

Polio Advisory Committee Minutes for meeting held Friday 26th September 2008

Present

Jill Burn, Margaret Cooper, Geoff Dean, Peter Hudson (Executive Manager, Community Services), Michael Judson (Chairperson), Mary-ann Liethof, Jen Sykes (Minute taker), Jo McKenna, Peter Willcocks and Gordon McKinnon

Apologies

Liz Telford

Confirmation of Minutes for meeting held 29th August 2008

Confirmation of Minutes moved by Geoff and seconded by Margaret. All in favour.

Agenda Items

Report on Tasmanian speaking tour

This was a low key event. First stop was Ulverstone with only 10 people making it a disappointing start. Launceston had 17 people in attendance and Hobart attracted an audience of 24. This was particularly good as there were some attendees that are new to the support network. There was discussion about the lack of services in Tasmania and concern re where people go for their aids.

Proposal for 'Health Forum' in 2009

This is a new concept which was suggested by Liz and floated by Mary-ann at the PAC meeting. It is envisaged that this would be separate to 'Polio Day'. The focus would be on general 'wellbeing' and looking at overall health issues. May 2009 was tentatively suggested as the timeframe to aim for. Mary-ann suggested input by the PSV team, nutritionists, naturopaths, masseurs and other complimentary therapists using a 'try out' workshop format. The PAC believes it is a great idea. It was suggested that the word 'polio' be in the title if that is the target group, i.e. "Wellbeing for Polio Survivors". The PAC will think about the type of people they would like to hear from and report back at the next meeting.

Update on oral history project

Margaret reported that the decision has been made to do a book with the working title of 'Moments In Time'. It would be set in an historical context, with a foreword by an historian with knowledge of Fairfield hospital and the issues surrounding the polio outbreaks. Contributions will be sought through support groups, Polio Perspectives and the internet. Rather than whole stories, the idea is to capture a key experience in people's lives that can be funny, sad or anything in between. The chosen vignettes will be divided into 4 categories – early, teenage, adult and senior. It was considered important that people submitting pieces be allowed to remain anonymous, if desired. Mary-ann will be preparing a draft "Statement of Purpose" including a "Statement of Consent" for anyone interested in submitting their memories, and presenting it to the PAC for comment by December 08.

Primary issues to highlight when talking to 'decision makers'

Geoff suggested that PAC and Polio Network think about specific issues that need highlighting when talking various decision makers in our daily lives. The issue of PSV's funding was raised and Mary-ann commented that the PAC would need to take advice from Jane Henderson about this. The ensuing discussion focused on the need to obtain funding for Polio Australia as a unified

national voice in terms of lobbying, as some states are struggling for resources and in other states the resources are splintered. Rural areas are a real problem with people having limited or no access to the services they need.

Mary-ann stated that the PAC needed to focus on polio-related issues rather than general disability issues (i.e. ongoing taxi debate), as they are being dealt with by other disability agencies such as Scope and Yooralla, as well as advocacy groups such as NDS (National Disability Services) and DARU (Disability Advocacy Resource Unit). In these instances, the PAC and ParaQuad already lend their support. Mary-ann asked members to consider the areas they believe are of prime importance for polio survivors and email their thoughts through. A Strategic Planning day will be held in place of the January 09 PAC meeting where these issues will be discussed and prioritised.

Tapping into PAC members' networks

The PAC discussed making the most of the contacts they have in their roles on other committees etc. It is believed that networking/advocacy opportunities would be enhanced if the PAC found more effective ways of feeding and receiving information through all the channels that are currently in place. PAC members agreed to list all the committees they are involved in as a pre planning activity for the Strategic Planning day and they will forward these lists to Michael prior to Jan09.

Review of Previous Action Plan

- **PAC Christmas function**

The November/Christmas meeting will be held at the Peacock Inn, 210 High St, Northcote on Friday Nov 28th at 11.00am. Mary-ann will contribute \$20 per head and a couple of bottles of wine. Partners are welcome to attend at their own expense. Mary-ann will have invitations ready at the October meeting.

- **Post-Polio Clinics Directors Network Teleconference**

Mary-ann attempted to hook into this teleconference from Launceston but could not get a connection, despite trying through Telstra and then the US operator. Her presentation has been rescheduled to the November conference.

- **Macquarie Group Foundation submission**

Unfortunately these negotiations have been put on hold as there are no funds available at the moment.

Correspondence

Incoming:

- **Invitation from MS Australia to attend Medical Cooling Concession Launch**

This launch will be held on Thursday 23rd October at the Bureau of Meteorology at Docklands from 11.00am – 12.00 noon. People with heat intolerance on low incomes in Victoria will now have access to a six month Medical Cooling Concession that will help them to keep cool affordably. Jill and Michael will attend with Mary-ann.

- **Invitation to speak to Rural Clinical School Students in Shepparton & Ballarat**

Mary-ann has been invited to speak to medical students in Shepparton and Ballarat. Previous PAC member, Marilyn Grimme, has had involvement with the Shepparton Rural Clinical School's orthotic students so some teaching staff had an awareness of post-polio syndrome and considered Mary-ann's visit to Shepparton for Polio Day a good opportunity to introduce the subject to their students. They also informed colleagues at the Ballarat Rural Clinical School who invited Mary-ann to talk to their students as well. This is a great opportunity to reach medical students which would otherwise been difficult to connect with.

Reports

PQV

Peter Hudson reported:

- The agency that provides out of hours care for PQV has suspended its service. There is a short term arrangement in place as the process to engage another provider takes place.

Polio Community Officer

Mary-ann reported:

- Today is the 'official' close off day for rsvp's to the various Polio Days but the expectation is that they will continue to come in. Numbers aren't as high as hoped for in Sale, Bendigo, Shepparton and Warrnambool so a letter has been sent to these regions to generate more interest. Total number for all the regions is 238 which is 80-90 more than if only one Polio Day was being held in metro Melbourne.
- Advertising has been bought in each local paper for 3 weeks in the Public Notices section. Each group has been asked to get an article in their respective newspaper and Mary-ann has resourced each group with a press release. An article will be appearing in the Sale newspaper on the weekend.
- Greg Hunt, MP for Flinders was recorded in Hansard's "Constituency Statements" reporting on Polio Awareness Month – this was emailed to PAC members.
- Various radio stations have been contacted and so far community bayside radio station 88.3 Southern FM's Best Medicine program has taken up the opportunity to record an interview. (Jo reminded Mary-ann that you can advertise for free on Magic 693's community calendar).
- Polio Canada has featured an article about Mary-ann's visit in their Fall 2008 newsletter.

General Business

No items were discussed under general business.

Action to be Followed Up

- Prepare a draft "Statement of Purpose" including a "Statement of Consent" for anyone interested in submitting their memories and present it to the PAC for comment by December 08 MAL
- Present at rescheduled Post-Polio Clinics Directors Network teleconference in Nov MAL
- Suggestions to Mary-ann re type of people that would be interesting to hear from for proposed "Wellbeing for Polio Survivors" PAC
- Suggestions by email to Mary-ann re potential advocacy issues for PNV to consider PAC
- Provide Michael with a list of all committees that members are part of PAC
- Prepare invitation to PAC Christmas function MAL

Date of next meeting: 12.00pm for 12.30pm start - Friday 31st October 2008, Board Room, 208 Wellington Street, Collingwood, 3066