



**Minutes of the Australian Health Economics Society
Annual General Meeting
4.45pm, 25 September 2014
STAMFORD GRAND HOTEL GLENELG, ADELAIDE**

(Subject to ratification at 2015 AGM)

Due to absence of the President at the AGM, the meeting was chaired by the Vice President of the Society, Michael Shields, who declared the meeting open at 4.55 pm.

Present: Jenny Watts, Jing Jing Li, Michael Shields, Philip Clarke, Denzil Fiebig, Jane Hall, Phil Haywood, Sopany Saiag, Elena Meshcheriakova, Tony Scott, Kees Van Gool, Asterie Twizeyemariya, Virginia Mumford, Julie Ratcliffe, Dennis Petrie, Michael Palmer, Claryn Kung, Redzo Mujcic, Ian McRae, Anthony Niu, Tracy Comans, Jenny Whitty, Emily Lancsar, Rachel Milte, Bonny Parkinson, Arlene Vogan, Michelle Evans, Lisa Gold, Tony Harris, David Johnston, Paula Lorgelly, Rachel Knott.

Via video/teleconference: Rosalie Viney and Joanne Epp.

Apologies: Rosalie Viney (who was able to dial-in via video conferencing, but was unable to participate in discussions).

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was moved by David Johnston and seconded by Jing Jing Li that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. The motion was carried.

President's Report (delivered by Michael Shields)

The President apologised for the report coming from afar this year. She trusted the conference is going extremely well and is looking forward to the feedback on the introduction of the long paper format as well as the AHED workshop.

Especially given her absence from the meeting, the President wanted to express a huge thank you to the Executive and the Committee for their support and assistance over the past year ensuring that the Society has continued to run successfully. Particular thanks to:

- Jing Jing Li, Julie Ratcliffe, Jenny Watts and Michael Shields for their input on the Conference and every other aspect of the Society's operations,
- Julie Ratcliffe and to Julie Stone for their role in organising the Conference,

- Bonny Parkinson, Brett Doble and Rachel Milte for their efforts in organising the AHED workshop and
- To all of the Executives for ongoing input into policy, and into development of the new website and other AHES activities.

The President also made special thanks to Jing Jing Li for keeping the Executive organised, and has ensured a very smooth transition in her first year as Secretary after Lisa Gold's many years in the role. Jing Jing Li puts an enormous amount of work in, and has been the driving force behind the new website and the regular updates to our members.

The President, on behalf the entire committee specially thanked to the local organiser of this year's conference – Julie Ratcliffe, and to Julie Stone who has been making sure that everything runs smoothly.

AHES is very pleased to have had sponsorship from the Flinders University, Monash University and CHERE for this year's Conference that has enabled us to have two excellent keynote speakers. In addition, the Society was able to offer one regional scholarship and four local scholarships to PhD students to attend the Conference. The Society has had an increasing number of submissions to the Conference, and this year have been able to accommodate all the submissions that were of a suitable quality, as well as having 10 long papers accepted to the Conference. Feedback on this format is welcome.

The AHED workshop has become a fixture of the AHES Calendar, and six papers were accepted for the workshop this year. There has also been a growth of interest in submitting to, attending and helping organize the AHED Workshop. This reflects the strength of the PhD Cohort in Australian universities, but also the great initiative of Bonny Parkinson and Brett Doble in getting the Workshop underway and organising it so well. We hope this element of the Conference will grow.

In terms of other activities we sponsored the third AWEHE for \$1500, and have agreed to continue to sponsor this in 2015.

A particular vote of thanks to Bruce Hollingsworth whose term as regional representative to the IHEA Board has come to an end, Bruce has represented AHES and IHEA members very well in this role, and continues to have a role in the future strategic direction of IHEA.

Congratulations to Denzil Fiebig who was elected to the IHEA Board this year. It is great that we will continue to have AHES representation on the Board, and we look forward to Denzil continuing the good work that Bruce has begun in ensuring IHEA is responsive to the interests of its members internationally.

The president's report was moved by Denzil Fiebig and seconded by Jane Hall.

Treasurer's Report

Jenny Watts tabled the 2013/14 financial report and presented the 2013 Treasurer's report (see Appendix A).

The Treasurer reported that the finances of the Society are healthy. One major activity in recent years has been the development of the new AHES website, all payments for conference and memberships are now going through AHES' paypal account; there will be a period of familiarisation with this new payment system any issues, such as the provision of tax receipts will likely iron out over time. The treasurer reported that there is a healthy balance in the balance sheet of the society with some excess revenue. This year there are 105 conference attendees. The Society has also awarded 5 travel scholarships.

Emily Lancsar inquired whether there are any plans to spend the extra funds and in what capacity. The treasurer explained although there is some excess revenue, this amount is not big so the society is not in a position to use the funds to contribute to any major projects or funding any research work at present.

