Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 April 2012 at 10:30 am
in the 6th Floor Council Chamber at the Royal College of Anaesthetists

Members:
Prof D J Rowbotham  Royal College of Anaesthetists, Chairman NIAA Research Council
Prof H Galley    Co-optee - Anaesthetic Research Society
Prof M Grocott    Co-optee – Health Services Research Centre
Mr D Hepworth    Co-optee – Lay representative, Patient Liaison Group
Prof D Lambert    Co-optee – NIAA Grants Officer and on behalf of Dr Nigel Webster for the British Journal of Anaesthesia
Prof R P Mahajan  Royal College of Anaesthetists, Chairman NIAA Board
Dr I Moppett    Co-optee – BJA Grants Officer
Prof M Mythen    Co-optee – University College London
Dr M Nathanson Anaesthesia and on behalf of Dr Paul Clyburn for the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain & Ireland
Prof J J Pandit Co-optee - Difficult Airway Society / Research Priority Setting Exercise
Dr F Plaat    Co-optee - Obstetric Anaesthetists’ Association
Dr S Walker Co-optee - Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain & Ireland

In attendance:
Ms S Drake Royal College of Anaesthetists (Director of Education & Research)
Miss C Bunnell Committee Secretary (NIAA Administrator)
Miss M Humphrey HSRC Administrator
NIAARC/18/2012  WELCOME
The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, particularly Dr Charles Cooper, attending on behalf of Dr Forrest for the Society for Education in Anaesthesia (SEA UK) and Miss Madeleine Humphrey, who would be covering Mrs Morgan Cenan’s maternity leave. It was noted that Dr Nick Scott, of Regional Anaesthesia UK (RAUK), had not yet attended a meeting since being invited to join the Research Council and the Chair looked forward to welcoming him soon.

NIAARC/19/2012  APOLOGIES
Apologies were received from Dr Clyburn (The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain & Ireland, AAGBI), Dr Forrest (SEA UK), Dr Gill (Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthetists, ACTA), Dr Howell (Vascular Anaesthesia Society of Great Britain, VASGBI), Professor Leuwer (NIHR CLRN Lead for Anaesthesia), Dr Razis (Neuroanaesthesia Society of Great Britain and Ireland), Dr Scott (RAUK), Professor Webster (British Journal of Anaesthesia, BJA), and Mrs Morgan Cenan (Senior National Institute of Academic Anaesthesia, NIAA, and Health Services Research Centre, HSRC, Administrator).

NIAARC/20/2012  MINUTES
The confidential and non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2 February 2012 were approved as a correct record with one amendment to the confidential minutes.

ACTION: NIAA Administrator to upload the non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2012 to the NIAA website.

NIAARC/21/2012  MATTERS ARISING

(i)  NIAARC/05/2012  NIAA Away Day
Dr Nathanson confirmed to the Chair that he was satisfied with the changes made to the NIAA Away Day discussion paper on behalf of the AAGBI.

(ii) NIAA/13/2012  NIAA Comprehensive Review
The Chair congratulated the NIAA team on the publication of the NIAA Comprehensive Review which had been well received by colleagues in the specialty.

(iii) NIAA/15/2012  NIAA Exhibition Stand
Mr Hepworth reported on the success of the NIAA exhibition stand at the Royal College of Anaesthetists’ (RCoA) Anniversary Meeting on 14 March. The stand had benefitted from being in a prominent position and over 100 copies of the NIAA Comprehensive Review had been distributed. Through his discussions with delegates, Mr Hepworth reported that many worked at District General Hospitals and had little time to engage in research.

NIAARC/22/2012  THE ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL RESEARCH CHARITIES
This item had been raised at the previous meeting following a suggestion made at the NIAA Away Day that the NIAA consider joining the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC). It was noted that the subject would be discussed at the Board meeting that afternoon, however the initial feeling was that any further investigations should be deferred until the NIAA’s plans for charitable status were more fully realised.
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The NIAA Administrator reported that the majority of Research Council members had now confirmed their conflicts of interest and that reminders had been sent out. Once all returns had been received a conflict of interests register would be uploaded to the NIAA website.

