



UK Health Alliance on Climate Change

Minutes of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change Executive Committee

Held online 11 December 2024, 10.30-12.30

Present: Jill Belch (RCPE), Juliet Dobson (BMJ), Rose Gallagher (RCN), Jacob Kranowski (RCPsych), Sandy Mather (ICS), Elaine Mulcahy (Director, UKHACC), Richard Smith (Chair, UKHACC), Anandita Pattnaik (UKHACC), Eleanor Roaf (FPH)

Apologies for absence: Rodney Morton (FNF), Emma Radcliffe (GP), Ranee Thakar (RCOG)

Summary of actions:

- EM to share exit interview questions with trustees (for information) and Terry Kemple (for completing) > Done
- RS to approach leaders of specialty toolkits to ask about presenting at the September council meeting
- EM to notify members of Association of Dental Hospitals joining UKHACC and finalise the joining process > Done
- RG and JB to reach out to contacts within RSM to find out who best to approach about the rejoining UKHACC
- EM to schedule updates from alliances we are members of at future exec committee meetings > in progress
- JB to reach out to contacts at RCSEd regarding remaining members of UKHACC
- Budget review to take place at the January Exec committee meeting > On agenda
- Trustees to email suggestions for potential ambassadors to RS/EM and proposal to be presented at future meeting
- RS to send an email of thanks to existing ambassadors for their support over the last year
- EM to email thanks to network members for their ongoing commitment and action with an update that we will not have the monthly check in meetings in 2025 (using the comms/policy meeting as an alternative) but the whatsapp group will continue to act as a means for directly sharing with the network > Done
- RS to send an email of thanks to the fundraising committee chair on behalf of the trustees > Done
- RS to follow up with previous communications with the Wellcome Trust to understand thinking now and where they are at with their divestment policy > Done
- RS to seek CSO NHSE views on NHS organisation membership of UKHACC and how that might work > Done
- NHS organisation membership category to be discussed at March council meeting > On agenda
- Discuss funding for scorecard during budget review in January meeting > On agenda
- Discussion at March council meeting regarding requiring organisations to complete the scorecard > On agenda

- Ensure messaging around commitments is to strongly encourage members to achieve them and avoid perception of greenwashing > Ongoing
- EM to produce response to the government consultation on scope 3 emissions and share with Energy Transition working group > Done
- EM to progress with application to join Scottish Food Coalition > Done
- JD to review CPDMatch and make recommendation over email regarding endorsement > Done
- EM to notify CPDMatch of outcome of endorsement following JD recommendation received > Done
- EM to sign fossil free health communications pledge on behalf of UKHACC > Done
- EM to share pledge with members to encourage them to sign up > Done
- Future consideration to be given whether discussion on the fossil free health communications pledge should be discussed at a UKHACC council meeting
- Move conflicts of interest to start of meeting in future > Done
- EM to share template email for reaching out to potential members with JB > Done
- JB to reach out to Vascular Society UK, Scottish Cardiac Society, and Scottish Rheumatology Society regarding joining > Done
- UKHACC to respond to the CMO England annual report
- RS to speak to CSH and SHC about approaching MHRA > Done
- JB to share details of Scottish ecocide bill > Done

1. Welcome from the Chair

RS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minute from the November meeting

The minute from the November meeting was accepted.

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

- RS/EM have worked on developing exit interview questions for retiring trustees. These will be shared with the committee and sent to recently retired trustee, Terry Kemple
- ERad put EM in contact with a charity CEO who has given advice on how their organisation manages accounts. She has subsequently connected EM with an accountant to provide a quote for UKHACC. EM is meeting the accountant to discuss our requirements in January and will report back.
- Thanks to the invitation from JB, Jim Skea has been confirmed to speak at the March 2025 council meeting. RS will now go to the groups that have produced gradings for specialties regarding presenting at the September meeting
- JB thanked UKHACC for the letter to the Scottish government on wood burning stoves. The decision of the committee was delayed as a result of letters including ours and a request for further information, which JB provided. The final decision is expected soon.
- RS recently met with Chris Gormley, CSO NHS England and discussed ways of supporting work
- Correspondence with Hugh Montgomery, Real Zero was exchanged over the last month regarding risk of green washing and ensuring UKHACC members are actively working on sustainability and climate change

3. New member approval: Association of Dental Hospitals

The trustees reviewed and approved an application to join from the Association of Dental Hospitals.