The Treasurer's report was moved by Denzil Fiebig and seconded by Jane Hall.

Election of Office-Bearers

Nominations for candidates for election as officer-bearers of the Society were called for in the third issue of the 2013 newsletter. By the due date of 25th September 2014, the following nominations had been received by the Secretary:

- President: Rosalie Viney
- Secretary: Jing Jing Li
- Treasurer: Jenny Watts
- Public Officer: Joanne Epp
- General Committee: Jenny Whitty
- General Committee: Bonny Parkinson
- General Committee: Rachel Milte

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

Special note: the Secretary also received additional nominations from Claryn Kung and Anthony Niu who expressed a wish to be involved with AHES and the organisation of the AHED Workshop. Rachel Milte had also expressed an interest in this position within the AHES executive. A discussion took place at the AHED Workshop and the decision was made that given Rachel Milte's experience and involvement in organising this year's AHED Workshop that she would be nominated as the general committee member responsible for AHED Workshop in 2015. Claryn and Anthony will work with Rachel on the organisation of the 2015 AHED Workshop. A succession plan was also discussed to allow someone else within the AHED organising committee the chance to be part of the AHES executive as a general member.

At the AGM, the Vice President Michael Shields announced that he would be stepping down from the position of Vice President after more than 10 years in the position. This was a surprise announcement. Michael Shields has been an integral part of the AHES executive, contributing tirelessly to the scientific program at our annual conferences and to the many policy initiatives undertaken by the Society. He has overseen the AHES ECR prize and AHES travel scholarships and has been integral to innovations in the Conference program. The Society greatly appreciates Michael's commitment to health economics in Australia and the outstanding work that he has done for the Society over his period as Vice President. He will be greatly missed as a member of the Executive.

Due to Michael's resignation, at the AGM, the Society took nominations from members present for the role of Vice President.

The following nomination was received and carried:

- Vice-President: David Johnston (nominated by Denzil Fiebig, seconded by Tracy Comans)

The Society congratulates David on his new position and thanked everyone for their contributions.

AHES travel Scholarships

At the 2012 AGM it was decided that AHES travel scholarship should only be offered to PhD students (previously junior staff and PhD students were eligible) as there was concern that the scholarships were substituting for worker's department funds (or lack thereof). To ensure that people clearly meet the criteria for scholarship a form (or an alternative means of authenticating their student status) will be provided on the website that applicants to confirm that they meet criteria as well as a letter from the supervisor. It was also proposed that in order to obtain the travel scholarship, the student should also submit a paper to AHED. These initiatives all were carried out this year and were also clearly documented in the call for papers as well as the AHES website.

At the 2012 AGM it was decided that as a guide, in general, the society would fund up to two international scholarships to the Asia-Pacific region (that region to exclude Australia and the USA) and up to two domestic postgraduate student scholarships.

The society received 6 applications for scholarship this year, two from international students and four from domestic students. A total of four domestic student and one international student scholarships were awarded.

Lisa Gold and other members queried why did the Society offer more scholarships than what was previously agreed. The reason for that undertaking this year was because of the relatively few numbers of applications received from international students and the relative equal standing of the student applications from Australia. In this incidence, the executive felt that it would not be fair to distribute funds away from the domestic students in order to fulfil the guidance of a 50:50 split in the distribution of funds between domestic and international student scholarships. A consensus was reached amongst the executives that all four domestic scholarship applications should be awarded this year (albeit each student received a lower amount compared to if only two domestic scholarships are granted) and that one international student scholarship would also be offered. Due to the reapportionment of funds among the students, this deviance from the general guidance did not impact on the budget of the Society; however it did result in a fairer outcome and assistance to more students to attend the conference.

Conference 2015

Jenny Whitty reported on the progress of the 2015 conference which is to be held in Brisbane. The local conference organising committee also includes Hong Son Nghiem (University of Queensland) and Tracy Comans (Griffith University). The dates for the conference in 2015 are Wed 30 September to Friday 2 October. The conference will be held at the Stamford Plaza in Brisbane CBD. The hotel is conveniently located within an easy walk to many restaurants and facilities and also has a pleasant outlook onto the Brisbane River.

As an opportunity for members, Emily Lancsar mentioned that the second international meeting of the International Academy of Health Preference Research (IAHPR) conveniently will also be held in Brisbane in 2015, on the Tuesday before the AHES conference (29 September 2015). Therefore it is an excellent opportunity for members who have an interest in preferences research to attend both events.

The next step for the local organising committee and the executives would be to consider keynote speakers for the conference as well as conference sponsorship. Overall good progress has been made with the 2015 AHES conference organisation.