ACTION: NIAA Administrator to upload a register of interests document to the NIAA website once all information received.

NIAA AWAY DAY

Ms Drake introduced an updated discussion paper covering the themes discussed at the NIAA Away Day held on 11 November 2011. She highlighted the new Executive Summary and additional points raised by Dr Nathanson.

The Chair welcomed the document and requested that it be used as the basis of an action plan against which future performance could be measured. It was also agreed that the Executive Summary should be placed on the NIAA website and that visitors to the site should be given the opportunity to comment on the document.

ACTION: NIAA Administrator to add the establishment of the HSRC to the Executive Summary, to upload the Executive Summary to the NIAA website accompanied by a feedback form; and to develop a matrix against which progress can be recorded.

SPECIALIST SOCIETY RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The Research Council received tabled copies of four membership surveys from the Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain & Ireland (APAGBI), the NASGBI, SEA UK, and the VASGBI.

Professor Lambert highlighted the priorities that were common to all four surveys. These were: an interest in outcomes research, general educational material, and vascular and neurological research in children.

Dr Plaat reported that the results of the Obstetric Anaesthetists’ Association (OAA) survey would be circulated soon. Professor Pandit reported that the results of the Difficult Airway Society (DAS) survey would be available by the end of the year.

Professor Lambert hoped that the exercise would reveal common themes and help partners to identify potential areas for collaboration, but emphasised that partners retained control of their funds at all times.

It was agreed to produce a summary paper once the results of the specialist society surveys had been received and to discuss any opportunities for collaboration at the September meeting.

ACTION: Professor Lambert to combine the results of any further surveys and produce a summary paper for consideration at the NIAA’s September meeting.

NIAA RESEARCH STRATEGY

Professor Mahajan reported that a first draft of the NIAA Research Strategy had been submitted to Professor Rowbotham and Professor Mythen for comment and that the document would be discussed at the Board meeting that afternoon. He hoped to finalise the document within the next two weeks and to circulate it more widely to the Research Council by the end of May.
**NIAARC/27/2012 NIAA COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**
The Research Council received an updated version of the NIAA Communications Plan. This was accompanied by an implementation document and a timeline of targets and achievements. Ms Drake spoke to this item and explained that in order to fully realise the plan, champions would be required from the Research Council and Board to lead on certain areas. Colleagues were also asked to notify the office when they spoke at events and meetings about the NIAA, so that the plan could be updated on a regular basis.

**ACTION:**
- **NIAA Administrator** to issue a call for volunteers to lead on key areas of the NIAA Communications Plan.
- **NIAA Administrator** to make the following amendments to the plan:
  - p5. Reference to ‘Anaesthesia’ to become ‘Anaesthesia News’
  - p7. Add the AAGBI main Congress meetings to the list of exhibition stands to be attended by the NIAA.
- **NIAA Administrator** to circulate the NIAA PowerPoint presentation and logo to members for use when representing the NIAA at external meetings, along with an updated implementation document.
- The **Communications Plan** to become a standing item on future agendas.

**NIAARC/28/2012 NIHR SPECIALTY GROUP ‘ANAESTHESIA, PERI-OPERATIVE MEDICINE AND PAIN MANAGEMENT’**
Professor Grocott led this item in the absence of Professor Leuwer. He referred to the progress made by the Specialty Group over the last two years, leading to an increase in the number of studies and recruitment of over 40,000 patients.

The Chair welcomed this clear improvement in the group’s achievements over time. He also commented on the very positive specialty group meeting which had been held at the College on 13 March, involving representatives from industry and the Comprehensive Local Research Networks (CLRN).

**NIAARC/29/2012 NIAA GRANT OFFICER’S REPORT**
Professor Lambert reported that Round 1 2012 would close on Friday 20 April, and that 16 applications had been received to date. He hoped to issue all applications for peer review by Monday. Work on a generic application form was ongoing and he hoped to have this ready for consideration at the September meeting.

