



**IPCRG Annual General Meeting 2016**  
**Wednesday 25th May 2016**  
**16.00 – 17.15**  
**RAI Auditorium Theatre**

**Chair:** Ron Tomlins (RT)

**Present:** Board members: Kristine Whorlow (KW), Niels Chavannes (NC), Jamie C Sousa (JCS), Karin Lisspers (KL), Ioanna Tsiligianni (IT), Tan Tze Lee (TTL)  
Executive Officer: Siân Williams (SW), Business Manager: Samantha Louw (SL)

**Ordinary Member Representatives:**

|                |                              |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Australia:     | H. John Fardy                |
| Bangladesh:    | Monsur Habib                 |
| Bulgaria:      | Radost Assenova              |
| Canada:        | Alan Kaplan                  |
| Chile:         | Mauricio Soto                |
| FYR Macedonia: | Radmila Ristovska            |
| Greece:        | Evangelos Frangkoulis        |
| Ireland:       | Derek Forde                  |
| Netherlands:   | Thys van der Molen           |
| Norway:        | Anders Ostrem                |
| New Zealand:   | Proxy given to Jaime C Sousa |
| Pakistan:      | Taj Muhammad                 |
| Portugal:      | Rui Costa                    |
| Romania:       | Catalina Panaitescu          |
| Singapore:     | Tan Tze Lee (Board member)   |
| Spain:         | Miguel Roman                 |
| Sri Lanka:     | Sarath Paranavitane          |
| Sweden:        | Bjorn Stallberg              |
| UK:            | Dermot Ryan                  |
| USA:           | Barbara Yawn                 |
| Vietnam:       | Proxy given to chair         |

Other persons in attendance: Svein Hoegh Henrichsen, Jon Arild Aarskog, Anders Ostrem, Janwillem Kocks, Onno van Schayck, Lynn Josephs, Dermot Nolan, Katrina Stavric, Valentina Nejasmic, Claudia Vincente, Maqsood Ali, Javed Khalid, Mohammad Dost Khan.

**1. Welcome and apologies**

RT opened the meeting at 15.05.

Our voting members as listed above were allocated flags for voting.

Apologies noted from New Zealand and Vietnam, their proxies noted.

**2. Approval of minutes from last AGM, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

It was agreed that they were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**3. President's Report**

The President highlighted the achievements of the IPCRG over the last year. A copy of his report is appended for information.

**4. Treasurer's Report including the audited Accounts and Directors' report for 2015**

The Treasurer reported on the state of the IPCRG's final accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015. A copy of her report is appended for information.

It was agreed unanimously to adopt the Accounts and Directors' report for 2015.

AK asked if there was anything that could be done to recover the unpaid debt and the impact on relationships with the company involved. RT responded that there was active communication between IPCRG and the company and that IPCRG would continue to push for full debt recovery.

#### **5. Appointment and remuneration of Auditors: Scott Moncrieff**

KW recommended the adoption of Scott Moncrieff as our Auditors for 2016 at a fee not exceeding £10,000 per annum.

This was agreed unanimously.

#### **6. Subscriptions for 2016**

KW recommended that subscriptions for 2017 be maintained at the 2016 level: Ordinary Members zero and Associate Corporate Members Euro 36,750 (pharmaceutical companies) and Euro 6,300 (device companies).

This was agreed unanimously.

#### **7. Election of President Elect: 1 nomination received: Dr Ioanna Tsiligianni**

This was agreed unanimously; Dr Ioanna Tsiligianni was elected as President Elect.

#### **8. Election of Treasurer. The current Treasurer, Ms Kristine Whorlow, is eligible for re-election**

Canada and Singapore nominated Ms Kristine Whorlow. There were no other nominations and she was appointed as Treasurer for 2017 with acclamation.

#### **9. Membership – by special resolution to agree to the admission of the following to membership to the IPCRG. A special resolution requires a 75% majority of members present and voting.**

##### **a. Members: Slovenian Primary Care Respiratory Group**

It was agreed unanimously to elect Slovenian Primary Care Respiratory Group as an Ordinary Member.

##### **a. Associate members: Invited specialists: Professor Sally Singh, Dr Nick Hopkinson, Associate Professor Le Lan and Professor Rafael Stelmach**

AK asked for further information on these nominations. SW confirmed 3 are on the Scientific Advisory Committee for the FRESH AIR project and Professor Stelmach has supported our Brazilian colleagues during their E-Quality project. It was agreed unanimously to invite all nominations. It was agreed that in future the biographies could be complemented by an explanation of why the directors proposed each individual.

#### **10. Member items**

##### **a. *Npj Primary Care Respiratory Medicine***

The Editorial Board of the journal was meeting on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May. As Dr Paul Stephenson, Joint Editor in Chief was retiring from the role, discussions would take place at the Editorial Board meeting about his replacement. IPCRG was working with the journal to translate articles into Chinese, Portuguese and Spanish. Presenting authors for either a poster or an oral presentation at the 8th World Conference, are entitled to a discounted APC (50% reduction on the full rate) if an article, for which they are the corresponding author, is accepted for publication within this journal. SW offered to provide more details on this to anyone who requested it.

