

Australian Health Economics Society

Affiliated with iHEA

Minutes of the Australian Health Economics Society Annual General Meeting

Brisbane Marriott, Grand Ballroom

5:37pm, Tuesday 20th September 2022

(Subject to ratification at 2023 AGM)

The meeting was chaired by the President of the Society, Julie Ratcliffe, who declared the meeting open at 5:37 pm.

Present (as per the sign-up sheet circulated during the meeting in the Grand Ballroom):

Virginia Mumford, Julie Ratcliffe, Lan Gao, Tessa Peasgood, Patrick Abraham, Natalie Carvalho, Kirsten Howard, Mona Aghdaee, Danusha Jayawardana, Meimei Chen, Gang Chen, Yafei Si, Esa Chen, Sundar Ponnusamy, Dennis Petrie, Nicole Black, Sameera Senayake, Matthew Oancea, Rajan Sharma, Anthony Scott, Thao Thai, Kushneel Prakash, Rchel Milte, Louisa Gordon, Noura Saba, Jyoti Khadka, Son Nghiem, Sabina Lenzen, Katie Page, Toby Cumming, Martin Howell, Peyman Naeim Firouzi, Cathy Mihalopoulos, Keshia De Guzman, Michelle Cunich, An Tran Duy, Cate Bailey, Michelle Tew, Haidi Khorshidi Akbarzadeh, Yong Yi Lee, Henry Cutler, Jean Spinks, Jemimah Ride, Bonny Parkinson, Jing Jing Li, Angela Devine, Eric Sun, Jackie Roseleur, Marshall Makate.

Apologies: Nil

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was moved by Dennis Petrie and seconded by Anthony Scott seconded that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. The motion was carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2022 (Julie Ratcliffe)

Welcome everyone. I would like to commence by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land upon which we stand, the Yuggera people and the Turrbal people and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. I would like to personally thank our gold sponsors Queensland Health and the Universities of Queensland, Griffith and Queensland University of Technology for the provision of merchandise, all the attendees, presenters, discussants chairs and our keynote speakers for their excellent contributions and for making both AHED and AHES 2022 here in Brisbane such a great success. It is fantastic to be back together again for our first face to face meeting in three years following our two previous years of virtual events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am particularly indebted to the local AHES organiser Dr Jean Spinks who has worked extremely hard in the lead up to this

conference and Associate Professor Tracy Comans for her contributions. I would also like to thank members of the AHES Executive especially Sonja De New, Virginia Mumford, Lidia Engel and Marshall Makate who have put in a tremendous amount of hard work over a period of several months in the lead up to this conference to ensure every aspect of it was covered off thereby ensuring that we are all able to enjoy this tremendously successful event.

AHES introduced two new awards for the first time in 2020. The first being the Rising Star Award. This award is bestowed by the AHES Executive to rising early career research stars in health economics whose work is beginning to make a significant impact nationally and internationally. The second award is the Deeble-Scotton Prize for Policy Impact. John Deeble and Dick Scotton were two of the founding fathers of Australian health economics whose important work guided the foundations of Medicare and both were important contributors to the establishment and early AHES program. These two awards are offered bi-annually rotating with the AHES best paper prize, This year we had a range of excellent applicants for both awards and the winning nominees will be revealed and presented with their awards at the closing ceremony. I would like to thank the academic members of the Policy Impact Committee for 2022 Prof Chris Ruhm, Prof Paula Lorgelly, Dr Jean Spinks and Dr Yong Yi Lee and our health policy representative Jarrod Ball Chief Economist at CEDA for their contributions in choosing the winner of the Deeble-Scotton Prize for Policy Impact in 2022.

AHES Executive Activities

AHES Representations to funding bodies NHMRC and MRFF. In February 2022 I was joined by Professor Stephen Jan and Professor Kirsten Howard in an AHES representation meeting with Professor Anne Kalso CEO NHMRC and colleagues. We discussed several key issues including the recent report from the House of Representatives Standing Committee Inquiry into approval processes for new drugs and novel medical technologies in Australia highlighting that trained and skilled health economists in Australia are in short supply. We highlighted Recommendation No 5: The Committee recommends that the Australian Government develop a labour market and skills strategy to expand the number of health economists in Australia. This could include encouraging training within Australia as well as seeking expertise from overseas.

In common with bio-statistics discipline, many ECR and MCR health economists in academia are employed on relatively short, fixed term contracts (typically of 1-2 years duration) through a variety of soft funded research projects: NHMRC/MRFF plus other sources. Career progression is difficult and compounded by lack of salary support, anecdotal evidence indicates early exit from academia to the private sector is increasing. We presented and discussed a range of potential capacity building initiatives including adjustment in the wording of the selection criteria for Investigator grants to better reflect the contributions and research impact of those engaged in cross cutting research, dedicated funding scheme for advancing research methodologies and dedicated NHMRC/MRFF PhD scholarships and fellowship funding for methodologically focused disciplines including health economics and bio-statistics. The meeting went well, and our proposed solutions were well received. However, it is evident that we will need to take further opportunities to continue our conversations with NHMRC and MRFF to generate any real positive action for change. We will continue to make concerted efforts in that direction over the next 12 months.