Actions:

- EM to notify members of Association of Dental Hospitals joining UKHACC and finalise joining process.

4. November Director's report

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

- The response to the ten year plan was submitted via the online portal and also shared directly with the chairs of the working groups
- AP has commenced interviews with individuals to help inform the adaptation report
- It was agreed that we should aim to provide updates from organisations/alliances/coalitions we are part of at future executive committee meetings to ensure trustees are informed
- RSM has been contacted about re-joining. RS has written directly to the president, but has not had a response. EM has emailed previous contacts but both no longer work at RSM. RG and JB indicated they have contacts within RSM and will aim to find out who best to approach about rejoining.

5. Budget update

The November budget vs income/expenditure overview was shared for review on the spreadsheet of the accounts. There were no issues to report.

6. Member subscriptions renewals and leavers

Subscriptions invoices were issued on 18 November for payment by 31 December. To date nine organisations have paid the subscription fee. Two have indicated leaving. The Association of Anaesthetist has moved the focus of sustainability within the organisation and working with another partner. The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh is undergoing cost savings and not renewing any subscriptions. Both organisations indicated they might rejoin in future.

Any personal contacts in these organisations would be helpful to contact.

A discussion to review the budget in light of lower subscriptions fees than budgeted will take place at the next meeting of the committee.

Actions:

- JB to reach out to contacts at RCSEd regarding remaining members of UKHACC
- Budget review to take place at the January Exec committee meeting

7. 2025 Operational Plan

A draft plan for delivering our strategic objectives was presented. The trustees approved the plan.

8. UKHACC Ambassadors

We currently have four ambassadors: Parveen Kumar, Fiona Godlee, David Pencheon, Robin Stott.

Trustees discussed whether we should consider appointing another ambassador. The following points were noted:

- Good to have ambassadors representing different specialities (existing four ambassadors are all doctors)
- Good to keep track of what ambassadors are doing
- Invite to an exec so they can meet trustees
- Need to ensure diversity among ambassadors
- Might be good to consider someone outside of the health sphere - e.g. Someone from Peers for the Planet
- Celebrity might be a good idea

Actions:

- Trustees to email suggestions for potential ambassadors to RS/EM and proposal to be presented at future meeting
- RS to send an email of thanks to existing ambassadors for their support over the last year

9. UKHACC spokesperson network

Since establishing the spokesperson network in 2023, we have continued with a whatsapp group for members of the network to share media requests and information. This works quite well and is active. We also established monthly check in meetings, which have been poorly attended over the last number of months.

We have been in discussions with Climate Outreach regarding a collaboration to seek funding for the network, but the outcomes of this are uncertain.

It was agreed the whatsapp group should continue to exist, but that we should not continue with the monthly check in meetings in 2025. Instead, the monthly comms/policy meeting can act as a place for sharing comms information for organisations to cascade to individuals in their organisations.

Actions:

- EM to email thanks to network members for their ongoing commitment and action with an update that we will not have the monthly check in meetings in 2025 (using the comms/policy meeting as an alternative) but the whatsapp group will continue to act as a means for directly sharing with the network

10. Fundraising committee update

An update of the work of the fundraising committee since it was established in September 2024 was shared prior to the meeting and discussed.

Actions:

- RS to send an email of thanks to the fundraising committee chair on behalf of the trustees

11. Re-establishing contact with the Wellcome Trust

Trustees were asked to consider whether we should continue to refuse any potential funding from the Wellcome Trust following a previous decision not to accept funding as a consequence of their investments in fossil fuels and position on disinvestment by 2050,

which is contrary to the UKHACC policy on who it will accepting funding from (disinvest by 2040).

Since our previous communication with Wellcome, it has been clarified that Wellcome has... “set a strategy to bring our whole investment portfolio to net zero by 2050 at the latest. In many parts of the portfolio, we expect net zero to be achieved much earlier than that. Within this portfolio-wide approach to decarbonisation, we don’t take a “divestment” or exclusionary approach to the fossil fuel production sector, or indeed to any other sector other than tobacco. This is not least because off-loading more carbon-intensive assets to other investors does not make a real-world difference to overall emissions.