Call for expression of interest for AHES conference 2016

The Vice President put out a call for members to express interest for hosting the 2016 conference. Those interested should get in touch with the AHES executive.

AHES and iHEA

AHES representation on iHEA Board (report from Bruce Hollingsworth)

Bruce Hollingsworth via Michael Shields provided a summary for AHES Members of iHEA Board meeting in Dublin, July 2014.

Bruce reported that iHEA conference in Dublin went well, however it was smaller (900 delegates) than the Sydney congress (1250 delegates)! Many iHEA delegates still have very fond memories of the successful Sydney Congress held last year. The next iHEA conference will be in Milan in July 2015.

Bruce's term on the iHEA Board as AHES representative will finish at the end of 2014, but he will be re-elected as an ordinary member to finish his work on the Strategic Plan sub-committee. The Strategic Plan has entailed a small committee to work on getting members views on various issues (Bruce worked on regional issues, the sub group comprised of members from all over the world). In Dublin there was a further meeting of around 50 members to elicit views based on issues raised by the sub groups (as well as regional issues, there was a 'science' group, and a 'communications' group).

It is anticipated that all these views will be put in a report for a special Board meeting in January 2015, to be ratified as the strategic plan, and this will then be used as the basis for the search committee which will advertise and look for a new CEO as Tom Getzen is leaving in 2015. Bruce has always put forward Australasian viewpoints and concerns at iHEA and hopefully all concerns are being flagged up and iHEA is able to change to accommodate these. Bruce will endeavour to keep us posted on the developments of the Strategic Plan and the new CEO search as they arise.

At the iHEA Board meeting, general business was discussed. Bruce reported that in terms of personal movements Andrew Jones and Bob Elliot will also both be leaving the Board in 2014. Bruce also congratulated Denzil Fiebig's on his successful election to the Board and look forward to his views at the meeting in Milan in 2015. It is possible that the 2019 iHEA conference will be held in Basel, the 2017 conference will be in Boston, and then possibly 2021 in Istanbul, although this is still not decided.

Bruce reported that it has been a pleasure representing AHES at iHEA, although he will no longer be acting as an official representative for AHES at iHEA, he will continue to speak for Australian interests on the Board in 2015, and with Denzil also joining the board Australian interests will continue to be well represented.

Report from Denzil Fiebig (iHEA Board Member)

Denzil Fiebig joined the iHEA Board recently after being successfully elected in late 2013. Denzil reported on the last Board meeting held in Dublin in July 2014 and on some recent iHEA initiatives and events. Denzil's report overlaps with Bruce Hollingsworth's report somewhat, so only a summary is provided here.

IHEA is working on their Strategic Planning a major part of it consists of finding Tom Getzen's replacement as Executive Director, Tom Getzen will step down in 2015. As part of the process iHEA members can expect to receive a satisfaction survey in the near future. This is part of the inputs into the Strategic Plan.

Denzil gave a quick account on the spread of representation of regional representatives at iHEA. Bruce Hollingworth has been acting as Australia's regional representative, as per Bruce's report he will be stepping down as our representative at the end of the year. Denzil noted that there is no fixed designation of which regions get represented at iHEA, the representation is entirely up to the nominating committee and then subject to the board's approval. Denzil believes iHEA is currently seeking proposals for reps from EUHEA & China.

With Bruce's term coming to an end as the AHES representative on iHEA, Denzil is more than happy to be our de-facto representative on iHEA. Members are welcome to approach him about any iHEA issues or any Australasian health economics issues.

Proposal for AHES Policy Response Committee

A proposal for AHES Policy Response Committee was circulated at the AGM (see Appendix B). Comments were sought from members present.

Tony Scott thought this was a good idea particularly if it is to increase AHES' ability to more effectively lobby the government in a timelier manner. However he and a few other members sought clarification on whether this committee will respond to issues around funding or is it more for putting out position statements from the Society.

Jane Hall supports the idea that the Society should be actively supporting more funding for health economics research and also greater community and government support for use of economics evidence in policy decisions. However she thought some potential issues with AHES carrying out this role is that people in government departments making decisions are not necessarily AHES members. Also AHES is different to the Australian Medical Association (AMA) for example, in that we are not a lobby group. So if the Society is to take up a more lobbying role, it will be a fundamental change to the role of the Society. Jane also acknowledged that a great amount of time will need to be devoted to make fast responses to policies.

David Johnston asked a provoking question on whether there is a need for a policy response committee if the Society is already adequately responding to issues arising in health economics and if there is not to be a fundamental change to the role of the Society (ie, increase government lobbying).

Overall members present thought more discussions need to be had on the AHES Policy Response Committee, its role and construct. So the decision was made for the Society to circulate the policy proposal along with the AGM minutes so members can further consider the issues and make comments.

Any Other Business

None discussed.