Health Economics Connect. The newsletter initiative 'Health Economics Connect' aimed at policy makers, to help promote the research and activities of members that are of interest to policymakers which AHES introduced in 2018 continues to grow very successfully year on year. This year we have showcased excellent contributions from Australian health economists through this newsletter including research to demonstrate how migrant populations are disadvantaged through COVID-19 vaccination policies. Research to demonstrate that at the height of the omicron wave free rapid antigen tests made economic sense for the Australian government this year. Improving financial decisions when entering aged care and how low income families are missing out on dental benefits to name just a few. I would like to thank the 2021/2022 newsletter co-ordinators Claryn Kung, Caroline Watts, Joanne Flavel and Ann Livingstone and all past and current members of the Health Economics Connect Committee who have worked and continue to work very hard to source content and produce and disseminate high quality newsletter to policymakers throughout Australia. If any members have any content, that they would like to bring to the attention of policy makers for a future issue please get in touch. Also, if any AHES members are interested in joining this committee please let us know as we are always looking for people to help.

IHEA. Report from A/Prof Sonja de New – the representative of AHES on the IHEA Board

A lot of the activity over the last months has been about the IHEA Congress. Planning is on track for the IHEA 2023 Congress in Cape Town (Scientific Committee, abstract system, logistics arrangements). There is some uncertainty about the willingness to participate on-site and potential COVID restrictions, which is currently being assessed. Abstract submissions close on November 29th, 2022. Expressions of interest for the Review Panel close on September 26, 2022. Discussions are underway about the location of the 2025 congress. The application deadline for proposals to host IHEA in 2025 closed in April 2022.

IHEA has a new logo and corporate design, including a new website layout.

IHEA has also engaged in several other activities to further the mission of IHEA. In particular, two IHEA sessions were successfully held at 2022 ASSA/AEA meeting, and two IHEA sessions have been submitted for the 2023 ASSA/AEA meeting based on peer-review of submitted abstracts. The mentoring program has a new coordinating team and applications for 2022/23 mentees and mentors have closed. All mentee applicants were able to be matched with a mentor, the first time in the program's history.

The Special Interest Groups (SIGs) have been active in webinars and holding informal virtual networking events ("social hour"). The Teaching Health Economics (THE) SIG has launched a series of virtual capacity strengthening workshops for teaching, for example on "Developing context appropriate session topics and reading lists" as well as "Active learning approaches".

IHEA has had a very active webinar program over this year with 3-4 webinars per month over the last quarter, also partly driven by the engagement of SIGs with webinars. The Teaching Materials Repository has been revamped and members are encouraged to continue submitting resources to the repository.

Further, the Student Paper Prize and the Arrow Award have been announced. The Student Paper Prize was awarded to Henry Cust (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine) for his paper on "Trading HIV for Sheep: An estimation of the sexual behaviours response of female sex workers to Tabaski in Senegal". The Arrow Award was awarded to Andrew Goodman-Bacon (Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis) for his paper on "The Long-Run Effects Of Childhood Insurance Coverage: Medicaid Implementation, Adult Health, And Labor Market Outcomes" published in the American Economic Review.

IHEA has updated its mission statement and strategic goals and is in the process of developing a full strategic plan. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Promotion and Monitoring Group (EDI PMG) was established last year as recommended in the EDI strategy. IHEA has also updated its EDI statement.

IHEA plans to implement a Fellowship Program which will likely provide a small grant to support research as well as provide mentorship for early career research development. Details of this are still being finalised.

AHES Mentoring Program

The AHES mentoring program has continued apace very successfully this year. Several mentoring opportunities have been cultivated by the AHES mentoring committee which are receiving excellent take up and are very highly valued by AHES members including speed mentoring, a one on one mentoring program, PhD and ECR group mentoring and career development sessions. A virtual AHES Mentoring event was held a few weeks ago and like previous AHES mentoring events this event was a fabulous success with very positive feedback received from all attendees. Again, this is largely due to excellent organisation over many months behind the scenes from the AHED mentoring committee. I would like to thank the AHED mentoring committee members Tianxin Pan (convenor) Ingrid Cox (vice convenor) Natalie Carvalho, Michelle Cunich, Thomas Lung, Alison Pearce, (convenor) Barbara de Graaff (vice convenor), Alison Pearce, Andrew Island, Cate Bailey, Sean Docking and Thao Thai. I would also like to thank the presenters and attendees at the virtual AHES Mentoring event and all of the enthusiastic and committed mentors and mentees who have contributed to the on-going success of the AHES mentoring program in 2022 and who I know will continue to do so in the future.