Even so, the portfolio’s overall exposure to fossil fuels is very small and has fallen substantially in recent years. We no longer hold any publicly traded shares in fossil fuel production companies. The last such holdings, in Shell and BP, were sold last year as a result of a decision to move away from cyclical sectors. The 3% of our portfolio invested in energy at the time of the last Annual Report falls fairly evenly between energy solutions and long-term investments in fossil fuel-related private equity funds. While we do not intend to add to this latter group, they are long-term positions for which we do not control the timing of exits so they will remain in the portfolio, in diminishing quantities, for a little while longer.”

Points noted were:

- Climate change is one of Wellcome Trusts priorities and they are funding a lot of projects in this space
- UKHACC needs to be ethically clear about who we receive money from.
- A strong stance can be a useful position when seeking funding.
- Not accepting funding should not preclude us from working with Wellcome on projects such as the network (e.g. Wellcome funding Climate Outreach)
- UKHACC needs to also consider budgetary issues next year
- Need to avoid being contradictory: we’re not taking money from Wellcome but we are taking money from members, many of which have investments in fossil fuels
- Communication and transparency are critical

It was agreed we should go back to Wellcome and ask if this is still their policy

Actions:

- RS to follow up with previous communications with the Wellcome Trust to understand thinking now and where they are at with their divestment policy

12. NHS Trusts and private health as members

Trustees were asked to consider if membership of UKHACC should be extended to NHS Trusts and private healthcare providers.

Points noted were:

- Potential to fundamentally change the nature of the organisation but would also bring in significantly more income.
- Should get the views of members and discuss at the council.
- Should speak to GNHS more about this - would achieve more with collaboration with them on this, and we need to ensure GNHS and UKHACC are aligned
- Might want to consider an NHS membership fee

- Uncomfortable with private healthcare
- Careful consideration about fee for NHS Trusts
- Clarity of who we might be diluted if we open membership to trusts
- Logistics of risk of having so many members is a bridge to cross when we get to it
- Our commitments and work would be beneficial to healthcare organisations
- Wider membership would increase awareness of UKHACC
- RS to discuss with CSO GNHS in new year

Actions:

- RS to seek CSO NHSE views on NHS organisation membership of UKHACC and how that might work
- NHS organisation membership category to be discussed at March council meeting

13. Our Commitments delivery plan

An overview of a two year project to support members deliver our commitments was shared prior to the meeting. The key points are:

- Over the next two years we will produce 'How To' guides for each of the Commitments
- We will continue to gather case studies and really encourage organisations to submit case studies to showcase their work and share with others if they can
- We will aim to deliver information sessions including presentations from members who have already implemented a commitment and external advisors to provide additional support. These will be open to anyone from UKHACC membership organisations (e.g. finance director may want to attend the one on bank switching)
- We have started a process of 'buddying up' organisations who can help each other out where one has already implemented and one is just starting the process
- We have removed the list of organisations that have endorsed the commitments from our website and will maintain this as an internal list that is shared with members in the monthly Director's update email. We'll continue to add to this as more organisations endorse with an aim of reviewing the list and publishing it on our website at the end of 2026.

A funding proposal to support the project has been sent to Dale Vince for consideration.

The Climate and Health Scorecard has confirmed they will be able to provide the assessment of progress over the two year period from January 2024-December 2025, with a report to UKHACC council delivered in March 2026. The cost of this will be £100 per participating organisation.

Points noted were:

- We need to think about how we can cover the cost of the scorecard (about £4,000). This should be discussed at a future meeting.
- There should be a discussion at the March council meeting regarding requiring organisations to complete the scorecard
- It might be helpful to better integrate commitments into the website with more information
- We do need to say this is not a way of greenwashing for organisations with stronger messaging to members that they need to do something - that is the point of being in UKHACC

Actions:

- Discuss funding for scorecard during budget review in January meeting
- Discussion at March council meeting regarding requiring organisations to complete the scorecard
- Ensure messaging around commitments is to strongly encourage members to achieve them and avoid perception of greenwashing

14. Government consultation on scope 3 emissions from oil and gas

Following the supreme court decision on the Finch case, in which the approval of an oilfield was deemed unlawful because scope 3 emissions were not considered in the environment assessment, the government has launched a consultation to ask the public what should be considered in assessments of scope 3 emissions. The decision will inform the government's approval of all future oilfields, including the potential to reconsider the decision on Rosebank..