The Vice President declared the meeting closed at 5.40pm.

APPENDIX A: AHES Treasurers Report 2013/2014FY

TOTALS

OPENING BANK BALANCE (1/07/2013)			\$ 30,560.53
REVENUE		\$ 37,570.48	
INTEREST	\$ 14.42		
MEMBERSHIP - NEW/RENEWALS 2013/14 (N=91)	\$ 6,350.00		
CANBERRA CONFERENCE (REGISTRATIONS=59)	\$ 24,980.00		
SPONSORSHIP	\$ 1,300.00		
GST CREDITS	\$ 2,658.00		
ADJUSTMENT	\$ 2,268.06		
TOTAL REVENUE			\$ 68,131.01
EXPENDITURE			
2013 CONFERENCE TOTAL		\$ 12,898.45	
- VENUE + IT + PRINTING	\$ 8,247.80		
- DINNER	\$ 3,084.00		
- KEYNOTE TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION	\$ 983.65		
- EXECUTIVE DINNER	\$ 583.00		
2013 SCHOLARSHIPS TOTAL		\$ 6,373.30	
- IHEA SCHOLARSHIP X7	\$ 5,150.00		
- ECR PRIZE	\$ 500.00		
- RESEARCH PRIZE	\$ 500.00		
- ENGRAVING	\$ 223.30		
OTHER TOTAL		\$ 14,363.16	
2014 CONFERENCE VENUE DEPOSIT (ADELAIDE)	\$ 6,852.00		
2014 CONFERENCE DINNER DEPOSIT	\$ 2,154.00		
SUNDRIES (GIFTS, TELECONFERENCE)	\$ 215.48		
2013 AHED SPONSORSHIP			
SPONSORSHIP - HEALTH ECONOMETRICS CONFERENCE 2014	\$ 1,500.00		
AHES INTERNET SITE DEVELOPMENT	\$ 2,679.32		
BANK FEES AND CHARGES			
- CBA	\$ 196.20		
- PAYPAL	\$ 766.16		
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$ 33,634.91
BALANCE (30/06/2014) CBA	\$ 30,304.20		
BALANCE (30/06/2014) PAYPAL	\$ 4,191.90		
CLOSING BANK BALANCE (30/06/2014)			\$ 34,496.10

At 23/09/2104

CBA	\$66,794.66
PAYPAL	\$2,298.62
CLOSING BANK BALANCE (23/09/2014)	\$69,093.28

APPENDIX B: Proposal for the Formation of a “Rapid Response Policy Committee” as a Sub-Committee of the AHES Executive

Background

AHES has traditionally maintained a limited role in commenting on matters of health policy, leaving this to individual members.

- Where AHES has taken a more active role in policy issues, it has generally been:
 - To promote the need for provision of appropriate funding of health economics and health services research;
 - To emphasise the need for a sound theoretical and evidence base to inform health policy;
 - To promote the importance of establishing appropriate evaluation frameworks for health policy initiatives.
- These activities have generally been undertaken on an as needs basis, reacting to specific requests or issues, and have relied on the availability and willingness of individual members and the Executive to commit time to the preparation and dissemination of advice.
- The health policy environment is becoming increasingly complex and there is a potential role for AHES to contribute more directly to policy debate.
- In addition, the Executive regularly receives requests to contribute to specific issues or reviews, such as those by the Senate Committee on Community Affairs.
- To provide a systematic and thorough approach to contributing to the health economics and health services research debate and discussion in Australia requires a more formal structure than is currently in place. In particular, there may be a need for a horizon scanning function and for capacity to reach a rapid consensus in relation to particular health policy and health economics issues.

Proposal for consideration at the AGM

- Establish a Health Economics and Policy Rapid Response Committee, convened by an AHES member who could become a member of the AHES Executive.
- The President or Vice President of AHES would also be a member of the Policy Response Committee.
- AHES members could nominate to be core members of this Committee or to be part of a broader network of members who could be called on to contribute to specific issues in their area of expertise.
- The Committee would report to the AHES Executive, and any comments or documents would be reviewed and approved by the AHES Executive before being released. The wider AHES membership may also be given the opportunity to comment on draft policy documents/ responses emanating from this rapid response committee. However depending on the timing this may not always be possible.
- The AHES Executive would refer any specific requests to the Committee (for example requests regarding Senate Committees or other Reviews).
- The establishment of this Committee would not preclude individual AHES members from commenting on specific issues (independent of AHES), but rather establish a mechanism for AHES to be able to create a coordinated and agreed response in a short time. It would also formalise a process that has already happened in the past.
- Meetings to be held via teleconference to discuss specific issues, and other communications via email or a sharepoint (such as google groups).
- It would be expected that the Policy Committee would hold virtual meetings at least twice a year and more often if required.