

▶ NZATS Board Meeting Wednesday 15th December 2004

Venue:

Baxter Healthcare, 33 Vestey Drive, Auckland

Present:

Karen Bennett, Patricia O'Brien, Andrew Warmington, Janine Gunn, Julie Bromley, Janine Wells, Michele Peck, Louise Goodwin

Apologies:

Lindsay Butler, Malcolm Stuart

Matters arising from the previous minutes:

Treasures Report statement "account will be in deficit if we keep paying out for the Script". To be confirmed that this is only one of many items that will use funds.

Ascot Mercy Hospitals- A letter has been written confirming the actions that need to be taken as specified in the report. (To be discussed in the agenda)

Registration Fees- 1st of April increase in fees to be publicised on the website

Report by Andrew Warmington – Changes to COP Exams

The main points are

- Change the general vivas to a written examination
- Establish pass / fail criteria
- Examiners to have some discretion when candidates are borderline
- 65% of exam achievement as a minimum in any area

Andrew Warmington indicated that these changes would make decisions clearer for examiners in the future. It would allow examiners to pass candidates who were "marginal" but had demonstrated safe practice.

It was agreed that the following statement should be added to the Examination Guidelines.

" Each candidate will be individually assessed and evaluated. The examiners reserve the right to consider a lower average in exceptional circumstances."

The facilitator for the COP exams who remains to chair the " court of examiners" needs to be seen as unbiased. It has therefore been agreed that the chair should be a non-examining board member with no trainees in that exam group.

It was discussed that the administration of the COP exams is labour and time intensive. This will increase with the introduction of the written examination paper that will replace the current general vivas. It has been agreed that a clerical secretary is required to carry out admin preparation and collation/ postage of exam results. It is anticipated that the cost of this secretarial support will be

funded out of the increase in examination fees.

The board discussed when the increase in exam fees should be implemented. The board was conscious of the need to give suitable notice of fee increase. It also recognised that changes that would be funded by the increase may not be feasible in the short term i.e. increase in the numbers of examiners. However, after much discussion, it was agreed that the increase to \$495 per candidate, would be effective for the May 05 exams. Hospitals and candidates will be notified as soon as possible.

Great effort has been made in previous exams to ensure that candidates are not assessed by examiners that they know. This process has been time consuming for the facilitators and has not been perceived as fair by some candidates. It is proposed that candidates will randomly select the examination team i.e. A, B or C. With the increase in numbers of examiners to three in a team, the chance of a potential conflict of interest situation should be minimal. This increase in numbers should also speed up the examination process.

Pat O'Brien expressed some concern at the increase in numbers of examiners and their ability to keep up their level of practical examination experience. She stated that examiners should be undertaking that role at least once every 18 months to remain current. At present there are 10 Anaesthetists and, shortly an increase to, 12 Technicians who participate in the COP exams. After discussion it was agreed that with 3 examiners in each team, it should be possible for each one to "cycle" through in this time span.

To increase the number of Anaesthetist examiners, an advert will be placed in The Script. Andrew Warmington will also seek out possible interested Anaesthetists.

Pat O'Brien stated that Anaesthetists from hospitals not already involved in the examination process should be actively encouraged to apply so as to create a more even distribution of input throughout the country.

AUT update

Pat O'Brien and Lindsay Butler have met with Wendy Emson to discuss the update of the objectives for 5A. Objectives for 5B will be discussed in the future.

Registration issues

Erin's comment in the meeting minutes were discussed and passed on to Julie Bromley for actioning.

Membership

Karen Bennett gave confirmation of the presentation of honorary membership to Patsy Rose and life membership to Basil Hutchinson. Both have expressed their thanks to the NZATS for this recognition of their support and involvement with the profession.

Agenda Items

Future meeting dates

The dates for next years board meetings were discussed. Several members expressed difficulty in being released from clinical duties on a Friday. It was proposed that the day should be changed to the Wednesday before to allow more members to attend. Karen will look at this and confirm new dates as soon as possible

Website

The board has been asked by George Fuge to consider his proposal of a chat forum as a link from the NZATS website. Whilst the board recognises the value of comments from its members it did not consider it appropriate for individual members of the board to respond, as this could be personal opinion. The cost at present is minimal but will require financial backing after 6 months. The board agreed that the chat forum could be a link from the NZATS for a trail period of 6 months after which the board will consider financial support.

Travel Bookings

Michele has organised a business credit card for NZATS. This will allow for payment of travel for board members and use by the exam committee. Michele will investigate the idea of a nominated travel agent co-ordinating all travel bookings. Karen Bennett asked if air-points, or any other benefits, could be gained by block bookings through one agent. Michele will investigate.

