

THE VASCULAR SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

MINUTES OF THE 40th ANNUAL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING ON 24 NOVEMBER 2005 AT THE BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, BOURNEMOUTH

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Baird, Mr J Beard, Mrs L de Cossart, Mr R Holdsworth, Mr P Kent, and Mr M Wyatt.

2. DEATHS

Members stood in silence as a mark of respect for Mr Ronald Grimley who had died during the year.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual General Business Meeting on 25 November 2004 were approved as a correct record.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President referred Members to his report in the Yearbook in which he had summarised the activities of Council during the past year. He referred to the publication of the recent NCEPOD report on AAA. Although the numbers studied were small, a clear message had emerged which showed that patients admitted to smaller hospitals fared worse than those admitted to larger units. Moreover, there was a 60% increased chance of surviving a ruptured aneurysm if the patient was tended to by a vascular anaesthetist. He stated that the Society would be making a formal response to this publication, and the Audit Committee would give further consideration to the implications of the report.

5. HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Honorary Secretary stated that it had been an extremely busy year for the Society in looking at educational, service and political issues.

Members were reminded that, at the previous AGM, consideration had been given to the future publication of the Society's abstracts in the BJS. Due to space constraints, the BJS was proposing only to publish the prize session abstracts and include the remaining abstracts in its e-journal. The Honorary Secretary reported that he had approached the EJVES regarding publication in its journal but they were also only able to offer on-line publication. Council had therefore accepted that the BJS should continue to publish the Society's abstracts. Confirmation was being sought that the e-journal would be fully citeable.

The Honorary Secretary reported that he had written to the Department of Health expressing concern that the priorities placed on breast and colo-rectal surgery were seriously disadvantaging vascular services. A disappointing reply had been received from the Customer Service Centre at the DoH which stated that vascular surgery, although linked to diabetes, was not considered a high priority. The Honorary

Secretary had written again following this unsatisfactory reply, and had received a more positive response, which he believed was stimulated by the publication of the National Audit Office's report on Stroke Prevention. He had been invited to attend a Vascular Programme Board meeting at the DoH and would continue to press for a higher profile for vascular surgery via this route. The Society hoped to be involved in the production of national guidelines on stroke being produced by the DoH at the instruction of Ministers over the next 18 months.

The Honorary Secretary reported that the Society's membership continued to increase with a total of 755 members, compared to 731 members in 2004. He stated that the number of Senior Members was also increasing with currently 111 members. Historically, Senior Members received free membership of the Society. However, it had been calculated that it currently cost the Society approximately £35 per member to provide Senior Members with information on the Society and to administer the membership database. He sought Members' support in introducing a fee to Senior Members to meet the Society's costs. Mr May, Professor Sir P Bell, Professor Barros D'Sa and Professor Campbell all spoke in support of introducing a fee, and £50 was suggested as a reasonable amount. This was supported by Members, and the Honorary Secretary would advise Senior Members accordingly.

Action: Honorary Secretary

The President thanked the Honorary Secretary for all his hard work throughout the year.

6. HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

The Honorary Treasurer reported that Council had worked hard during the year to maintain the running costs of the Society according to its financial recovery plan. However, two of the Society's Major Sponsors had withdrawn their support and the Society had suffered a subsequent £20,000 loss of income. He felt it was important to recognise that the support of Major Sponsors was not guaranteed and the Society therefore needed to address this loss to ensure that the Society had sufficient reserves to allow the Society to run for one year if no further income was received. The Honorary Treasurer therefore proposed that membership subscriptions should increase in January 2006 for Ordinary Members from £135 to £160 and from £70 to £90 for Affiliates, Associate and Overseas members. The majority of Members present at the meeting approved this proposal following a show of hands.

The Honorary Treasurer advised Members that the accounts published in the Yearbook related to the first complete year of The Vascular Society, and included funds from the British Vascular Foundation.

Mr Braithwaite queried whether educational bursaries, which the Society had agreed to introduce in 2000, were still available to SpRs in years 5 and 6 of their training. The Honorary Secretary confirmed that bursaries were available, but the request for logbook data to assess patterns in training had proved to be an inhibitory factor in attracting applicants.

