

Minutes from Annual General Meeting

9 December 1999

Held in the Hanmersley Room, Sheraton Hotel, Perth WA

Present: Dr Jonathan Anderson, Dr Nicholas Beech, Dr Barry Bland, Dr Mark Boyd, Dr Michael Boyle, Dr David Bradford, A/Prof Bruce Brew, Dr Diane Bridger, Dr Dianne Chambers, Dr Allen Cheng, Dr John Chuah, Dr Deborah Couldwell, Levinia Crooks, Mr Philip Cunningham, Dr Elizabeth Dax, Dr Gregory Dore, Dr Fraser Drummond, Dr Chris Duncombe, Dr Virginia Furner, Dr Andrew Gordon, Dr Andrew Grulich, Dr Stephen Hodby, Dr Jennifer Hoy, Dr Sarah Huffam, Dr Christine Hughes, Prof John Kaldor, Dr Mark Kelly, Ms Julie Letts, Dr Simon Mallal, Dr Dominic Mallon, Dr Debbie Marriott, Dr Peter McEvoy, Dr Rosemary McGuckin, Dr Anne Mijch; Dr Anna McNulty, Dr Nicholas Medland, Dr Anne Mijch, Mr John Miller, Dr Graham Mills, Dr Graham Neilsen, Dr Kelly Papanou, Dr Vanita Parekh, Beatie Pearlman, Dr John Peterson, Dr Robert Pickles, Dr Peter Pigott, Dr Terry Pitsikas, Dr Hugo Ree, Dr Dennis Rhodes, Dr Pamela Rooney, Dr Norman Roth, Dr Jan Savage, Dr Darcy Smith, A/Prof Graeme Stewart, Dr Leonie Todhunter, Dr Ashley Watson, Dr Clare Willington

Apologies: Dr Tony Allworth, Dr Peter Anderson, Dr Ric Chaney, Prof Suzanne Crowe, Dr Dilip Dhupelia, Prof Richard Doherty, Dr Christopher Fairley, Dr Paul Goldwater, Dr Jock Harkness, Prof Michael Kidd, Dr Katerina Lagios, Prof Peter McDonald, Dr Lloyd Mason, Dr Peter Meese, Dr Rex Melville, Prof Adrian Mindel, Dr Pam Palasanthiran, Ms Nandini Ray, Dr Tina Schmidt, Dr David Shaw, A/Prof Denis Spelman,

Minutes from the Previous meeting

Minutes from the 19 November 1998 were circulated and accepted as a true record of the meeting

(M: Dr M Boyle, S: Anne Mijch) CARRIED

President's Report

Thanks to the executive base of ASHM, especially Claire Koetsier, Beatie Pearlman and Levinia Crooks. Without their support, ASHM would not have been able to achieve what they have.

Thanks to A/Prof Suzanne Crowe for her advice and support over the last couple of years, and her work in invigorating the Education Subcommittee.

Thanks to Dr Jenny Hoy for all her support, and in particular for her enthusiastic chairing of the Treatments Subcommittee. I wish her well as president, and I think ASHM will certainly achieve a great deal under her guidance.

Our treasurer, Prof Michael Kidd, has been extremely competent and has set new standards for a Treasurer. He has had a very watchful eye, and has paid meticulous attention to our financial state of affairs, and fortunately I am able to say that ASHM is in a very strong financial situation. Jonathan Anderson is our incoming Treasurer.

Pam Palasanthiran has done an excellent job as editor of *Noah's Arc*. The newsletter continues to be appreciated greatly by the membership. The editorship has been taken over now by Sharon Lewin, who has recently returned to Melbourne, and I know that it will retain its high standard under its new editor.

Andrew Grulich has been a wonderful committee member. He has been energetic, reliable, and we are delighted that he has become our incoming Vice-President.

Peter Piggott we talked into coming back on the committee this year, and as usual he's managed to keep us honest and make the appropriate comments at the appropriate times to stop us straying. Peter, Martyn French (convenor of this conference) and myself are the three remaining musketeers from the early days of ASHM on the committee and it's interesting to see the changes the Society has undergone since then, as HIV medicine has evolved within Australia and despair has turned to cautious optimism for those of us who are privileged enough, and I say that with particularity in reference to this morning's sessions, to live within Australia.

