

Polio Advisory Committee Minutes

Friday 26th June 2009

Present

Jill Burn, Geoff Dean, Michael Judson (Chairman), Mary-ann Liethof, Jo McKenna, Christine McAuslan (Minute Taker) and Peter Willcocks.

Apologies

Margaret Cooper, Martin Grillo, Gordon McKinnon, Linda Morton, Simon Hughes (PSV) and Liz Telford.

Confirmation of 29 May 2009 Minutes

Moved Jill Burn, seconded Geoff Dean. All in favour.

Agenda Items

Welcome to Martin Grillo

Michael reported that potential new PAC Member, Martin Grillo, was unable to attend as he has been hospitalised with a broken leg. Michael will ascertain Martin's availability for the July meeting.

Polio Australia update – Visit to Canberra

Mary-ann, Gillian Thomas-President of Polio Australia, Neil von Schill-Secretary of Post-Polio Network (NSW) and Dr John Tierney-Partner, Government Relations, jointly participated in Canberra meetings on Wednesday 24th June to inform a number of politicians in regard to seeking support for Polio Australia and its aims.

At the first of the meetings a presentation was made to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing. As a result of this meeting a 'Notice of Motion' (see attachment) will be included on the Notice Paper for debate when Parliament resumes in August. This motion by Standing Committee members was instigated by Catherine King (Labor - Member for Ballarat) and supported by Jill Hall (Labor Whip - Member for Shortland, NSW).

The delegation also met separately with Catherine King and Peter Dutton (Liberal - Member for Dickson, QLD and Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing), Darren Chester (National - Member for Gippsland via Bairnsdale polio support group), Greg Hunt (Liberal - Member for Flinders via Fran Henke), Bruce Billson (Liberal - Member for Dunkley via Fran H), Senator Mitch Fifield (Liberal - from Mentone, Vic), Mark Coulton (National - Member for Parks, NSW) and Jill Hall. Two of the politicians the delegation met with have parents who had polio.

Jill Hall, Catherine King, Mark Coulton and Greg Hunt agreed to become parliamentary co-patrons of Polio Australia.

Greg Hunt in recognising that governments have not addressed the issues of polio survivors commented that his support "was on moral grounds as it was the right thing to do." Greg also requested a submission from Polio Australia to reach him before Parliament resumes in August which may be incorporated into his preparation for the next budget submission. He is working closely with Peter Dutton on this. Mary-ann will contact Greg's secretary to obtain a template for the submission.

While lunching with Senator Mitch Fifield and Bruce Billson, MP, Mary-ann suggested Mitch may like to attend a meeting of the Bayside Group. Mary-ann is to follow up with a reminder email as Bayside is shortly to have an anniversary party.

In order to participate in the delegation Mary-ann covered her own flight and accommodation costs. Jill moved that “when funding is available Mary-ann should be reimbursed those costs”. Geoff seconded the motion. All agreed.

Mary-ann also commented that she is liaising with a Certified Practising Accountant (on a voluntary basis) and with Gillian Thomas regarding the Business Plan for Polio Australia. But the bottom line is “need funds to pay a worker to do the work”.

Disability Parking Issues

Peter Willcocks reported he is to attend a briefing session on the new **Harmonisation of Disability Parking Permit Schemes in Australia**. Peter expressed his concerns at some of the language and criteria that is being used in advertising the sessions and within the Scheme itself. Questions were raised as to the wording of the proposed 3 eligibility criteria for the new national scheme **permanent permit**. Eg. a walking stick is not classified as a ‘mobility aid’. Many polio survivors do not require the assistance of another person but could not walk far or with safety without the use of a walking stick.

- **Criteria 1:** *You are unable to walk and always require the use of a manual wheelchair or powered mobility device, or*
- **Criteria 2:** *Your ability to walk is permanently and severely restricted and you sometimes require the use of a mobility or medical aid. This does not include a walking stick, shopping trolley or pram, or*
- **Criteria 3:** *You do not use a mobility or medical aid but your ability to walk is permanently restricted by a significant medical condition or disability, which sometimes requires the physical assistance of another person and limits your access to the community.*

Michael also raised the fact that the new scheme still doesn’t address the policing and issuing of parking fines for those who use Disability Parking bays without any kind of permit.

