Palliative Care Research Society

Annual General Meeting

Date: Friday 11th March, 2pm, Palliative Care Congress, Glasgow

Present: Barbara Jack, Julia Downing, Sally Boa, Ruth Isherwood, Jo Bayly, Katherine Knighting, Anna Bone, Alice Firth, Anne Finucane, Jean Lugton, Katharine Armour, Barbara Kimbell, Sarah Russell, Emma Carduff, Bruce Mason, Erna Haraldsdottir, Scott Murray, Jane Hopkinson

1. Apologies:
Sonja McIlfatrick, Dorry McLaughlin, Stephen Mason, Susan Salt.

2. Welcome:
Barbara Jack (Chair) welcomed everyone to the AGM.

3. Minutes of the last meeting (March 2014):
These were approved by Ruth Isherwood as an accurate record of the meeting and seconded by Jo Bayly.

4. Matters arising not otherwise covered:
None.

5. Membership of the executive committee:
This year, Barbara Jack has come to the end of her term in office as Chair. Dorry McLaughlin is also standing down as Membership Secretary. Both Dorry and Barbara were thanked for their hard work over the years as PCRS committee members.
Going forward, Julia Downing will take over as Chair, and other committee members are as follows: Jo Bayly (Communications Officer), Sally Boa (Secretary), Sonja McIlfatrick (Treasurer), and Ruth Isherwood (link to APM). Barbara welcomed three new members onto the committee: Anne Finucane, Anna Bone and Stephen Mason.

6. Chair’s Report:

During the last year Barbara Jack and Julia Downing have represented the PCRS on the PCC planning committee. For PCC 2018, which PCRS lead, the Chair will be Julia Downing with support by Ruth Isherwood. Other members of the executive and members of APM will join the PCC organising committee once the venue is confirmed.

In the last year we have managed to keep the cost of membership the same, with the benefits of access to the BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care, EAPC membership and reduction in conference fees for PCC and EAPC. Following the AGM in 2014, at the PCC in Harrogate when the members agreed
with our suggestion of subsidising events for members, we have continued to offer local events. This last year in addition to several master classes, we also co-hosted an event for PhD students with the Sue Ryder Centre at the University of Nottingham which was very successful and a feature in the last newsletter. We look forward to receiving suggestions from the members for future events and also ideas on other ways of supporting the members. We have tried to vary the newsletter to include interviews with relevant people as well as advertising events; sharing work in progress etc. and we are interested in looking at what the members think of the content and invite feedback.

Barbara reflected over her time as Chair. During this time we have: changed the membership package journal; upgraded the website; purchased new banners for conferences; enlarged the newsletter; introduced Gmail for the members; continued to have the Facebook account and more latterly Twitter accounts. We also introduced master classes and local events which have all evaluated very well. The membership has remained stable and when members leave, we follow them up to ascertain if any members are unhappy. Financially we remain stable, and all processes for the Charity Commission, data protection etc. are followed with us using Compleat Conferencing Service to maintain our membership and deal with all financial matters.

In conclusion the last year has continued to show the PCRS as a vibrant society. Barbara stated that it has been a great privilege to be Chair and thanked all the executive team for their input. She knows Julia, as the new Chair, will continue to drive it forward, with the aim of supporting palliative care research.

7. Treasurer’s report:

The auditor’s report for the year ending 31st December 2015 is included with this report.

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Bank balance at 31st December 2015

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<td>£48,437</td>
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The Palliative Care Research Society (PCRS) is in a financially secure position. In the year Jan - December 2015 reserves have been maintained to both sustain the organisation and to ensure business could continue for a period of at least 12 months if there was no additional income. The society is now in the pleasing position of considering how to use surplus funds to further palliative care research. To this end, investment has been made in continuing to develop the PCRS website, support for regional training events and marketing materials for PCRS, in advance of conferences for 2016.

Membership fees have remained unchanged in the year ending December 2015. Numbers are being maintained. As of Jan 2016 our current membership numbers are 144. This has increased our income. That means we have a running costs of over £5,000 reserve, considered to be sufficient to cover our running costs for a 12 month period.
Compleat Conferencing Services continues to maintain up-to-date membership and financial databases.

In conclusion, I would like to thank members of the Committee for their hard work and support that has enabled the achievement of a stronger financial position.

8. Membership Secretary’s report:
Numbers remain fairly stable at 144. We have followed up members who have not renewed and found the reasons are: retirement; no longer working in palliative care or left the UK.

9. Communication Officer’s report:

PCRS Newsletters

The PCRS executive committee have published two newsletters for members since the last AGM, in August 2015 and February 2016.

PCRS communication methods:

Please email pcrs.research@gmail.com with

1. Enquiries to committee
2. Items for the PCRS Newsletter
   a. We’d be interested to hear about members’ experiences attending Palliative Care Conferences, including this PCC and the EAPC to be held in Dublin in June. What presentations/posters/networking encounters made an impression?
   b. We’d also like to hear about research in progress. Do you have a website or social media account linked to your research we can publicize?
   c. Research into practice- we’d love to hear about any projects implementing research into practice.
   d. Local events

3. Items you would like us to post on our website/Facebook page or Twitter feed.

4. Items/events/news of imminent interest can be emailed to the membership

Face book Page:

Please ‘like’ the “Palliative Care Research Society” Face book page. Our ‘likes’ have gone up from 630 in June 2015 to 883 in February 2016.

Twitter:

You can follow and tweet to @PCRScommittee.

We are following 145 tweet accounts (including national and international palliative care and palliative care research organizations, as well as individual palliative care researchers). We have 465 followers. If we’re not following you and you would like us to, send us a tweet or follow us and we’ll follow you back.

Gmail account:

Events can be publicised via the gmail account, so please let members of the committee know if you would like us to publicise an event for you.
Website:

The ‘Events’ and ‘News’ sections on the website have now been combined and can be found on the home page. If any members have difficulty logging on to the members section, please let a member of the committee know. If you have difficulty accessing full copies of papers from BMJ Supportive and Palliative care, it is most likely because of the browser you are using (there are problems if you are using Google Chrome). Jo Bayly will write an article about this for the next newsletter.

Jane Hopkinson wondered if we had any stats on how much the website and BMJ subscription is used. Julia will explore this.

10. P CRS Events

A number of events were organised last year and were highlighted in the last newsletter. Members with ideas for future events should get in touch with the committee.

11. AOB:

Barbara talked about the new Scottish Palliative Care Research Forum which had its first meeting at PCC. This is a Scottish forum which has been formed to take forward the Scottish Strategic Framework for Action on Palliative and End of Life Care. PCRS and the forum will be working closely together and will run some events together in the future. Scott Murray reiterated the importance of collaboration between the two organisations. Scott will be approached to write an article about the forum for the newsletter.

Sarah Russell, the new Head of Research at HospiceUK introduced herself and was welcomed to the meeting. Sarah has agreed to write an article about her role for the newsletter.

At the end of the meeting, Julia again thanked Barbara for her hard work as Chair during her time on the PCRS committee.

12. Date of next meeting:

The next AGM will be held after March next year, via conference call.