David Shaw is a former conference convenor, who unfortunately will be leaving the committee. He has truly served South Australia and ASHM very well during his time on the committee.

Unfortunately Tony Allworth couldn't join us at this meeting, but he continues to represent Queensland very soundly and he's certainly been a stalwart on whom ASHM relies greatly.

Anne Mijch is the convenor of the 12th national conference in Melbourne next year. Through chairing the Hepatitis C subcommittee, she has ensured that we have forged links with the hepatologists and others involved in the care of patients with Hepatitis C. So thank you very much to Anne for both that and for the work you have put in already for next year's conference.

To Michael Boyle, Di Bridger our Newcastle representatives, Liz Dax and Jonathan Anderson (who will be our new Treasurer) from Victoria, thank you very much for your contributions over the year and we look forward to another year of hard work from all of you!

Our best wishes and thoughts go to Peter Meese who unfortunately had to resign from the committee during the year due to ill health.

The *HIV Journal Club* has really gone from strength to strength. Miriam Paul has recently taken over from Mark Kelly as the editor and I think this publication continues to be highly valued for its ability to look critically at papers published in the area of HIV.

During the year, Margaret Scott, who was the program manager for the Commonwealth funded HIV Education Program for Doctors left ASHM to go to the NSW Dept of Health. She was an extremely hard act to follow, but we've been very fortunate in luring Julie Letts away from Melbourne. Julie is very committed to the project. I'd urge all ASHM members to

make themselves known to Julie and her Education Project as the project will really benefit from interaction with as many ASHM members as possible.

Marilyn McMurchie, due to the pressures of work, will unfortunately be standing down from the Professional Affairs committee and there will be a new head to that committee.

In this morning's talk, Mr Justice Cameron mentioned that it was up to us to materially influence the course of HIV wherever we can and within our region I think that it's apparent that we do face an emergency in HIV, particularly in South-East Asia, Cambodia and in Africa. I think that it's very important to state that the standing committee on International Affairs has recognised the urgency of this role we need to play and have formed a national consortium under the auspices of the University of NSW. Hopefully this will produce results very soon in the form of educational resources for those involved in HIV care education and prevention in the various resource-poor regions in our region.

During the year ASHM moved to Surry Hills. We are now housed in the Albion Street centre building, a centre dedicated to HIV care, research and training. I think this move has been very beneficial and as a committee we would like to thank Julian Gold and Virginia Furner for making ASHM feel welcome.

ASHM would not be able to pursue many of its activities without the support it receives from the pharmaceutical companies. I think we increasingly see our relationship as a partnership. Although there are obviously many problems with the supply of drugs to countries in need, in Australia we are lucky enough to have access to these therapeutic agents and the partnership is basically collaborative. A large number of delegates would not be at this meeting without the financial support of these companies and I'd like to thank them publicly for their assistance at ASHM.

ASHM has always been a very broadly based society. Much of our earlier interest was in medical management, but as the disease evolves, we really need to increase our support for young scientists, the clinical researchers, and for those involved in epidemiology, and psychosocial research. Not only to continue to attend and participate in ASHM conferences, but to continue with the basic research into all aspects of HIV infection which is so essential.

In the last year, ASHM has attempted to maintain a high media profile, with press releases, with letters to the editor, with radio interviews and with other media outlets on a broad range of subjects particularly in NSW with the needle exchange programs, safe injecting rooms, and the HIV infected health care worker. It's hoped that this higher profile will continue.

Peter Canavan spoke today about the human dimension of HIV infection in a very moving talk. Beatie reminded me before this meeting that at an early ASHM conference, she was handed a leaflet in which ASHM was attacked by the community for ignoring the needs of the affected community. I think that it's very unlikely that this will happen again, either today or in the future. The needs of our patients are central to ASHM's philosophy. More and more I think the affected, scientific and medical communities speak with one voice, and I think ASHM is very proud of this partnership. Nowhere was this more evident than in the discussions and meetings prior to the release of the Fourth National Strategy.

Ensuring that our members involved in the care of people with HIV remain as up to date and as well informed as possible remains a very high priority of ASHM. As the treatment options for our patients have increased, so have the complexities of their care. All in ASHM remain committed that the highest standards are met.