The President thanked the mentoring committee members for a well organised and well attended mentoring session at the conference. She also thanked everyone for the virtual mentoring program.

AHED

The AHED PhD workshop was held on Monday. This event included a series of featured presentations from some of our most talented PhD students Australia-wide and internationally. I would like to thank the University of Queensland Faculty of Business Economics and Law for sponsoring this event and the AHED Organising Committee in particular Xiuqin Xiong, very ably supported by Aarushi Dhingra, Matt Oancea and Yufan Wang for the excellent organisation of AHED 2022. I would also like to thank members of the AHED 2022 Paper Selection Committee: A/Prof Joshua Byrnes (chair), Prof Dennis Petrie, A/Prof Kompal Sinha, Dr Nathan Kettlewell and Dr Anita Lal.

The president also noted a record attendance at AHED (90 attendees).

Special Interest Groups

AHES now has a special interest group (SIG) Terms of Reference and proposal form for the formation of a SIG and we currently have several SIGs in early stages of establishment including cancer, mental health, child health aged care and health care financing and organisation. Anyone interested in joining any of these SIGs please contact the relevant SIG group convenor or any member of the AHES Executive who can introduce you. Similarly, the AHES Executive welcome new applications for special interest groups providing that the criteria for formation are met – please see the AHES website for more details.

Expression of thanks.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the AHES Executive Committee for 2022 Sonja De New, Lidia Engel, Virginia Mumford, Marshall Makate, Jean Spinks, Mona Aghdaee, Xiuqin Xiong, Michelle Cunich and Tracy Comans. We especially thank Virginia for her extended service to AHES over several years as our Treasurer and we thank Michelle for her service in 2021/22 as a general member. Finally, I would like to extend a big thank you to Sonja for her valued contributions as she comes to the end of her term as AHES Vice President. You will be missed Sonja and we wish you all the best for your forthcoming parental leave and all your future endeavours. Thank you everyone.

Julie Ratcliffe asked for questions from members on matters discussed thus far:

No questions from the audience.

TREASURER'S REPORT (Virginia Mumford)

Virginia Mumford tabled the 2021/22 financial report and presented the 2022 Treasurer's report (see Appendix A).

Virginia Mumford stated that we started the process of preparing this year's conference in very difficult circumstances and we were concerned of whether we would have face-to-face vs virtual meeting. I apologise for the crowding that has happened at the venue as we moved from a budgeted 120 to 191 attendees. It was too late to change the venue with the sudden change in the number of attendees.

We were also considering on whether we should have conference dinner or not and there was overwhelming interest to have the dinner. This has been a fantastic and successful conference. The finances are in a very healthy state and which means that we can keep the conferencing costs low next year in terms of contributions and registration fees and we will have a bit more available in terms of rewarding our early career and mid-career contributions to health economics in Australia. The losing balance is \$90k, if anyone has any questions feel free to ask me. Registrations have gone up, memberships have gone up, attendance to dinner have also gone up, people attending AHED have gone up as well.

Any questions:

- Whether conference dinner should be included as part of the registration to encourage ECR attending the dinner? Virginia noted that we are considering that depending on where the conference is going next year. AHES Exec are always trying to find ways in which we could encourage our ECRs to attend.
- Should we be thinking about how best to spend the healthy balance? (question from Henry Cutler). Virginia noted that we have never had such balances before and we were unsure whether the successful virtual event was going to happen again. We should also keep in mind that the healthy balances can also be used to buffer to other small cities. For the future, we should focus on how best to spend the healthy balances. Henry also asked whether

the Exec should consider the threshold amount/level to target? Virginia said yes, we also looking at how to price the conference. It's a question to incorporate going forward.

Election of Office Bearers

All Exec members were renominated. Secretary was ratified and seconded by Julie and Jackie Roseleur. Membership secretary was seconded by Cathy, Bonny and Jing Jing.

President thanked everyone who had voted for the vacant offices for Vice President and Treasurer.

Voting for vice President – it was a close race but A/Prof. Gang Chen is the nominated candidate with 49 votes
AHES Treasurer – Lan Gao (31 votes).

Appointing AHED Representative for 2023

Adelaide is happy to host the next AHES conference. This is also the last year for Julie as the AHES President, so this would be a nice farewell for Julie.

Diana Khanna, and Rachel Milte are nominated as lead representatives for the conference.

Conference 2023

The 2023 Conference will be held in Adelaide with Diana Khanna and Rachel Milte and Jackie Roseleur as Local Organisers.

