

4. NEW GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS : PROGRESS TO DATE

(a) Training for LREC Members

The Governance Committee received for information copies of a paper from Ms A Torrie which outlined proposals for training LREC Members.

Ms Torrie reminded members that a requirement of GAFREC was that training should be provided to all LREC Members by NHS Boards. She had looked into various methods of training, liaised with other Scottish NHS Boards and had come to the conclusion that Mr A Goldberg and his team at Keele University offered the best “value for money” training service. Ms Torrie had also taken the opportunity to speak with three other English Health Authorities who had in the past used the Keele training team and had extremely favourable comments in respect of both their professionalism and course content.

Ms Torrie pointed out that it was the intention to confirm a provisional booking already made of the Western Infirmary new lecture theatre for 18, 19, 20, 23, 24 and 25 June 2003. It was intended that the first set of dates would comprise an introductory course and the second set of dates would comprise an intermediary course.

The Chairman thanked Ms Torrie for her efforts in organising an appropriate training programme.

DECIDED:

That the Governance Committee endorse the plan for training LREC members as submitted.

Ms A Torrie

(b) Update on Recruitment

The Governance Committee received for information copies of a paper from the Secretariat Manager detailing progress to date with the recruitment process. The paper included an update on the number of vacancies still to be filled for both expert and lay members in each LREC in NHS Greater Glasgow. There were currently 65 vacancies for expert members and 37 vacancies for lay members. The Governance Committee recognised the substantial task which lay ahead in arranging for these posts to be filled by the deadline of 1 April 2003.

The Secretariat Manager advised that advertisements for lay members had been placed in nine local newspapers. It was the intention to hold interviews for lay members in mid March. It was noted that up to three days may have to be set aside for this purpose. Dr Anderson, Dr Jamieson and Dr Wallace advised of dates which each would be available to sit on the interview panels. The panels would consist of a nominated Governance Committee member, the Head of Board Administration or his representative, Ms Torrie and a lay member. Ms A Lees, a lay member of the Western Infirmary Local Research Ethics Committee, had agreed to undertake this particular role.

Ms Torrie updated the Governance Committee on the measures being taken to appoint the outstanding expert member vacancies. Letters seeking nominations had been sent to the General Practitioner Subcommittee, the three Universities within Greater Glasgow for a statistician and the various Directors of Nursing, Pharmacy and Medicine within Greater Glasgow. In addition, advertisements would be placed in Trust premises.

The Governance Committee recognised that a pragmatic approach to recruitment was necessary if the LRECs were to be GAFREC compliant by 1 April 2003.

DECIDED:

That the Governance Committee note the progress being made in the recruitment process and approve the measures being undertaken to complete it by 1 April 2003.

**Head of Board
Administration/
Secretariat
Manager**

(c) **Funding of Local Research Ethics Committees**

The Governance Committee received for consideration copies of a paper from the Head of Board Administration requesting members to give their consideration to the funding of Local Research Ethics Committees within NHS Greater Glasgow.

Dr Wallace had drawn attention to how NHS Trust LRECs would be funded in the future. Members were asked to note that from 1 April 2004, NHS Ethics Committees should be free standing and therefore should have an adequate and appropriate budget to fulfill their obligations under the new governance arrangements.

The Governance Committee needed to give its consideration to the most efficient way to achieve this. One way may be for Greater Glasgow NHS Board to top-slice the general allocation and provide Trusts with a ring-fenced amount to cover the resources required to ensure that LRECs functioned appropriately. At the same time, charging structures for LRECs would need to be uniform and all monies received by this route should be paid directly into the Greater Glasgow NHS Board account. This income could help defray the cost of LRECs but would be one step removed from the LRECs directly receiving funding by this route.

Dr Wallace stressed that it would be important to prevent any possible public misunderstanding that those paying for ethics approval could in anyway influence LREC members' decision.

Some discussion followed and it was recognised that LREC Administrators could have difficulty in managing a budget without proper training. There was general agreement that monies generated by LRECs, for example, charges for considering proposals, should be used to support their activities. The Chairman suggested that the current funding arrangements for LRECs be reviewed with a view to finalizing firm proposals for the next meeting of the Governance Committee.

DECIDED:

That a review of the current funding arrangements for LRECs be undertaken with a view to producing firm proposals for future funding at the next meeting of the Governance Committee.

**Head of Board
Administration/
Director of
Public Health**

5. NEW GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS : CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

(a) Letter from Mr A S Weatherhead

The Governance Committee received for consideration copies of a letter from Mr A S Weatherhead, a lay member of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary Local Research Ethics Committee, detailing a number of points in relation to the draft Model Constitution proposed for LRECs in NHS Greater Glasgow and the ongoing recruitment process.

The Head of Board Administration referred to the very detailed content of Mr Weatherhead's letter and drew members' attention to a briefing paper which he had prepared and tabled in connection with it. The Head of Board Administration's paper addressed the issues raised by Mr Weatherhead some of which would be encompassed in the draft Model Constitution and the Standard Operating Procedures being prepared by Ms Torrie.

The Head of Board Administration advised that advice had been obtained from the Central Legal Office regarding the status of the draft Model Constitution and the forthcoming Standard Operating Procedures. This advice confirmed that as LRECs were NHS Board appointed subcommittees, they were subject to the Board's function orders, membership regulations and standing orders. LRECs did not have a separate existence and to that extent they did not have a separate Constitution. The NHS Board was the legal entity from which all authority was derived. Thus, LRECs should not have such a document which purports to bind the NHS Board from which it derived its authority. The NHS Board's standing orders for the LREC could reflect the matters referred to in the draft Model Constitution but it should only be on that basis.