Professor Lambert then reported that the British Journal of Anaesthesia (BJA) would be advertising a new development grant of £250,000.

**ACTION:**
- **Professor Lambert** to continue work on a generic application form for the NIAA research grants, taking into consideration relevant NIHR and CLRN information.

**NIAARC/30/2012 HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTRE**
(i) The Research Council received a progress report from Professor Grocott. It was noted that the report had also been submitted to College Council the previous day.
National Emergency Laparotomy Audit (NELA)
Professor Grocott reported on feedback from the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) to the NELA bid.

Hip Fracture Perioperative Network
In excess of 10,000 patients had been recruited to this proposed sprint audit of ‘hip fracture anaesthesia’ so far.

Study Development
The HSRC was currently providing support for two large multicentre studies; EPOCH, a cluster study of a quality improvement programme in patients undergoing emergency laparotomy; and GeRAFFE, a randomised controlled trial of general vs regional anaesthesia in patients with fractured femur.

UK Perioperative Clinical Research Forum (UKPCRF)
This event took place on 12 March and was chaired by Professor Rupert Pearse. It had been an overwhelming success with interest exceeding capacity. Next year’s meeting would be chaired by Professor Fang Gao Smith.

As part of this item it was noted that a meeting had been held with the Anaesthetic Research Society (ARS) that morning to discuss a proposal for closer working between the society and the NIAA, part of which would involve collaborating more closely on events such as the HSRC UKPCRF. This proposal would be considered further by the ARS Council.

Recruitment
It was noted that the HSRC researcher post had recently been readvertised. A draft job description for Local Audit Research Coordinators (LARCs), who would act as a point of contact for surveys, disseminating information, providing feedback on local issues and identifying local reporters for HSRC projects such as the national audit projects, was noted.

(ii) NIAA Clinical Trial Unit
Research Council received a proposal from Professor Grocott for a NIAA Clinical Trials Unit (CTU) Working Group.

(iii) Research Excellence in UK Anaesthesia (REUKA)
Professor Grocott reported on the results of the first pilot census of research output from UK anaesthetists conducted by the HSRC. This had been based on information gathered via the NIAA Researchers’ Database and the ResearcherID website. The exercise showed that it was feasible to collect this data and also the importance of encouraging researchers to maintain their records.

ACTION: Research Council members to join the database if they have not already done so and to add their Researcher ID reference numbers.

NIAARC/31/2012 RESEARCH PRIORITY SETTING EXERCISE
This item was not formally discussed as Dr Howell was absent from the meeting, however a copy of an email from Mark Fenton, Editor of UK DUETS (UK Database of Uncertainties about the Effects of Treatments), regarding the upload of uncertainties from the NIAA Research Council Research Priority Setting exercise to UK DUETS, was tabled.
NIAA/32/2012  NIAA EXHIBITION STAND
The Chair asked members whether they would be available to assist on the NIAA stand during the Group of Anaesthetists in Training (GAT) Conference in Glasgow on 27 – 28 June.

NIAA/33/2012  DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 27 September 2012

Provisional dates for meetings in 2013:

Thursday 31 January 2013
Thursday 25 April 2013
Thursday 17 October 2013

NIAA/34/2012  ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was one item of Any Other Business:

DAS Professorships
The Chair invited colleagues to consider the Difficult Airway Society’s (DAS) initiative to award its own professorships and what the formal NIAA response to this should be. He acknowledged the established methods of appointing professorships through the university system and the award of temporary titles such as the Macintosh Professorship via the College.

Professor Pandit outlined the events leading up to the decision and members discussed the issue in detail. There was a strong lack of support for the initiative and the debate was split 12 to 2, with 12 against. It was agreed that the Chair would report this outcome to the NIAA Board that afternoon.

ACTION: The Chair to report the outcomes of the discussion to the Board at its afternoon meeting.
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