

WA Health Translation Network
Abridged Executive Board Minutes for WAHTN Website
Meeting No. 4/2018
Tuesday 6 November 2018, 7.30-9.30am
Members Meeting Room, UniClub, UWA

Attendees:

Mr Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC, Chair
Ms Pip Brennan, Consumer Advocate
Dr James Williamson, representing the WA Department of Health
Professor Shirley Bowen, representing the Private Health Sector members
Professor Peter Leedman, representing the Medical Research Institute members
Professor Eeva Leinonen, representing the member universities
To be appointed, Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia
Professor Neale Fong, representing the WA Health Service Boards
Professor Gary Geelhoed, Executive Director WAHTN, ex officio

Executive Officer: Dr Tanya Tuffrey, WAHTN

Apologies

Professor Peter Thompson AM, Deputy Director WAHTN; Dr Debbie Turner, Chief Operating Officer WAHTN

1. Welcome and Farewell

The Chair welcomes members to the meeting to the fourth meeting of 2018, in particular, Professor Neale Fong, replacing Professor Bryant Stokes AM as the Health Service Boards representative.

Professor Peter Klinken has accepted a position as Chair of Lotterywest and Healthway and will be withdrawing from WAHTN Board due to a potential conflict of interest.

2. Correspondence

Received: Resignation letter from Prof. Klinken.

Sent: A formal letter to Prof. Klinken from the Chair thanking him for his service.

3. Declarations of potential or perceived conflicts of interest

4. Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Board 27 August 2018

3.1 Members confirmed the Minutes of the Meeting of the WAHTN Executive Board held on 27 August 2018 (Attachment 1).

RESOLVED 6/2018

3.2 Matters arising:-

The Executive Director will report on matters arising within agenda item 10 (Executive Director's Quarterly Report).

The action items from the previous meeting will be included here.

5. Management Committee

The next Management Committee meeting will be held on 4 December 2018.

These meetings keep all partners involved by reporting on the day-to-day running on the network, and keeping all partners up-to-date. A presentation is usually included at these meetings which are items of interest or which highlight potential problems.

6. Australian Health Research Alliance (AHRA)

The Executive Director provided an update on AHRA initiatives. He spoke on the Aboriginal Health initiative mainly being driven by AHRA members in Central and South Australia. WAHTN is represented in the initiative by Rhonda Marriott and Glenn Pearson. WAHTN had twice distributed a national survey on Aboriginal Health but very few responses have been received. The ED speculated the low response rate might relate to its length and complexity.

Pip Brennan queried whether still birth research was being prioritised within the Women's Health Research initiative. The Executive Director said that John Newnham's research on pre-term babies had been discussed, but not still birth.

In the Consumer and Community In Research Initiative (led by WAHTN and Sydney Health Partners), a survey of consumers and researchers has been completed taking stock of what is occurring in this space across Australia. The survey has received a good response of over 800. The WAHTN project officer, Jo Wilkie, also undertook an international comparison – looking at relevant groups in the US, Canada and the UK. The results have been put into a draft report which will be discussed in a workshop on Monday 12 November. While preliminary results show that it is difficult to objectively prove the benefit of consumer involvement in research, the ED voiced the opinion that it is now well accepted. James Williamson commented that the English Chief Medical Officer Dame Sally Davies was about to visit Perth and her opinion should be sought.

MRFF have also been holding workshops including in Perth on their strategy for the next two years. At the same time in Perth they held a workshop on Consumer and Community in Research Initiative.

As well as the original four AHRA initiatives, additional initiatives now include Women's Health, Ageing (Minister Hunt has an interest in this), clinical trials and Wound Care (again Minister Hunt has expressed an interest in this). On Wound Care, WAHTN is working with Diamantina in Brisbane. The Executive Director pointed out that WAHTN was spending increasing time devoted to national benefits. He felt while not of obvious short term benefit to WA that they would benefit in the long term. Peter Leedman suggested looking at the structure of the other AHRAs and how they are managing to juggle the balance between local and national interests. The Executive Director spoke of the various members of AHRA

emphasising their varied governance structures, history and funding models. Although all of the AHRAs receive the same MRFF funding regardless of size, their funding from their partners varies.

Neale Fong suggested looking at an overview of the other AHRAs to see what their focus is –
ACTION ITEM

The Executive Director recently spent two days in Canberra with other AHRA members to raise the profile of AHRA. Facilitation was by Executive Counsel Australia. The Executive Director highlighted the difficulty posed by the distance between Perth and Canberra and welcomed the opportunity the visit allowed. In meetings with Minister Hunt, the Minister showed interest in the work on clinical trials and what was being done in WA. A detailed proposal is being drawn up for the clinical trials work across all of the AHRAs coordinated by Monash Partners and we are providing feedback. A copy of the KPMG report on return on Research Investment is to be circulated to the Board – ACTION ITEM

7. Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)

Refer to the ED's report. MRFF \$2M first tranche of funding (Attachment 6) and MRFF Grant Guideline (Attachment 7).