NOTED

(d) Letter from Dr M P G Jamieson

The Governance Committee received for consideration copies of a letter from Dr Jamieson raising a number of points in relation to the draft Model Constitution and the recruitment process. It was noted that some of these points were similar to those raised by Mr Weatherhead and that they would be encompassed appropriately. Dr Jamieson accepted the need to take a pragmatic approach to the recruitment process and was satisfied that the Governance Committee was acting appropriately in order to be GAFREC compliant by 1 April 2003.

NOTED

6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR MULTI-CENTRE RESEARCH WITHIN NHS GREATER GLASGOW

The Governance Committee received for consideration copies of a paper from Ms A Torrie requesting initial consideration be given to the issue of multi-centre research within NHS Greater Glasgow.

The Governance Committee should be aware that the previous guidance given for multi-centre research was that "where a research proposal covered more than one NHS institution in Greater Glasgow, it was sufficient for a researcher to obtain the approval of one of the LRECs provided:

- (a) the application for ethical approval specified all the institutions in which research would be undertaken, and
- (b) none of the other institutions mentioned in the application had previously refused ethical approval”.

Ms Torrie pointed out that whilst this was the theory, it certainly was not working in practice. Increasingly, individual LRECs within NHS Greater Glasgow were unwilling to “nod through” approval for applications which they themselves had not had the opportunity to consider.

Ms Torrie suggested that the Governance Committee may wish to consider what plans were required for either strengthening the existing arrangements or for ensuring that submissions were transferred across the city in a timeous manner. Due to the sixty-day timescales laid down by GAFREC, consideration would have to be given to putting some sort of formal arrangement in place. This issue was being addressed by COREC managers in England and whatever was decided there may well be recommended for Scotland.

Ms Torrie further advised that within the North Glasgow Trust, effective guidelines existed for dealing with multi-centre research between the LRECs at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow Royal Infirmary and Glasgow Dental Hospital. It was considered that good communication was the key to resolving this issue. Given the number of LRECs in NHS Greater Glasgow and the volume of NHS proposals each was required to consider, it was essential that mechanisms were found to establish effective arrangements for multi-centre research within NHS Greater Glasgow.

DECIDED:

That this issue be explored further with a view to producing working mechanisms for multi-centre research within NHS Greater Glasgow.

**Head of Board
Administration/
Ms A Torrie**

7. RESEARCH GOVERNANCE : INTERFACE BETWEEN THE NHS AND UNIVERSITIES IN GREATER GLASGOW

The Governance Committee received for consideration copies of correspondence regarding attempts to establish an interface between the NHS and the various universities in Greater Glasgow in connection with research governance procedures.

The Chairman explained the background to the Glasgow Research Governance Group which was under the chairmanship of Professor C J Packard. The issue was essentially one of demarcation whereby clarity was required on what should go to an NHS LREC and what should go to a university LREC. However, this was a very complex area. It was also recognised that university LRECs would have to be GAFREC compliant in the future. The Chairman suggested that the Governance Committee should meet with the representatives of the Glasgow Research Governance Group to pursue this issue further.

DECIDED:

That Professor C J Packard be invited to the next meeting of the Governance Committee.

Mr W Marshall

8. MEETING WITH LREC REPRESENTATIVES

The Chairman welcomed the various members of LRECs in NHS Greater Glasgow who had been invited to this part of the meeting. At its previous meeting, the Governance Committee had considered that it would be beneficial to update LRECs on current progress and give their representatives the opportunity to raise any points they had in relation to the actual working of the new governance arrangements. With this in view, invitations had been sent to the Chairman and Vice Chairman, a lay member and the administrators.

The Head of Board Administration gave a short presentation on the background and reasons for the new governance arrangements. The Secretariat Manager outlined the ongoing recruitment process and Ms Torrie referred to the ongoing training arrangements for LREC members.

The Chairman then opened the meeting to the LREC representatives. A very wide ranging discussion followed at which the following main points were noted:

- The need for LRECs to be properly financed and for administrators who were not full-time to be given the time and resources required to service their committees.
- The need for proper working mechanisms for multi-centre research within NHS Greater Glasgow.
- The suggestion that new LREC members be presented with a “starter pack” outlining the background to LRECs and the new governance arrangements.
- The possibility of in-house training in the future which would tap into the expertise already existing with LREC members.

The Chairman advised that training and finance were being looked at in some detail by the Governance Committee. He referred to a point raised by one of the lay members concerning his future membership given that he was a non executive member of a Special NHS Board. The Head of Board Administration undertook to look into this issue and report back.

**Head of Board
Administration**

There was particular concern expressed regarding the number of lay members required for a quorum. It was noted that the Governance Committee had thought that two lay members should be present to constitute a quorum, however, there was strong feeling expressed that this would be too many. GAFREC stipulated only one lay member was required to form a quorum and the Governance Committee was asked to reconsider this issue. The Head of Board Administration undertook to place this issue on the agenda of its next meeting.

**Head of Board
Administration**

The Chairman thanked the LREC representatives for their input. All agreed that this had been a most useful exercise and that it should be repeated at the end of the year.

NOTED

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the NHS Greater Glasgow Research Ethics Governance Committee would be held on Friday 6 June 2003 at 12 noon in Board Room 1, Dalian House, 350 St Vincent Street, Glasgow.

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm