

Polio Advisory Committee Minutes

for meeting held Friday 29 June 2007

Present

Margaret Cooper, Marilyn Grimme, Michael Judson, Mary-ann Liethof, Christine McAuslan (Minute Taker), Jo McKenna, Lyndie Spurr, Barbara Watson (Acting Chairperson) and Cliff Wise.

Apologies

Gordon McKinnon (Chairperson)

Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting Held April 27th

Minutes confirmed: Moved Marilyn Grimme, seconded Margaret Cooper.

Agenda Items

Welcome to Lyndie Spurr, New General Manager, Community Services

Barbara welcomed Lyndie and the PAC introduced themselves to Lyndie. Lyndie briefed the PAC on her background with the Royal District Nursing Service.

Congratulations to Cliff Wise (OAM)

The PAC congratulated Cliff on receiving the 'great accolade' of the Queen's Birthday Honours Order of Australia Medal.

Donations

- An ex-PAC member has donated \$2,000 to the Post Polio Special Purpose Fund
- Mary-ann also received a donation of \$500.00 from a member of the Traralgon Post Polio Support Group
- The Mordialloc/Mentone Lions Club has again donated \$500.00 for the Polio Day Forum
- Mary-ann will be addressing the Keilor East Rotary Club with a view to their contribution to Polio Day for the second year running

Farewell to Jill Pickering and Barbara Watson

Jill and Barbara (both having reached the time limit for participation on the PAC) were thanked for their participation and were presented with a plant and wine in appreciation of their contribution. Both are eligible for nomination after a period of 12 months.

Review of Previous Action Plan

Visit to Officer for Disability to Discuss PSV Funding

Margaret and Jill will visit Claire Thorn at the Office of Disability on Monday 23 July, 11.00am. Margaret explained to Lyndie that this is not an official visit as representatives of the PAC, but as private individuals for an informal chat in regards to the issues of inadequate services resulting from inadequate funding to PSV.

PAC informed Lyndie of the policy and applicable processes when PAC members officially meet with members of Parliament.

In response to a query regarding the responsibility for dealing with systemic policy related issues, Lyndie replied that she was looking at the Executive Officer position and that "it was fair to say that Policy Development is missing from the descriptions for that particular role".

Geoff Dean related that as a result of the letter sent to Peter Ryan, MP stating that ParaQuad received \$8.9 million pa, Peter Turner (ParaQuad CEO) is following up as the information is incorrect.

Marcom Projects Agreement

Marcom has bought the rights to the marketing and sales of the "Post Polio Syndrome: The Australian Experience" DVD for 3 years. PNV will receive royalties.

School Speaker Program Progress

Six volunteer speakers attended the first training session. The next session will be held on Friday 6th July with eleven participants. Three PAC members are participating in the training. Marilyn, who attended the first session, commented in response to Mary-ann's query that she found the training "Well put together, professional, looked good and a worthwhile thing to do". Each school visited has to fill out a tick sheet to say it complies with OH&S requirements for the safety of presenters. Schools carry liability.

Polio Day Progress

Mary-ann is meeting with Centrelink on the Thursday 5 July to discuss panel participation for Polio Day on the topic of 'Transition from Disability to Age Benefits'. Brian Koop from DHS has also been invited to attend this meeting, but is yet to respond.

Correspondence

- Peter Ryan MP has accepted the invitation to speak at Polio Day as keynote Speaker on 'Health Services in the Rural Sector'.
- Fran Henke's letter to Greg Hunt (MP for Hastings) regarding minimal services for polio survivors was forwarded on to the Federal Minister for Health and Ageing Tony Abbott, which was consequently responded to by his Parliamentary Secretary. Response read to PAC saying there "Although post-polio syndrome is a recognized medical condition, the Department does not currently support activities related to this syndrome. There is no plan to provide, nor have there been any discussions surrounding provision of compensation to Australians with post-polio syndrome".
Fran forwarded this response to John Tierney (retired MP for 10 years who runs a 'Government Relations' business). John offered to bring the subject up at a meeting he will be attending in Canberra with the Head of the Federal Cabinet Policy Unit.
- Michael expressed concern at NSW's lack of progress in proceeding with drafting the 'Polio Australia', Constitution, stating that it "could take two years at current progress (and) need to carry impetus through".

Reports

PQV

Cliff reported that:

- Paraquad made a healthy profit of approx. \$400,000. Paraquad services operate at a significant loss of approx. \$600,000 to \$700,000 but Independence Solutions made a profit of over \$1,000,000.
- There is an administrative goal to work out how much the costs of services delivered are in order to advise funding bodies of the gap.

- Next year's budget approved.
- Independence Solutions will move to Brunswick in a couple of months. Smith St. staff will then return to Wellington St. offices. A decision is still to be made as to whether to renovate Wellington Street or to move to a new site. Office accommodation needs to include room for expansion. The search for an appropriate building continues.
- The Board is looking at the way it operates with the assistance of a professional consulting group, whilst developing a very strong business arm, the Board recognises the need to achieve a balance – with representation from people with a disability.
- ParaQuad's 50th anniversary celebration will be held at Government House.
- Margaret questioned Cliff regarding the role of PQV, stating there is a client perspective of "moving away from care of people with severe disability (and) moving into aged care". Margaret said she knew of 8 people who have transferred from PQV to other Attendant Care services.
- Cliff responded "not going to allow other areas to push the main thrust to cater for the needs of the disabled' and he is raising issues at Board level around home care. There are teething problems due to there being a competitive market to employ attendant carers. DVA activities are lucrative and provide more flexibility to acquire carers.

Polio Community Officer

- Mary-ann announced she had just been awarded the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, Churchill Fellowship grant. She will be away for six weeks in April-May 2008 visiting the USA and Canada and will include a daily report on the PNV website as she travels.
- Steve Macagnan, who filmed the PNV video, has indicated he would like to accompany her and film the trip for a documentary.
- On her return Mary-ann intends to create a series of regional seminars to feed back information resulting from the trip.
- Mary-ann was asked to email the PAC her itinerary to members.
- Mary-ann activities included:
 - Melton Information Session – 12 people (the Western Post Polio Support Group has now ceased to operate after the convenor moved to the country)
 - Shepparton Post Polio Support Group for its 10th Anniversary – 14 members
 - Bundoora View Club (women's group connected to Smith Family) – 25 people
 - Salvation Army Friendship Group in Greensborough – 25 people
 - Traralgon Post Polio Support Group – 12 members
 - Eucha meeting had 29 attendees, 20 new to the Polio network. Interest in starting new Eucha support group.
 - Attended Women with a Disability Network's 'Think Tank' regarding restructuring the organisation and met Claire Thorn from the Office of Disability there.
 - Will be meeting with Fran Henke and the Frankston Metro Access worker to discuss networking opportunities.
- PAC Memberships are now due.
- Will be attending Government House in regard to her receiving the Churchill Fellowship on Friday 27 July. Requested a change of date for the next PAC meeting to 20th July. All agreed.

General Business

- Michael raised the potential for fund raising regarding the number of businesses that will donate money back into the community, e.g. can nominate a minimum of 5-10 people who will spend (a combined total of) \$1000 per month at Ritchies Supermarkets. Mary-ann said she would follow up on this and any other ideas (gaming industry, etc).
- Marilyn will be an apology for July and August meetings as she will be travelling.

Action to be Followed Up

Forward USA/Canada Itinerary to PAC member
Explore the options of Ritchie type community benefits

MAL
MAL/PAC

Date of Next Meeting: Friday 20th July 2007, ParaQuad Victoria Boardroom, 208 Wellington Street, Collingwood.