



Minutes of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change Executive Committee

Held online 17 April 2025, 14.30-16.30

Present: Juliet Dobson (BMJ), Elaine Mulcahy (Director, UKHACC), Emma Radcliffe (GP), Eleanor Roaf (FPH), Richard Smith (Chair, UKHACC), Jill Belch (RCPE), Rose Gallagher (RCN), Jacob Kranowski (RCPsych), Sandy Mather (ICS), Chris Banks (Treasurer)

Apologies for absence: Rodney Morton (FNF), Raneer Thakar (RCOG)

Summary of actions:

- Reach out to RCP and other contacts involved with research hubs > Done
- EM/RS to consider projects that could be developed with learning outcomes for registrars training programmes > In progress
- CB to complete conflicts of interest
- EM and CB to meet to talk through the budget > Meeting organised
- EM to share the final council minute with members and publish on the website > Done
- EM to edit the video of Jim Skea's talk for sharing with members > Shared (but not edited)
- EM to share Climate and Health Scorecard questions with trustees when available, and also ensure that Intensive Care Society is on their list of organisations to send the survey too
- EM to draft exit feedback questionnaire for leaving members
- EM to share the mass lobby information in the newsletter > Done
- Meg (TCC) will share details of the Scottish coalition with JB regarding Scottish lobbying event in September > Done
- EM to share contacts for health groups with Meg from the Climate Coalition
- EM to connect ERoa and Meg > Done
- RS/EM to contact non-profit organisations regarding joining UKHACC > Done
- RG will reach out to contacts regarding organisations to approach about joining UKHACC
- RS/EM to develop a proposal for establishing a sub-committee for reaching out to potential members > On agenda for June exec
- JD to add comment on the nuclear position statement regarding the destruction of nature related to nuclear sites > Done
- EM to add clear sentence on position related to CCC recommendations and add additional comments from trustees to the nuclear position statement > Done
- EM to share nuclear position statement with members to note objections, then final approval at next exec committee > Done
- RS to write to Penny Dash emphasising the importance of sustainability and the need for it to be high on the agenda > Done
- EM to meet with Climate Outreach and discuss potential of them speaking to UKHACC members about communicating effectively > Meeting scheduled
- Reach out to organisations such as Asthma+Lung UK which has patient representatives as members regarding joining UKHACC > Done

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RS/EM to look at what CCC says about AI and then consider producing a statement > Done |
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1. Welcome from the Chair

RS welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

2. Welcome to Chris Banks as Treasurer

Trustees introduced themselves and welcomed Chris Banks as the newly co-opted treasurer to the Executive Committee. CB introduced himself and outlined his previous experience.

3. Conflicts of interest

No Conflicts of interest were declared.

Actions:

- CB to complete conflicts of interest

4. Minute from the March meeting

The minute from the March meeting was accepted.

The following actions were discussed and/or carried forward from the previous meeting

- RS/EM met with Mood Bhutta regarding the NIHR research hub. They are still in an early stage of setting up the hub but interested in us working with them at some time.
- Since the last meeting, we have met with Greener NHS regarding abolishment of NHS England. We have decided not to write to DHSC regarding maintaining a dedicated section providing leadership on sustainability at this stage, but will reconsider in the future once more information regarding the future of NHS England is available.
- RS spoke at the dental school in Leeds and met with people at the Priestly Centre - they work specifically on things that are mitigation and adaptation and might be interested to do more on health.
- RS has been teaching on climate change and governance at RCPE - David Pencheon UKHACC ambassador is going to be taking over the course. It is a good example of an ambassador doing something very active.
- RG presented key commitments of UKHACC and publications we have produced to the European Public Health Alliance

5. Risk register

No changes to the risk register were noted.

6. March Director's report

The March Director's report was shared prior to the meeting. Points noted were:

- We have now completely switched over to Godfrey Wilson and the first payroll was completed with them this month. EM has also collated all of the information required for them to produce the end of year accounts and independent examination with an aim to have the report available for review by the trustees at the June Executive Committee meeting.
- The letter to Wes Streeting was sent yesterday with about 30 signatures. We also received a number of quotes from UKHACC organisations. Uplift has led on PR but

as yet, we have not seen any coverage. EM is currently working on the North Sea consultation which is due on 30 April.

- It was very good having Jim Skea speaking at the council meeting. We have a recording but it needs to be edited to share with members and put on our website. We can also share the slides.
- RG sits on a committee at RSM and has suggested looking at climate change for patient groups which they were very interested in. RG will keep contact with them and they may rejoin next year.
- The opening rate of the newsletter has dropped a bit. Wait to see a trend before being concerned.