7. AUDIT AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Mr Ashley reported that support for the NVD was now at 309 surgeons registered from 117 centres, with an estimated 17,000 cases submitted. The carotid dataset was now available on-line, and it was hoped to offer web-based submission for all datasets soon.

The UK Carotid Endarterectomy Audit, in association with the Royal College of Physicians, was due to go live in late December.

Mr Ashley reported that the Audit Committee had recently discussed funding of the RETA registry and had agreed that appropriate national funding should be available to support it. Concern had also been expressed about under-reporting of implanted devices as it was noted that it was a requirement of NICE that all devices should be entered into the registry.

The President thanked Mr Ashley for his excellent chairmanship of the Audit and Research Committee over the past four years.

8. TRAINING AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Professor Scott reported that there had been an increase in the number of vascular representatives on the SAC, with Mr S Silverman, Mr M Wyatt and Professor Shearman being elected alongside Professor Scott. The SAC undertook regular visits of training regions and Professor Scott advised Members to discuss any concerns they may have about such visits with any of the vascular representatives.

Professor Scott reported that Mr Dominic Dodd, on behalf of the Society, had undertaken discussions during the year on the establishment of an allograft bank. It was proposed that a service would be established in 2006 based in Liverpool offering cryopreserved arterial grafts, which would be fully tested and matched.

The President thanked Professor Scott for his outstanding work as chairman of the Training and Education Committee over the four years.

9. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Professor Campbell reminded Members of the agreement made at last year's meeting regarding the action to be taken when 'outliers' were identified from the National Vascular Database. He reported that he and the President had had to implement this process on one occasion during the year, and had visited a vascular surgeon whose outcome data from the NVD had given cause for concern. Members were advised that this was a very positive visit with a satisfactory outcome for both the surgeon and the Hospital's Medical Director. Professor Campbell hoped that the outcome of this process would set a precedent for any future similar instances.

10. VASCULAR TUTOR

Mr MacSweeney reported on the courses which had been successfully held during the year. He stated that an endovascular course had been held the day before the AGM, and he thanked the Faculty and the Sponsors for their support. New courses planned for the forthcoming year included renal access and venous disease.

11. BVF COMMITTEE

Professor Sir Peter Bell reported on the activities of the BVF during the past year. He welcomed Miss Terrie McCann who had recently been appointed as Fundraiser. He reported that the BVF/Society dinner at the Merchant Taylor's Hall had raised approximately £15,000. This event would be held again in 2006 on 12th May, and he encouraged Members to attend. In addition, a ball held in Newcastle had raised approximately £4,000. Other events, including the London Marathon and sponsored cycle ride had raised over £15,000.

The Committee had approached several people to become Patrons of the BVF, and Mr George Davies, who had links with Marks and Spencer, had agreed to support it. Discussions were being held about changing the name of the BVF to Circulation in order to give it a wider appeal.

Professor Bell requested Members' support for donations and covenants to the BVF, and he would be writing to all Members in the future about this.

Professor Bell thanked Mrs Karen Lody, the BVF administrator, for her help during the year.

12. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The successful candidates in the ballot for election to Council for 2005-2008 were as follows:

Mr R Chalmers

Professor J Michaels

Mr D Mitchell

On behalf of the Society, the President thanked the retiring members of Council: Mr A Davies, Professor C Shearman, and Mr D Berridge. It was noted that both Professor Shearman and Mr Berridge would remain on Council as Chairman of the Training and Education Committee and Honorary Treasurer respectively.

Members were advised that Mr J J Earnshaw had been elected Honorary Secretary Elect from November 2005, and would succeed the current Honorary Secretary in November 2006.

The President confirmed that Professor G Hamilton had been elected as President Elect for 2005-2006.

13. AGM 2006: EDINBURGH

Mr Wolfe reported that the AGM in Edinburgh would take place from 22-24 November. He also advised Members that he had organised a meeting of Regional Vascular Society representative and Professors in Vascular Surgery early in December.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The President thanked the secretariat- Mr Lamont, Ms Robey and Mr Farrell - for all their hard work during his year of Presidency. He also thanked Members of Council for their contribution.

The Honorary Secretary proposed a vote of thanks, on behalf of the Society, to the President for his input to the Society.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 23 November 2006 at the Edinburgh International Centre, Edinburgh.