As HIV is becoming a chronic infection, and people are facing a long life with HIV infection, ASHM really needs to establish strong links with other organisations, professional groups,

professional societies etc to ensure that HIV infection remains on the agenda despite the stable numbers in Australia. We can never become complacent, particularly with the escalating epidemic in our region.

As HIV infection becomes a chronic illness in our community, practitioners in all disciplines of health care will need to be aware of specific management problems and they will only learn this through interactions with groups such as ASHM. So I think the formation of these links are really crucial, both for our continued viability and for the optimal management of people infected with HIV.

In conclusion, my two years as President have been challenging, always interesting, very educational but often very frustrating. I'm certainly aware of how much needs to be done and how much could be done and like those who have gone before me and those in the future I've found that the constraints of time are really enormous. It's extremely difficult trying to juggle a full time career in HIV medicine and the requirements of ASHM and the time that I would like to dedicate to ASHM has been much less than would have been ideal. It's certainly a tribute to the Executive Officer, in particular Beatie, that we've been able to achieve as much as we have over the years because without this support of someone working full time, it would have been impossible. I wish to conclude by wishing Jenny luck in her juggling act (although she's extremely efficient) as she takes over the Presidency of ASHM.

The President's report be accepted

(M: Dr Debbie Marriott S: Dr. Diane Bridger) CARRIED

Treasurer's Report

I am very pleased to present this report and the report of the auditor for the accounts of the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine for 1998/99.

ASHM is in a healthy financial situation with significant reserves.

Our accounts fluctuate from year to year primarily in relation to current projects. 1998/99 saw an increase in funds from membership (this was due to increased membership – there was no rise in membership fees). It also saw a profit of \$82,829.12 from the 1998 ASHM conference held in Newcastle and my congratulations to the organizing committee.

Our expenses also fluctuate. There is a significant difference in the administration fees of 1998 and 1999 mainly due to the vagaries of the timing of requests for funds by the Finance Office of South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service which bills the Society and then pays our staff. The cost of auditor's remuneration was to have our accounts audited for the past few years to meet our requirements as a society.

I am informed by the auditor that items AAS 22 and AAS 28 (see page 5) are not required from our society.

One of my main aims as Treasurer during the past two years has been to ensure that ASHM has the cash reserves to be able to continue functioning should we have a significant shortfall in income for one or more years. As members will be aware our society is highly dependent on income from our annual conference, our membership fees and continuing support from the pharmaceutical industry for our publications, projects and meetings. A shortfall from any of these sources in a single year would be serious for the society. We now have the cash reserves to act as a barrier against such an eventuality. As a reminder our Total Members' Funds for 1997 was \$272,349.95.

My thanks to Beatie Pearlman for her support and tireless energy in ensuring that this society has always remained financially sound. My best wishes to Levinia Crooks and your new incoming Treasurer.

I apologise for not being able to attend the AGM but I am happy to answer any questions from members about any aspect of the ASHM accounts. My email address is michael.kidd@med.usyd.edu.au.

Michael Kidd

Honorary ASHM Treasurer 1998-99

The Treasurers report was presented and moved by Dr Jonathon Anderson, seconded Dr Elizabeth Dax. CARRIED

Appreciation for Beatie Pearlman, who was leaving the position of Executive Officer ASHM.

Carried unanimously, by acclamation

Introduction of Levinia Crooks

Dr Marriott introduced the new ASHM Executive Officer, Ms Levinia Crooks. Ms Crooks addressed the meeting briefly. She outlined a planned internal review for ASHM and the development of a Strategic Plan to help steer the organization.

Election of New Members

Dr Jenny Hoy	President
Andrew Grulich	Vice President
Dr Anne Mijch	Secretary
Dr Jonathon Anderson	Treasurer
Dr Debbie Marriott	Immediate Past President
Dr Tony Allworth	
Dr David Baker	
Dr Diane Bridger	
Dr Rick Chaney	
Prof Suzanne Crowe	
Prof Michael Kidd	
Dr Pam Palasanthiran	
Dr Kelly Papanoum	
Dr Ashley Watson	

There was no election as there were no contested positions.

The meeting was declared closed at 1.45 pm