7. Budget

The March budget update was presented. Points noted were:

- Need to ensure we have enough in reserves in case we needed to shut down

Actions:

- EM and CB to meet to talk through the budget

8. Council meeting minute

A draft minute of the Council meeting was circulated prior to the meeting and approved.

Points noted were:

- Good suggestion to do an exit interview with members that have left. We should set up a list of questions for leaving organisations.
- SM gave an update on feedback she had received from AoA. Reasons were direct action was counter to their views, the general election manifesto did not include enough clear links to health targets, meetings were not with all parties. The underlying driver was they could not sign up to all ten commitments and struggling to get their own house in order and this is an additional piece of non-priority work.
- At the next council meeting we will invite organisations that have introduced gold, silver and bronze systems for their specialty
- CHS has agreed to share the questions for the scorecard with trustees before circulating to organisations

Actions:

- EM to share the final council minute with members and publish on the website
- EM to edit the video of Kim Skea's talk for sharing with members
- EM to share Climate and Health Scorecard questions with trustees when available, and also ensure that Intensive Care Society is on their list of organisations to send the survey too
- EM to draft exit feedback questionnaire for leaving members

9. The Climate Coalition Mass Lobby

Meg O'Neill from the Climate Coalition presented an overview of the mass lobby taking place on 9 July - Act Now Change Forever. The slides Meg presented are available [here](#).

Points noted were:

- The TCC is encouraging people from all four nations to come to London for the lobbying event on 9 July. They are also working with partners in devolved nations to hold lobbying events in those areas. The Scottish event will take place in September.
- TCC is currently working on FAQs and communications specialists on responding to difficult questions.
- A small outreach team has been set up which is looking at how to broaden the climate and nature movement and they are keen to get more health voices represented.

Actions:

- EM to share the mass lobby information in the newsletter
- Meg (TCC) will share details of the Scottish coalition with JB regarding Scottish lobbying event in September
- EM to share contacts for health groups with Meg from the Climate Coalition
- EM to connect ERoa and Meg

10. Expanding membership categories

Following discussion at the Council meeting in March regarding a proposal to expand membership categories to include non-profit organisations and charities, trustees approved the proposal. It was agreed to set a target of two new organisations in this category to be recruited by the end of the year.

Suggested organisations to approach were:

- Diabetes UK
- British Heart Foundation
- Association of British Dispensing Opticians
- British Association of Dermatologists

There is huge potential to reach out to more organisations. RS suggested setting up a sub-committee to put more effort into recruitment rather than only depending on RS and EM. Trustees agreed that is a sensible suggestion and it would be good to include people outside of trustees

Actions:

- RS/EM to contact non-profit organisations regarding joining UKHACC
- RG will reach out to contacts regarding organisations to approach.
- RS/EM to develop a proposal for establishing a sub-committee for reaching out to potential members

11. New chair recruitment update

The closing date for applications for Chair of UKHACC has been extended to 30 April. To date, no individuals have come forward to formally express an interest in the role. Hugh Montgomery's team are approaching some individuals. We will wait until the closing date and then assess next steps.

12. Position on nuclear energy

A short life working group involving representatives from BMJ, RCPE, RCPsych, RCVS was established in February 2025 to establish a position for UKHACC on nuclear power.

Following discussion with the working group a draft position statement has been produced for approval of the trustees.

Points noted:

- Trustees expressed support for the statement.
- The statement should have a clearer point that there is an inevitability for some nuclear in agreement with the Climate Change Committee but no more than that, and the emphasis needs to be on renewables and battery power.
- A lot of work has been done on nature related to chernobyl, and the impacts on nature should be incorporated. It is important to explain what can happen in a nuclear accident.
- Health risks of build and working in a nuclear plant and the health risks of disaster are distinct things that should be separated out. Actual living risks versus 'what if' risks.
- General fear around nuclear catastrophes should also be added to mental health impacts
- EM proposed sharing this position with all UKHACC members to allow time for members to note any objections to the statement before publishing it.

Actions:

- JD to add comment on the nuclear position statement regarding the destruction of nature related to nuclear sites
- EM to add clear sentence on position related to CCC recommendations and add additional comments from trustees to the nuclear position statement
- EM to share nuclear position statement with members to note objections, then final approval at next exec committee

13. Correspondence with Penny Dash

In March RS wrote to Penny Dash to congratulate her on her role as Chair of NHS England and encouraging her to do all she could to ensure the NHS meets its net zero commitments. In her response, Penny Dash appeared to underestimate the scale of the work required to achieve this.