Regional Reps

Two vacancies for regional rep positions exist at present. These are: -
Upper North Island – Auckland
Lower North Island – Palmerston North
Voting forms for these Regional Rep positions will be distributed and allow proxy votes to be cast.

Review of Wellington Hospital

Pat O'Brien gave feedback on the developments made at Wellington Hospital. She reported that Marcel had made good progress and that they wanted to take on new trainees. This should conform to the 1:1 ratio as set out in the Training Regulations (04).

Pat also stated that survey fees need to be paid before the report will be released.

Update on Diploma / Degree progress

Pat O'Brien confirmed that she had had a meeting with Uni-tech to discuss the possibility of a Diploma. She said that progress was slow. AUT still seem to consider a Degree as their preferred option. Pat expressed her desire to protect the advantages of "apprenticeship" style training. The CTA at this point seems open to discussion about the possibilities of a Diploma. Pat confirmed that she would be keeping in contact with both AUT and Uni-tech as to any progress.

Training Regulations

Pat O'Brien asked if Australian citizens were recognised as having New Zealand Residency. It was confirmed that Australians are recognised as having residency so are able to take up trainee positions.

Script update and Editor position

Louise Goodwin has been asked to receive all of the articles for the future Script. She stated that she was not aware that the Communication Advisor position was to produce the magazine, rather to assist with its compilation. The board discussed the offer of Helen Mahoney to become editor of

The Script and Karen confirmed she would write to Helen accepting her kind offer. Louise will contact Lindsay to discuss the future production of The Script and report back to the board.

E-mail from Peter Barker re AGM

E-mail has been received requesting that reports and proxy voting forms should be available prior to AGMs. This was not the situation at the last AGM and was a cause for concern. The board agreed that any voting forms, Treasurers report, Chairs Report and minutes of the last AGM should be available in advance next year. It was also confirmed that this should be organised by the Secretary.

Letters have been sent on behalf of the NZATS Board, thanking the previous Treasurer (Lynne), Registrar (Erin) and Chair (Mark) for their valuable contribution to the progression of the society and the Anaesthetic Technician profession.

NZ Residency for Australians

Discussed previously in point (8)

Practicing Certificate

Karen Bennett confirmed to the board that once a student passes their Certificate of Proficiency they receive that certification. At present registered members then receive a membership card once a year. To assist qualified technicians with maintaining professional documentation it has been agreed that a Registration Certificate will also be issued with the card in future. The possibility of a badge was also discussed.

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A) Treasurer's Report

Michele Peck has been co-opted as the new NZATS Treasurer and she presented the current situation with the accounts. There was discussion over the ability and value of presenting the accounts at the AGM in November when the financial year ends in March/April. Karen Bennett stated that she would investigate the possibility of changing the account year-end so that it was closer to the AGM.

D) The ANZCA Conference

The 2005 ANZCA Conference is in Auckland on the 7-11 May. There will be organised meetings suitable for all Anaesthetic Technicians to attend.

Pat O'Brien stated that fees for technicians will not be subsidised and the cost will be the same as for medical staff at \$400 per day.

E) Meetings

It is hoped that an Educators meeting will be held in June 2005. Pat O'Brien is considering Christchurch as a possible venue.

A meeting of Charge Technicians is to be arranged.

Julie Bromley has offered to seek sponsorship for the Charge and Educators meetings.

F) Middlemore Book

Pat O'Brien reported that the Middlemore book "An Induction to Anaesthesia" is taking a long time to produce. It was agreed that we need to assess the numbers that will be required so that a re-print can be organised. It was suggested that a copy of this book should be provided with the trainees introduction pack.

G) HPCA Application

Pat O'Brien suggested that the application for HPCA registration should be submitted as soon as possible. Once the submission has been lodged, the profession would have started the formal process. Patricia has been working on the new Scope of Practice document for ADHB . Approval for use of this document by NZATS will be sought by Pat. It will be reviewed to ensure it is a true reflection of current clinical practice. This document will be circulated to Charge Technicians and Educators for their feedback by the end of January 05.

It was agreed that a questionnaire would be written and distributed, to gain information as to the scope of practice around the country. Janie Gunn agreed to organise this.

H) Reports

Reports are to sent out to other committee members at least 1 week prior to an associated meeting.

E-mail addresses of the NZATS Board members are to be issued with the minutes of this meeting.

Date of the next meeting to be confirmed

Minutes taken by Louise Goodwin

On behalf of the NZATS Board