



Minutes of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change Executive Committee

Held online 14 March 2024, 14.30-16.30

Present: Juliet Dobson (BMJ), Rose Gallagher (RCN), Terry Kemple (RCGP), Jacob Kranowski (RCPsych), Elaine Mulcahy (Director; UKHACC), Richard Smith (Chair; UKHACC), , Sandy Mather (ICS), Liz Marder (RCPCH), Emma Radcliffe (GP), Eleanor Roaf (FPH)

Apologies for absence:

Summary of actions:

- Session to trustees to run through budget and accounts to be organised (EM)
- Follow up with Greener NHS on query about carbon reduction plans for independent practitioners > TK has written to GNHS
- Write to Greener NHS about visibility of carbon footprint reporting (RS)
- Organise brainstorming session on fundraising > ON AGENDA
- EM to notify FMLM and members of approval to join and complete joining process > DONE
- Review LinkedIn profile and access permissions with aim to start using as a communications platform > DONE
- Final details and invitations for parliamentary event on 22 April to be sent > Done
- Planning and preparations/invitations for UKHACC RFTL on 9 June to be developed > ON AGENDA
- EM to approve payment of invoice to Climate and Health Scorecard for delivery of report on progress against commitments, and request advanced sight of the results prior to the council meeting next week > Done
- Trustees to let EM/RS know of anyone that might be interested in joining the RFTL Paris to Geneva ride
- Response to concerns and complaints regarding Tony Meggs webinar to be issued > Done

1. Welcome from the Chair

RS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minute from the February meeting

The minute from the February meeting was accepted.

Updates on actions from the last meeting:

The following actions we discussed

- A session for trustees on the budget and accountants is to be organised. This has been delayed as the accountant has not completed the review of the budget and

use of xero for managing the accounts. EM met with the accountants to discuss this on 6 February and was expecting a report from the accountant by 8 March. This was not received and has been chased.

- Following discussion at previous meetings regarding involvement in a plant-based day as part of the NHS Sustainability Day, EM and AP had further conversations with the Sustainability Partnerships regarding the resource requirement. Our recommendation is that this project is put on hold and reassessed until after we have produced our food policy report in October. The trustees agreed.
- We received a response from Greener NHS regarding questions on carbon reduction plans and other issues. Trustees felt it did not answer the question about GP independent practitioners and there is still no certainty about what is to happen. It was agreed UKHACC should reach out to GNHS again to seek clarity.
- Getting speakers for webinars is proving very difficult. We often don't get a response. Maybe should aim for lesser known voices and/or paying a nominal amount to secure more speakers.
- We lack fundraising skills. We were hoping to have someone from the NHS GMTS scheme to help last year but they dropped out. Any help from trustees or contacts would help. Most member organisations have fundraising teams or grant making organisations. This is something we should brainstorm about.
- We haven't written to the NHS about their carbon footprint. This is to be done.
- Eleanor Roaf and Emma Radcliffe have the same initials - need to clarify which is which on the minutes: Eleanor Roaf = ERo / Emma Radcliffe = ERa

3. Joining application from Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management

The trustees discussed and approved an application to join from the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management.

FICM approached by SM. They discussed internally and as they are part of RCoA, they are already members.

Action:

- EM to notify members of the application and complete the joining process

4. February Director's report

The February Director's report was shared prior to the meeting. Key points highlighted:

GCHA board meeting

EM attended the GCHA board meeting on 22 February. The focus for GCHA this year will be on building and developing engagement with its membership. A number of committees have been established to involve board members in key areas of GCHA work: finance, governance, and engagement. EM is a member of the engagement committee. As part of its aims to better engage with members, a series of bi-monthly sessions for members to share and update on their campaigns and projects have been set up. EM will co-chair two of these sessions.

Net Zero Clinical Care Conference

EM has met with BMJ to discuss their plans for Net Zero Clinical Care in 2024. They plan to build on the success of the event by establishing a [Net Zero Clinical Care Community](#), which will provide content throughout the year including webinars, videos, podcasts, roundtables

and conference that will be hosted on a BMJ NZCC content hub. They are in the initial stage of seeking partners to enable them to deliver and have asked UKHACC to share this with its members. EM and JD to follow up and discuss.

Other points noted:

- Lancet Countdown is also running a commission on a net zero health system.
- RS congratulated AP/EM on newsletter open rate
- We should be doing more on LinkedIn. JD advised that evidence from BMJ is that LinkedIn is a better space for debates around workforce and with healthcare professionals. It takes time to build up so the sooner we start using it the better. EM and AP to look into this.

5. Budget update

The accountant has not provided additional guidance on reporting since our last meeting. As an interim, a spreadsheet of the accounts was shared prior to the meeting which presented the overall budget, February budget to date, and February income and expenditure to date. Income and expenditure are currently on budget and no issues were raised.