Trustees discussed whether RS should write back. Points noted were:

- Need to understand how sustainability will tie into what will happen with Greener NHS
- Might be good to invite her to a future council meeting but we should be guided by GNHS
- Reply to say this is important and should be high on priorities

Points noted:

- RS to write to Penny Dash emphasising the importance of sustainability and the need for it to be high on the agenda

14. Government food strategy board

UKHACC has been asked to sign a letter to DEFRA regarding the make up of the new national food strategy advisor board. The letter calls on the Minister to:

- Reconsider the current makeup of the National Food Strategy Advisory Board.

- Ensure balanced representation by including independent public health experts, dietitians, healthcare professionals, environmental scientists, and climate policy specialists.
- Commit to transparency in how board members are selected and how decisions are made.

The Executive Director of the Food Foundation who is on the board has also commented on the dominance of industry representatives, but makes the point that a third of the board do not have interests in the food industry and will hold the board to account.

Points noted:

- May be a done deal but may be worthwhile to make the point about issue of industry representatives
- Boards can be quite over-powering when there is an imbalance of industry representatives on the board
- We could also reach out to members of the board that have a health interest to offer our support. RS knows Susan Jebb.

Actions:

- EM to signed the letter regarding Food Strategy Advisory Board on behalf of UKHACC
- RS/EM to reach out to members of the Food Strategy Advisor board to offer our support and share our policy report

15. Should we be more truthful?

Following publication of an article in [Nature](#), RS asked the trustees to consider the question of whether an increase in truthfulness is more important than technological advances as a solution to climate change and the threats facing humanity.

Points noted:

- The article suggested we should be more blunt and honest about what is happening, but this is not always the most motivating action and people can be switched off by very truthful
- Being hopeful spurs more action
- The dangers and what we are facing can be overwhelming
- There has been lots of work done on what motivates people and different sorts of people are motivated differently by the messaging
- No need to change our approach because it is already quite truthful
- Talk about the positives of the green revolution - e.g. if we put solar on all the roofs we might alleviate fuel poverty - start talking about how much better things could be if we achieved climate action.
- Get the balance right on explaining the risks but giving the solutions
- Keep talking about the upsides to win hearts and minds.
- If you want this, then this is the consequence - need to be clear of the risks
- Climate Outreach are the experts on how to communicate effectively - we should invite them to a future council meeting

Actions:

- EM to meet with Climate Outreach and discuss potential of them speaking to UKHACC members about communicating effectively

16. How do we involve patients in our work?

RCOG has an active patient group and spoke powerfully at their recent meeting. It would be good to find an effective way to include patient groups in our work. We have reached out to the patient association before.

Points noted:

- We could add a patient organisation as members without charging them.
- Could have patient input into reports or as part of the trustees group to help feed into meetings
- They represent distinct stakeholders and can be very supportive. Reaching charities that are focus on health conditions will have both clinicians and patients as members and might be a way to open engagement with patients (e.g. Asthma + Lung UK)
- Messaging is important and how we express this to patients - sustainable healthcare is good healthcare
- We should go to a patient association to ask them how we could engage with patients or how they could have an input

Actions:

- Approach potential members like Asthma+Lung UK as an initial step

17. Should we develop an AI policy?

A piece published in the BMJ was shared prior to the meeting. Other reports have said it is extremely difficult to find data on how much energy AI consumes.

Points noted:

- It is not possible to develop a position on everything with so little resources
- With nuclear energy members came to us asking for our position, this is not the case with AI
- Digital will be one of the priorities for NHS England under the ten year plan. The move to digital is huge and people are starting to ask questions about the sustainability issues around AI.
- AI has the potential to do a lot for health. It can do wonderful things but we need to think carefully about using AI ourselves. The vast majority of AI is not being used to improve health.
- Cautious about saying anything about AI. If saying anything it should be about the energy it is using. If we are going to have AI, how are we going to make savings? The algorithm is a big concern.

Actions:

- RS/EM to look at what CCC says about AI and then consider producing a statement.

18. Adaptation policy report

EM provided an update on the adaptation policy report with the following points:

- Draft 3 has been circulated to members of the working group with an aim of final sign off by 7 May. Once the WG has approved the report, it will be circulated to trustees for approval.
- Publication of the report will be in June to allow time to incorporate reference to the latest CCC adaptation progress report (this will be published in April)

- Mike Davies, Chair of the CCC adaptation committee has agreed to write the foreword
- A roundtable meeting will be held at RCP on 20 June to discuss the findings and recommendations. The WG is meeting next week to discuss this.

19. Potential members

EM updated on live conversations with potential members.

20. Any other business

No other business was discussed.

21. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held online at 14.30-16.30 Thursday 8 May 2025.