\$6.1M was promised in May 2017, with the proviso that the First \$2M be spent over 12 months in 2019. (This has now been altered to it being spent over 2 years). (NHMRC staff are assisting with grant approvals). The first \$1M was allocated to ECR Fellowships – 77 applications were received, and Lyn Beazley was the chair of the selection committee. 11 fellowships have been awarded, of whom 10 are women, and 9 are in the area of paediatrics. Awardees have been informed. (All awardees had matching funds of various sorts in their applications). A loose mentorship scheme is being offered to the fellows. A public announcement will be made in conjunction with the Minister's office.

Information being collated for the application for the remaining \$4M. The Executive Director will be meeting with the Chief Executives of the Area Health Services in early December to see how these funds can best be used to promote translational research in their hospitals. Shirley requested that similar meetings be held with the private hospitals – ACTION ITEM.

Pip Brennan queried what WAHTN is doing to see what the community wants research funds to be spent on. The Executive Director said that the state needs a strategy (as does WAHTN) and that WAHTN needs go to the public and the community to ask what their priority is for research. (check MM ref to guidelines). James Williamson said that DoH is drawing up a new strategy plan over the next 6 months and will work with WAHTN on this.

RETP funding was discussed. The Dept of Health has indicated future funding may be possible this year. In order to reduce the current shortfall, RETP will need to charge for online courses. The Executive Director has discussed this with the other AHRTC leads, asking them to publicise this to their groups (either to assist with funding or to pay to use the resources.) AHRA is interested in the platform, but not necessarily to pay for it. RETP had originally been set up for the WAHTN partners to use for free. From 2019 all students will be required to pay to use RETP – this may be done through their institutions – UWA has set

some of these are part of their courses. The Executive Director has informed Curtin University of this option but it has not been taken up formally.

8. Governance and Operations

8.1 UWA and Notre Dame have made a request that WAHTN not distribute employment opportunities (Attachment 8)

Agreed that all such future opportunities will be posted on a bulletin board on the WAHTN website rather than circulating by email – ACTION ITEM

8.2 Partners and Associate Membership update, including:

Busselton Population Medical Research Institute formally appointed as Associate Partner.

Written request from SilverChain to join as Partner. Have replied asking for a representative and noting need for NHMRC approval. (ACTION ITEM – Executive Officer to confirm amount requested from SilverChain).

They could bring on expertise in Wound Care.

9 Initiatives and Activities

9.1 AICC(WA) / WAHTN Luncheon event held on Wednesday 3 October 2018 with Professor Jeremy Nicholson (Australian National Phenome Centre) as Keynote Speaker. The event was very successful.

9.2 WAHTN Retreat / Strategic Planning Workshop (1 day or 2 half days) to incorporate reports from all Partners/Associates, Enabling Platforms and overarching activities still to be organised.

9.3 Proposed Neuroscience Research Plan for Western Australia. The Minister has approved this initiative.

9.4 Survey of WAHTN researchers (Attachment 9)

Attachment 9 – a survey was sent to the WAHTN and RETP mailing lists to get their thoughts about WAHTN – the final report will be circulated once complete – ACTION ITEM. The results of the survey were positive as was the feedback about WAHTN.

10 Executive Director's Quarterly Report

The Quarterly Report from the Executive Director is attached (Attachment 11 and 12).

For discussion.

Science on The Swan will be held 5-7 June 2019 at the Westin Hotel. Michael Mosely is the keynote speaker. The 11 ECR fellows will be highlighted at this event with each one invited to present. The Executive Director has also asked all of the AHRA Directors if they would like to attend – feedback has been good and so one session may be allocated to the alliance and their initiatives.

Upcoming NHMRC workshop plus one day AHRA conference.

The Executive Director attended Ausbiotech Conference from 31 October to 2 November.

Enabling platforms –

Clinical Trials Data Centre - well accepted, more people approaching them for support

RETP – discussed earlier

CCHRN – 3 years funding from Lotterywest will finish in June 2019 – there has been much work in this space, but going forward the big issues need to be highlighted – need to communicate that research and service are two pillars and need to have both. Anne McKenzie has resigned from CCHRN, she has a high profile and has served on many committees, and has been a wonderful representative from WA

CCHRN is putting a grant application together – Lotterywest happy to receive another application – but more likely that bridging funding would only be for one year

11 Any other Business

12 Next meeting of the WAHTN Executive Board

Tuesday 15 January 2019. (Meeting to be held 2 monthly in 2019 rather than 3 monthly).

13 In camera