

Polio Advisory Committee Minutes for meeting held Friday 31st October 2008

Present

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

Apologies

None

Confirmation of Minutes for meeting held Friday 26th September 2008

Confirmation of Minutes moved by Peter and seconded by Gordon. All in favour.

Agenda Items

Report on Polio Awareness Month

A total of 448 people attended the 8 regional Polio Days (this figure includes family members and presenters). Actual polio participants approx. 400.

Participants' feedback was that they appreciated the locally based Polio Days and many people attended who would not have been able to travel to Melbourne.

Feedback from PAC members in relation to their own participation in a regional day:

Sale Geoff Dean attended.

Geoff said that the day was a good opportunity for people to share stories, reminisce and discuss their experiences of services in the area. He believed that it was something that could be built on.

Warrnambool Gordon attended and stated that despite his initial skepticism regarding the afternoon 'Discussion Table' format, the day turned out very well. There were quite a few new people who attended. Local State member, Dr Denis Napthine MLA, launched the day.

Geelong Jill, Jo and Liz attended.

All commented on how cold the temperature was in the venue (Geelong Football Club). All attempts at rectifying this situation seemed ineffective. Jill found the day to be great and the location amazing, the local group to be terrific and a good range of local facilitators at the tables. She also commented that Mary-ann's presentation was terrific. Jo found the day very interesting, learning and making sense of some new things. Liz noted that it was good to have taken her partner to expose him to the 'underbelly', creating the opportunity to 'absorb lots of information and consequent discussions with a significant other who knows you'. Liz also pointed out that it was hard to sit for that period of time and concentrate on the issues being presented, suggesting that incorporating regular breaks would be helpful. Regarding the venue, she did say that the distance between parking and the function room was quite a way.

Frankston Peter W, Michael and Margaret attended.
Peter and Michael both commented on the good signage provided for reserved car parking spaces. Peter felt the venue (Sandhurst Club) “was a good place to be” and noted there was lots of interaction between participants. He added that they had forgotten to thank Mary-ann on the day and the work put in made a lot of difference to people’s lives. Margaret made a point of talking to people she didn’t know and found the presentations/discussion around anti-inflammatory diet and issues regarding fatigue were identified as being of particular interest. Margaret observed the venue was not accessible to public transport.

Albury, Ballarat and Bendigo No PAC members were in attendance.

Photos and a request for feedback have been forwarded to the group convenors. The next edition of Polio Perspectives will feature feedback from the various Polio Day events.

Presentation to Ballarat & Shepparton Rural Clinical Schools

As a result of publicising the regional Polio Days, Mary-ann was invited to talk to medical students at the Shepparton Rural Clinical School. This instigated another invitation to talk to medical students in Ballarat. In all about 40 medical students attended the presentations and showed a keen interest in gaining information. In both instances, local polio survivors attended to put a human face on the discussions.

Medical Cooling Concession Launch

Mary-ann, Michael and Jill attended the launch held in the Bureau of Meteorology at Docklands. Lisa Neville, Minister for Mental Health, Community Services and Senior Victorians and Member for Bellarine, mentioned the Polio Network as being part of the campaign to address issues regarding this concession. Mary-ann had opportunity to speak with Lisa Neville and has consequently forwarded information regarding Post Polio Syndrome to the Minister. Mary-ann found the launch to also be a great networking opportunity.

This concession has been extended to a period of 6 months. The account applicable to the concession must be in the name of the concession card holder. A link to the website will be included in Polio Perspectives: www.cyf.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/84193/medical_cooling_app.pdf

Chronic Illness Alliance (CIA)

Mary-ann met a representative of the Chronic Illness Alliance at the Medical Cooling Concession Launch. The CIA has members from diverse health issue organisations and provides resources in the form of publications, workshops and projects that address chronic illness issues. Mary-ann has suggested becoming a member of the CIA and will discuss this with Peter Hudson.
CIA website: www.chronicillness.org.au

Review of previous action plan

Suggestions to Mary-ann re type of people that would be interesting to hear from for proposed “Wellbeing for Polio Survivors”

Mary-ann has received no suggestions as yet. It was suggested that any feedback concerning particularly interesting table facilitators at the Polio Days may contribute to the proposal. This item will be kept on the agenda for the PAC Planning Day in January.

Suggestions by email to Mary-ann re potential advocacy issues for PNV to consider

This item will also be reviewed at the Planning Day, although it was identified as fitting within the scope of Polio Australia and the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) in its role as peak body for disability organisations.

Provide Michael with a list of all committees that PAC members are connected to

This purpose of this listing is to identify any committees or community organisations that PAC members are involved in which may lead to opportunities to do presentations. Input by January.

Invitation to PAC Christmas function

Meeting will be held at 11.00 prior to lunch. Each PAC member will receive \$20.00 towards cost of lunch.

Correspondence

Outgoing:

Letter to Hon. Lisa Neville read out by Mary-ann. The letter includes reference to the Geelong Region Polio Day (Lisa Neville's) electorate and Mary-ann's Churchill Fellowship Tour. An information/brochure pack was forwarded with the letter.

Geoff Dean forwarded a letter written by Fran Henke (previously circulated) to Ken Smith Member for Bass requesting his support. Ken's office followed up by contacting Mary-ann and then Jane Henderson at Polio Services Vic for further information. Consequently a request has been forwarded by the Member for Bass to Daniel Andrews MP, Minister for Health asking for additional funds for Polio Service Vic.

Reports

PQV

Peter Hudson reported that feedback from staff who attended Frankston Polio Day was that the day were very informative and well run. ParaQuad process regarding Polio Australia will be 'done and dusted' by the next PAC meeting.

Polio Community Officer

Mary-ann thanked Peter W. for setting up a radio interview with 88 South FM 'Best Medicine' program. Unfortunately there were some technical issues in the audio quality during transmission.

There was no response to Mary-ann's endeavours for interview time on the Richard Stubbs ABC 774 afternoon program. Mary-ann would like to get some 'time' on the ABC National Radio 'Health Report' with Norman Swan and may follow this up in the new year.

General Business

- Jill spoke of the systemic problem with assessors whose role it is to ascertain ability to work in relation to Centrelink benefits requirements. The lack of knowledge of long term health issues associated with polio identifies the need to educate assessors and the system. A letter to Centrelink on this issue to be included as an item to be discussed at January planning meeting.
- Geoff cited content from an obituary that referred to 'provocation polio' a term that he was unfamiliar with. Mary-ann thought this may refer to a batch of contaminated polio vaccine in the late 50's which contained live virus. When injected this was subsequently found to cause polio in recipients of the vaccine.
- Michael has produced 30 copies of the Yoga DVD

Action to be followed up

- Discuss becoming a member of Chronic Illness Alliance Inc with Peter Hudson. MAL
- Provide Michael with a list of all committees that PAC members are connected to by Jan. PAC
- Include on agenda items for Jan. Planning Meeting; i.e. letter to Centrelink re assessment for benefits and advocacy issues for PNV to consider. MAL

Date of next meeting: 11.00pm meeting for 12.00pm lunch - Friday 28th November 2008, Peacock Inn, 210 High Street, Northcote.

The Peacock In is located on the corner of High St and Bastings St (Melways Ref 30 F9). The 86 tram to Bundoora stops right outside (stop 31) and the Epping line train stops at Merri Station, just 10 minutes walk away.