- Selection process for selecting presentations for next year conference. There was a screening process based on scientific quality. AHES Exec was as inclusive as possible this year. We will see what happens next year. If many applications continue again in the next year, we might need to review the selection criteria for screening abstracts.
- Review options to improve the conference registration process is more of an executive issue.

Any questions?

- Kirsten – Is there any way we can please move away from PayPal as a payment mechanism? This is noted and the new Treasure will look into this.
- Can you also send reminders for when membership expires? We are looking for more ways to improve the membership process. Bonny noted that the Universities cannot pay for memberships. Some universities are less rigorous than others.

Consolidate the Society's official address with the Commonwealth Bank, ATO, and PayPal accounts to reflect the change in Executive Committee and to match that lodged with the Office of Fair Trading. The new Address will be 5/F, 75 Talavera Road, Macquarie University, NSW 2109.

Members seconded the motion to consolidate the society's address with the Commonwealth government to make the process a bit easier.

Members in attendance voted to extend banking rights to the outgoing Treasurer to November 1st, 2022, to allow for handover to the incoming new Treasurer, and for the new Treasurer to become a signatory to the accounts stated in item 6 of the AGM agenda. Virginia noted that It takes a while to get all the documentation complete for the new treasurer to take over. Bonny seconded the motion.

Opportunities to build health economics profile with new Federal government.

- Kim Daziel requested this item to be on the agenda. The President opened the issue to the floor for comments and or suggestions that we can take forward. The president noted that she has had more contact with the federal government recently because of her work on aged care and on Royal Commission on Aged Care.
- Henry Cutler requested that Julie provide a brief background on how the relationship actually works. At the moment it seemed as if it is just individual relationships. Toni Scott used to contact the President on certain issues e.g., putting nominations for PBAC etc. apart from that the President (Julie) did not know any other

occasions.

- Virginia Mumford noted that it depends on how AHES is political. Previously, AHES had shunned away from politics.
- The Australian government used to have scholarships and ceased that about 10 years ago. AHES can reach out to request these scholarships plus placements and training opportunities in government. Henry Culter seconded the latter point especially with regards to Health Technology Assessment. The COVID-19 pandemic sort of disrupted this but this should be the conversation to talk. Tony Scott noted that they used to call it the Health economics strategic modelling and a digital analytics for the Department of Health. Scott had contact through Research Australia, was also in conversation with the secretary to involve academics to get them involved in policy issues and research.
- Virginia noted.
- Henry Cutler proposed that the AHES executive need to get together to form a strategic way for AHES to engage government. Perhaps through scholarships, NHMRC, MRFF etc., or getting us involved with committees or have our AHES members to be involved in these committees in some way.
- Anthony Scott suggested that AHES form a subcommittee that could include external members to form a subcommittee to find ways of getting involved with government.

Any Other Business

None

The meeting closed at 6.33pm.

AGM Minutes signed by:

**Professor Julie Ratcliffe
AHES President**

Appendix A: Treasurer's Report

AHES ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2021-2022

Opening Bank Balance (01/07/2021)			
	CBA at 01/07/2021	\$	89,975.09
	PayPal at 01/07/2021	\$	3,115.21
	Opening Balance Total	\$	93,090.30
Revenue	Interest	\$	-
	Membership - new and renewals 21/22	\$	6,050.00
	Conference Registrations	\$	12,350.00
	Non-PayPal registrations	\$	575.00
Total revenue		\$	18,975.00
Expenses			
Conference	Marriott Initial Deposit	\$	(6,588.00)
	Total Conference	\$	(6,588.00)
Others	Research Australia	\$	(1,925.76)
	AHES Best Presentation Prizes	\$	(400.00)
	AHES Best Paper Prize	\$	(500.00)
	AHED prizes	\$	(200.00)
	Other Total	\$	(3,025.76)
Sundries	AHES Web Site Maintenance	\$	(359.19)
	CVENT - Conference Management	\$	(3,640.77)
	NSW Fair Trading AHES Registration	\$	(85.37)
	Bank Fees and Charges		
	CBA	\$	(2.50)
	Paypal	\$	(581.36)
	ATO payments	\$	(1,750.00)
	Sundries Total	\$	(6,419.19)
Total Expenses		\$	(16,032.95)
Closing Balance	Balance CBA (30/06/2022)	\$	92,598.50
	Balance PayPal(30/06/2022)	\$	3,934.01
	Balance Total	\$	96,532.51
	Provision for internet fraud payment	\$	(4,950.00)
	Closing Balance Total	\$	91,582.51

The Society had 223 Members as of September 1, 2022

The financial position reflects a very successful online conference in 2021, without the usual conference expenses associated with in person conferences

We have 170 attendees registered for the 2022 conference (at the time of the Treasurer's report).

Post AGM – we had 191 conference attendees at the 43rd AHES annual conference.