES empower the Executive to:

- (a) be flexible with the amount of scholarship in the future; and
- (b) to circulate details of successful Scholarship recipients in advance of the conference.

Conference 2012

The 2012 AHES conference will be held in Darwin. The local organisers raised the option of moving the conference to an earlier date in order to benefit from milder climate conditions. There was discussion among the membership, with support for both options (of keeping the conference at the Thursday/Friday of this week, and of moving to an earlier date) with no clear consensus.

The President proposed that for 2012 the AHES Conference remain at its standard time of year. However, the General Committee would be tasked to look at all factors around the timing of the AHES conference and to report back at the next AGM.

Conference 2013

The President raised the important question of whether AHES should stage a conference in 2013, given that the iHEA World Congress would be held in Sydney in July 2013. Jane Hall raised the option of holding AHES either before or after the iHEA meeting as a pre/post conference meeting but raised concern over hosting AHES as a competitor to iHEA. The President surmised that most of the members at the AGM did not support hosting AHES alongside iHEA, and argued that if the AHES members least likely to attend both AHES and iHEA were those based in Canberra, then the 2013 AHES conference should be explicitly targeted at Canberra for that reason.

AHES and iHEA in two parts:

AHES representation on iHEA Board

Bruce Hollingsworth reported on iHEA developments as the AHES representative on the iHEA Board. He had attended the 2011 Board meeting, where most discussion was over iHEA budgets and all documents are available on the iHEA website. iHEA will sponsor the 2014 European Health Economics meeting in Dublin as well as the 2015 iHEA Congress in Milan but the recommendation at iHEA was to thereafter go back to 2-yearly meetings. Bruce will circulate minutes from the iHEA Board meeting when these become available. There will be further iHEA elections next year and the call for nominations will also be circulated when available.

iHEA World Congress 2013 in Sydney

Jane Hall updated the membership on progress for the 2013 iHEA World Congress in Sydney. The theme for 2013 has been agreed as Celebrating Health Economics. Posters are already available reflecting this theme and packages will be available soon. To date, there has been a small group of CHERE and AHES representatives working to establish some mechanisms for the 2013 conference. We are now looking to form a larger committee over the next 12 months. We need to have some refreshing ideas about how we deal with food, posters and parallel sessions at iHEA 2013 and we will be involved in a call for wider participation in the near future.

By this time next year the call for papers will be going out and call for organised sessions will already be out so AHES members are reminded to start thinking now about what they would like to submit for iHEA 2013.

Jane Hall thanked all AHES members who advertised the 2013 conference in their presentations at iHEA 2011 and elsewhere and noted that there was lots and lots of interest in Sydney expressed at the 2011 iHEA conference in Toronto.

AHES activities to promote health economics in Australia

The President noted that she had reported on these activities in her President's report, but asked for further discussion from the members about how well they think the process has gone this year. Tony Scott agreed that the process had gone well and that – as someone involved in most of the activities – it had not generated too much additional workload.

The President reminded members that the success or otherwise of these activities does rely on the input and activity of AHES members to drive the process. She especially thanked Philip Clarke and Tony Scott for their efforts this year.

Jane Hall noted that the NHMRC plans to hold a workshop with the Academy of Social Sciences in the future and that one action for AHES would be to either join in with this workshop or lobby for a separate workshop.

Any other business

Definition of Junior Researcher for the Junior Researcher Prize

It was noted that the existing definition of junior researcher in the AHES Junior Researcher Prize may contravene discrimination laws. The President agreed that the definition would be changed to reflect status as current student or Early Career Researcher, without explicit reference to age. This would change the definition of Junior Researcher to anyone who was a current student or within five years of PhD submission. In response to some discussion over the exact definition of Early Career, the Secretary agreed to circulate the range of existing definitions of Early Career Researcher used by NHMRC, ARC and other bodies for agreement at the next AGM.

AHES website

The Vice-President and others requested that AHES devote some funds to redevelopment of the AHES website, which (it was agreed by all) is looking tired and dated. The Public Officer had already volunteered to lead a review of the AHES website, and was joined by Jing Jing Li as an additional volunteer at this AGM. Henry and Jing Jing agreed to work on the issues for AHES website redesign, with a view to circulating a draft document for comment by AHES members in the future and progressing, as appropriate, to contracting an external expert.

The President declared the meeting closed at 7.00pm.

APPENDIX A AHES Treasurers Report 2010/2011FY

			TOTALS
Opening Bank Balance (1/07/2010)			\$ 45,367.14
Revenue			
Interest		\$ 26.16	
Membership 2010/11 (N=159)		\$ 8,740.00	
2010 Conference (Registrations=128)		\$ 49,460.00	
Sponsorship (Pfizer Australia)		\$ 13,320.00	
GST Refund		\$ 29.57	
Total Revenue			\$ 71,575.73
Expenditure			
2010 Conference Total		\$ 42,321.40	
- Venue	\$ 22,230.50		
- Dinner	\$ 7,162.40		
- Other	\$ 940.28		
- Speakers	\$ 11,105.22		
- Executive dinner	\$ 883.00		
2010 research prizes Total		\$ 2,000.00	
- travel scholarship x1	\$ 1,500.00		
- ECR prize	\$ 500.00		
2011 Conference Dinner Deposit	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	
2011 Conference Deposit	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	
Sponsorship - Health Econometrics Conference 2009	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	
Sponsorship - Health Econometrics Conference 2010	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	
Internet Hosting 2011	\$ 312.00	\$ 312.00	
Bank Fees and Charges	\$ 1,913.97	\$ 1,913.97	
AMEX/Diners Charges	\$ 151.01	\$ 151.01	
Refunds	\$ 160.00	\$ 160.00	
Other	\$ 233.96	\$ 233.96	
GST	\$ 2,189.00	\$ 2,189.00	
CBA Merchant Adjustment		\$ 580.31	
Total Expenses			-\$ 55,861.65
Closing Bank Balance (30/06/2010)			\$ 61,081.22
Closing Bank Balance (26/09/2011)			\$ 107,964.02