6. Policy on purchasing approval levels

A proposal to set purchasing approval levels for the Director and Chair were discussed. This is to enable efficient processing of payments. The proposed levels agreed were:

- Director: up to £500
- Chair: up to £1000
- Trustees: more than £1000

7. General Election strategy and manifesto

An update on progress in delivering the election strategy was provided.

Meeting with Shadow Climate Change Minister

EM and RS met with Kerry McCarthy and one of her researchers, Orla Woods, on 29 February. A report of the discussion was shared prior to the meeting. An email of thanks with follow up information and an offer to keep communications open was sent after the meeting. Kerry McCarthy agreed to do a webinar with UKHACC, but a date for this has not been fixed. We said we would follow up with her on this.

RS and EM highlighted the support provided by Hope for the Future in preparing for the meeting, which was very helpful and appreciated. It provided us with good background knowledge about the minister, and helped us to keep the focus of the discussion on three key asks, with a priority of beginning to develop a good relationship.

It was highlighted that health organisations and UKHACC can provide evidence of what the public are saying to health professionals, and we should seek to build on that public facing role and how we can get this message to politicians. How are GNHS using that patient engagement and how can we tap into that?

It is important that the more health organisations can be coherent and amplifying the same message the better and more impactful it will be.

Climate Outreach is doing research on trust. Because nurses and health professionals are most trusted, they need to be more careful about what they are saying because the risk of losing that trust would be damaging. May be good to follow up with Climate Outreach to find out how we can use their evidence in our messaging.

Webinar invitations

A discussion regarding which political parties took place. It was agreed that we must do ensure a fair and balanced point of view is sought across political parties, while also taking our own resource capacity into account.

The rationale for holding a webinar is to provide an opportunity to ask politicians about their policies and our manifesto, and a way of getting politicians to engage with our manifesto. To increase awareness and hear their views about climate change and sustainability in their manifestos and to influence this. Policy teams in Colleges might be well placed to help the right people in the political parties.

Getting the right balance is challenging and there is also a risk of no response or difficulties in finding suitable dates, which can be a time consuming process.

It was agreed that in light of resource capacity, we will put the webinars on hold at this point and focus instead on coordinating a letter co-signed by members of UKHACC which we will send to all of the political parties, inviting them to respond with an offer to meet. This will be discussed at the council meeting on 21 March.

Parliamentary event on 22 April

A room has been booked with capacity for 40 people. Speakers will include Marina Romanello, Elaine Mulcahy and representatives from BMA and RCGP. It will be chaired by Lord Nigel Crisp. EM and AP are meeting with Peers for the Planet on Monday 18 March to discuss the invitation list.

Ride for their Lives on 9 June

RS and EM met with RFTL in February to discuss potential dates for a UKHACC ride. Sunday 9 June has been proposed. This will be a few days after our fossil fuel and just transition policy report has been published, and also falls within Great Big Green Week which has a theme of swaps.

Get as many people as possible from our members and cycle around Regents Park which is easy to do. They are very energising and inspiring events.

Action:

- Finalise invitation list and send invitations for parliamentary event on 22 April
- Start planning and prepare route and invitations for UKHACC RFTL

8. Council agenda and updates

The [agenda](#) for the March council meeting has been shared with participants. In total, 24 are registered to attend in person and 13 are attending online. The team at RCOG has been extremely helpful in supporting the room set up on the day. Refreshments (tea/coffee/water) will be served on arrival.

Professor Mike Davies from the Climate Change Committee has agreed to speak in person at the meeting.

Amelia Cussans and Eleanor Cooke from the Climate and Health Scorecard will present the results of the 2022-23 report at the meeting. Following discussions in 2023, they have produced a separate report which focuses on UKHACC member progress against our commitments. They have requested payment of £1200 to deliver this piece of work. This is something that was discussed and provisionally agreed with them previously and could be covered in the policy and projects line of the budget.

It was agreed that accountability is important in supporting organisations to make progress in achieving the commitments, particularly if they have endorsed them. Currently, there is no other organisation collating the data and measuring how different health organisations are delivering against set climate change and sustainability goals. The CHS team do it voluntarily, and is a valuable source of information (recognising there are some differences of opinion regarding the weighting used). The report on progress of UKHACC members against our commitments will be a valuable piece of information to inform the next stage of developing our commitments. It was agreed UKHACC should provide the financial support requested for this work.