To procure the discussion paper phone 1800 630 740 for a copy or download from:

www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/progserv/people/disability_parking_scheme/Pages/default.aspx

For current Eligibility Criteria in Victoria see:

www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/progserv/people/disability_parking_scheme/Pages/parking_schemes_factsheet_VIC.aspx

Other organisations such as members of the Chronic Illness Alliance and the Disabled Motorists’ Association are working on issues raised by the new scheme.

The Bayside group will forward a submission in regard to their concerns. After attending the briefing session Peter Willcocks will also inform Michael Judson of the issues. Michael will then make a submission on behalf of the PAC. Submissions must be received by **5pm AEST Friday 31 July 2009**. Peter will report back to the PAC at the next meeting.

Arthur Beale

Polio survivor and member of the Bairnsdale Support Group Arthur Beale passed away on the 14th June. Arthur was also a past Chairman of the ParaQuad Victoria Board.

Review of Previous Action Plan

Need to ‘second’ one person to replace Margaret Cooper

Potentially Martin Grillo may fill this PAC vacancy. Refer to item ‘Welcome to Martin Grillo’.

Letter re Medical Cooling Concession

- There are reports of some people who were eligible for the Medical Cooling Concession (MCC) being denied the concession by their power suppliers.
- A listing of addresses (including for the Ombudsman) for complaints regarding the MCC has been forwarded to the polio network groups.
- Jill Burn is reading through the new publication from MS Australia entitled, Keeping Cool Survey: Air Conditioner Use by Australians with MS – Public Policy related results & Recommendations. Jill will feedback any issues she identifies in the publication

PPS: Shades of Grey link to Rotary International

Peter Willcocks related that there had been 1152 hits for the 10 minute version, 191 for the full version and 233 for Polio Australia.

Mary-ann has received 3 orders from the U.S. for “PPS: The Australia Experience” DVD’s, which was also uploaded onto You-Tube recently by Steve Maccagnan, the Producer.

Correspondence

Liz Telford has emailed Mary-ann with a follow-up on her previous email from Israel. Liz related that due to the room no longer being available in the Knesset, she met with a small group of polio survivors in a restaurant.

Reports

Polio Community Officer

- Mary-ann went to the Bendigo group meeting on the previous Saturday. The meeting was attended by nearly 20 members. Previously held in a private home with an attendance of approx. 12 the group now meets in a community space.
- Peter Willcocks representing the PAC attended the Northern group’s meeting with Mary-ann. This meeting was a significant one for the group as it made the transition from an independent incorporated organisation to an auspiced group under the umbrella of the Disabled Motorist’s Association.
- Mary-ann pointed out to the PAC that the PNV groups (with a couple of exceptions which are incorporated and have opted to take out their own) are covered for Public Liability under Independence Australia’s Insurance Scheme.

General Business

- This is the final day for submissions for **Glimpses of Polio**. Mary-ann has had a few calls regarding being given an extension on getting entries in and one request for an entry to be anonymous. There will need to be some editing of entries but rewriting will not be undertaken. One of the workshops held at the Polio Day - Health & Wellness Try Day will cover the topic ‘Write your Story’. There are also previously written stories on the PNV website which Jill Burn will check.
- Peter Willcocks created ‘Thankingyou’ bookmarks for the Bayside Polio Group. Peter will send the format through to Mary-ann to consider if it has potential for further distribution. Peter suggested creating bookmarks for Polio Day or advertising the format through Polio Perspectives. Each group would need to substitute their own details.
- Jill Burns will nominate for the position of Chair at the July meeting.
- Michael related that the South –Eastern polio group (he is a member) is seeking to engage with ethnic groups. They are liaising with a local councillor to try to access one or more culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups as an exercise in how this may be achieved.

Action to be followed up

- Follow up on Martin Grillo's availability for next meeting MJ
- Contact Greg Hunt's secretary to obtain a template for the submission MAL
- Email Mitch Fifield re attending Bayside group's anniversary party MAL
- Report on Harmonisation of Disability Parking Permit Schemes in Australia briefing session PW
- Send PAC submission re Harmonisation of Disability Parking Permit Schemes in Australia MJ
- Check polio stories on PNV website JB
- Send bookmark format to Mary-ann PW

Date of next meeting: 12.00pm for 12.30pm - Friday 31st July 2009

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