We will develop a response to the consultation using evidence from our policy report to call for health impacts to be considered alongside environmental impacts of scope 3 emissions. Uplift is providing guidance on preparing the submission. The deadline is 8 January.

Actions:

- EM to produce response to the government consultation on scope 3 emissions and share with Energy Transition working group

15. Joining the Scottish Food Coalition

Trustees were asked to consider if UKHACC should join the [Scottish Food Coalition](#).

Based on the legal duties set out in the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022, the Scottish Food Coalition have four key asks of Scottish Government.

- The right to food and the right to a healthy environment must be enshrined in Scots law.
- The Scottish Food Commission must engage meaningfully with civil society when carrying out its duties.
- Scottish Government must adequately support and resource the development and long-term delivery of Local Good Food Nation Plans.
- Local Good Food Nation Plans must be developed and delivered as part of fully collaborative partnerships.

It was agreed that UKHACC should join.

Actions:

- EM to progress with application to join Scottish Food Coalition

16. Endorsement request: CPD match

Trustees were asked to consider endorsement of the CPD match website. RS reviewed the site and recommended endorsement. JD offered to review by 13 December and provide her recommendation over email.

Actions:

- JD to review CPDMatch and make recommendation over email regarding endorsement
- EM to notify CPDMatch of outcome of endorsement following JD recommendation received

17. Twitter v BlueSky

UKHACC currently has both X and BlueSky running parallel. RCN has now left X along with a number of other organisations and individuals. A recent Nature paper indicated that more scientists favour both. Many people are leaving X for moral reasons. It was agreed to keep an open mind to continue reviewing our position.

18. Supporting the fossil free health communications pledge

The Global Climate and Health Alliance is asking organisations to sign up to the fossil free health communications pledge. Trustees were asked if UKHACC should support the pledge and share it with UKHACC membership organisation.

BMJ has recently updated its policy: "In 2020, *The BMJ* committed to ban advertising and research funded by companies that produce fossil fuels. We have done so. And we asked others to join us. We will now strengthen our advertising policy further, following criticisms from readers that we carried advertising in our weekly print edition for Barclays Bank, a major funder of the fossil fuel industry. We are not banning advertising from all banks, but we will allow it only from banks that do not fund fossil fuel companies. BMJ has also re-endorsed the commitments of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change, which include a commitment to divest from fossil fuels." Further details here:
<https://www.bmj.com/content/387/bmj.q2197>

Actions:

- EM to sign fossil free health communications pledge on behalf of UKHACC
- EM to share pledge with members to encourage them to sign up
- Future consideration to be given whether discussion on the fossil free health communications pledge should be discussed at a UKHACC council meeting

19. Conflicts of interest

No issues were raised

Actions:

- Move conflicts of interest to start of meeting in future

20. Potential members

Royal College of Radiologists, Royal College of Occupational Therapists, Association of Palliative Medicine and UK Public Health Registrars are all currently considering joining UKHACC.

A meeting with British Cardiac Society is scheduled for the new year.

JB offered to reach out to Vascular Society UK, Scottish Cardiac Society, and Scottish Rheumatology Society.

Actions:

- EM to share template email for reaching out to potential members with JB
- JB to reach out to Vascular Society UK, Scottish Cardiac Society, and Scottish Rheumatology Society regarding joining

21. Risk register

The risk register was shared prior to the meeting. No additional changes were requested.

22. Any other business

The CMO England annual report is expected to be published tomorrow. UKHACC could welcome the report, making the point about the impact of climate change and health and that more needs to be done

RS suggested approaching MRHA in the same way we have made contact with NICE. RS will work with Centre for Sustainable Healthcare and the Sustainable Healthcare Coalition to put something together and present at future meeting.

An ecocide bill will be introduced to the Scottish parliament in 2025. A formal proposal is expected to come out over the next few months and may be an area that UKHACC can write to MSPs about.

RS thanked everyone for their work over the last year.

23. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held online at 14.30-16.30 Thursday 16 January 2025