Actions:

- EM to approve payment of invoice to Climate and Health Scorecard for delivery of report on progress against commitments, and request advanced sight of the results prior to the council meeting next week

9. Nature and Health activities

Robin Stott and Fiona Godlee have pulled together a working group involving UKHACC, Wildlife Trusts, Natural England and Mike Clarke to explore the potential of hosting a nature and health summit in 2025. A convening meeting of key participants including Michael Marmot, Natural England, National Academy for Social Prescribing and others will take place at Kew Gardens on 28 May.

Ride for their Lives have organised a cycle from Paris to Geneva ahead of the World Health Assembly on 27 March. Diarmid Campbell Ledrum from WHO will meet the group on arrival in Geneva with the blue satchel carried messages from children. They are keen to have a UKHACC participant on the cycle. It would also be an opportunity to use the ride to deliver our petition to call for a public health emergency. Trustees were invited to suggest any colleagues that might be interested.

Actions:

- Trustees to let EM/RS know of anyone that might be interested in joining the RFTL Paris to Geneva ride

10. Tony Meggs webinar response (discussion chaired by EM)

Background

Tony Meggs was invited to speak at an In Conversation webinar on 14 February to provide his perspective on oil and gas (aka fossil fuel) companies, energy and the climate and nature crisis. The invitation was sent to Tony Meggs as an individual with a broad perspective of the energy sector having previously worked in the oil industry (with BP), being the current government appointed chair of Sellafield UK, and a current advisor on green energy investments. Tony Meggs was speaking in a personal capacity and not representing an organisation.

Tony Meggs was invited following a list of potential webinar speakers was discussed and voted on by the Executive Committee. An invitation was subsequently sent and accepted. The event was published on the UKHACC website on 15 January and subsequently promoted in the News Bulletin (17 January), Director's Update (2 February) and social media. 62 people registered to attend the webinar and were invited to submit questions in advance. 35 people joined the webinar. Tony Meggs did not give consent for a recording of the webinar to be shared.

In the two days before the meeting, UKHACC received 4 emails asking for the event to be cancelled due to Tony Meggs association with the oil and gas industry. The event was not cancelled and those who had requested it to be so were invited to attend the webinar. Some did and were invited during the webinar to put their questions directly to Tony Meggs, which some did.

A further four communications against the webinar were received after the event, including a letter from the President of the Faculty of Public Health which is a member of UKHACC and a co-signed letter which included some of the previous complainants and others. Subsequently, another letter which included the signatures of members of the climate and health spokesperson network was also received. A folder containing all of the complaints and concerns raised was shared with the trustees prior to the meeting to allow time to review.

The main issues raised by the complainants were:

- UKHACC should not be providing a platform to fossil fuel companies because of their track record of human rights abuses, denying and blocking the science of climate change, and influencing, delaying progress in transitioning away from fossil fuels
- Representatives of the fossil fuel industry should not be promoted alongside trusted health voices
- The process of decision making around speakers and engagement

Points noted by the trustees were:

- The feedback and correspondence generated from this debate has provided a valuable discussion and reflection that is welcomed
- Tony Meggs was invited to speak in a personal capacity based on his experience. He was not there to represent the fossil fuel industry. The webinar was set up in an interview and Q&A format. This does not equate to a negotiation. A policy of no negotiation is not the same as no discussion.
- The issue of adopting a policy not to engage with a specific industry is complex and can be counterproductive. There are many issues we do not have the answer to around this.
- There is a risk that this has caused reputational damage to UKHACC as there are strong feeling around any discussion with fossil fuel employees (past or present)
- The process of decision making, thinking through potential repercussions, and ensuring a clear rationale for speakers is an area UKHACC should do better and is grateful of the offer from FPH to learn from policy they have developed in this area
- It is important to have difficult conversations, but the process of doing this is important
- Trustees who had attended the webinar felt it did not give a platform to the fossil fuel industry. It was evident that the backlash Tony Meggs received was unexpected and

he found it difficult. It was clear he hadn't thought about green issues as much as he should. There was no benefit to him or the industry.

- UKHACC is an umbrella organisation of 46 members. Individual members will at times have different perspectives.

RS provided these additional [comments](#)

It was agreed that UKHACC should respond to complainants highlighting the key points:

- We understand the depth of feeling among some health professionals and organisations and appreciate and respect the feedback and input they have provided, which has caused us to reflect and generated valuable discussion
- The decision to hold the webinar was based on the wide experience base of Tony Meggs in the industry. UKHACC does not have a policy of not engaging with the industry. The webinar was organised from a place of wishing to engage and understand perspectives
- We wish to move forward and recognise a need to ensure our process for decision making and inviting speakers is robust, and with clear justification and rationale.
- We welcome the offer from FPH to share with us their process for decision making to enable us to review our own process and engage with our members to share best practices

11. Risk register

The [risk register](#) was shared prior to the meeting.

12. Any other business

13. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held online at 14.30-16.30 Thursday 11 April 2024