**11. Planned conferences in 2017, 2018 for information:**

- a. 5th IPCRG Scientific Meeting, Ljubljana, Slovenia 18-19 May 2017**
- b. 1st IPCRG South Asian Scientific Conference, Colombo, Sri Lanka 3-5 August 2017**
- c. 9th World IPCRG Conference, Porto, Portugal 30 May- 2 June 2018**

**12. Date of next AGM**

The final date to be confirmed, likely to be at the 5<sup>th</sup> Scientific Meeting in Slovenia.

RT closed the meeting at 15.46

## **For information only:**

### **President's Report**

Colleagues and friends, ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to present my report for the year ending December 2015. This will also be the last time that I will be reporting to the Annual General Meeting as my friend and colleague Dr Jaime Correia de Sousa takes over as President.

I have been a member of the IPCRG Board since 2002, firstly as Treasurer and more latterly as President Elect and President. It has been a fascinating journey and the IPCRG has grown from a club with a few enthusiasts that sought to run a conference every 2 years to a global organisation doing work in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. We have a much sharper focus on our charitable goals than we had in the beginning. However, times have changed and we now face a much bigger challenge than in the past. I will return to this after the Treasurer's report.

The detailed Annual Report of our activities in 2015 was circulated to each of our members with the agenda for this meeting. I intend to highlight some of the key achievements of the IPCRG over the past 12 months.

I would like firstly to recognise the contribution made by my Board over the last 2 years. Professor Niels Chavannes has driven two of the IPCRG's key products - FRESH AIR and UNLOCK which have shown continuing growth in 2014 and 2015. The FRESH AIR protocol has now been utilised in Vietnam, Uganda, Kyrgyzstan and India while papers in peer reviewed journals are now starting to flow from UNLOCK. Niels is also Chair of the Organising Committee for this conference.

Jaime de Sousa has led our education activities in Europe and South America through Wonca Europe and our Teach the Teacher program. Niels, Jaime and our Treasurer, Kristine Whorlow, have been elected to committees of significance in GARD, the WHO Global Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Disease. In addition, Monica Fletcher who is well known to many of us has also been elected, ensuring that there is a strong primary care voice in GARD.

In addition, other Board members have contributed significantly to the success of the IPCRG over the last year: Karin Lisspers in research, Beraki Ghezai in education, Tan Tze Lee for organising the first Scientific Conference and the very successful Respiratory Research School in Singapore, and Ioanna Tsiligianni who does everything, and who has nominated for election later in this meeting as President Elect.

Our other flagship programs, E-faculty for enhancing research capacity and E-quality to encourage the development of local education programs designed to meet local needs continue to grow in scope and spread, suggesting that these programs are fulfilling a real need.

We are very appreciative of the ongoing support of the Research subcommittee under Professor Mike Thomas and the Education subcommittee chaired by Dr Hillary Pinnock in nurturing these programs. Unfortunately, ill health has forced Mike Thomas to resign from the Research Subcommittee. I have written to him on your behalf to wish him a speedy recovery.

I also want to place on record my thanks to our Executive Officer, Sian Williams, and our Business Manager, Sam Louw.

We have watched with pleasure in recent years the transition of the Primary Care Respiratory Journal to the Nature publishing group. The new journal, npj Primary Care Respiratory Medicine continues to have a significant impact in primary care. We commend the editors Aziz Sheik and Paul Stephenson for their contribution to the success of the journal. We have worked very collaboratively with the Primary Care Respiratory Society UK to achieve this result. The journal is one of our high profile assets.

Our other high profile assets are our conferences and Singapore 2015 was an outstanding success under Tan Tze Lee's leadership. We all have something to learn and something to teach. Our conferences provide an opportunity for colleagues from around the world to meet, listen to world class speakers, learn from each other, share experiences and have fun. I am confident that Amsterdam 2016 will be equally successful.

I should also highlight the growing interest of countries seeking membership of the IPCRG. We currently have 26 member countries with an application from Slovenia to be approved later in this meeting. We are optimistic that the increased awareness of IPCRG's activities and resources in Asia flowing from the Singapore conference will lead to more interest.

The tobacco dependence education program in Uganda funded under the Global Bridges program continues to be rolled out to support tobacco dependence education in Uganda, while funding from the European Lung Foundation (ELF) is supporting FRESH AIR in Kyrgyzstan. We were successful in 2015 to receive a large grant under the EU Horizon 2020 program and shared between 14 partners. The program is looking at implementation of FRESH AIR in Greece, Vietnam, the Kyrgyz Republic and Uganda over the next three years.

Funding of our activities and of our work continues to be a challenge. We are grateful for our industry partners who continue to support the IPCRG through Associate Corporate Membership, but the times they are a'changing.

Last year I said that the IPCRG had grown from a thriving infant into an active teenager, and the Board was undertaking a review of our policies, procedures and processes to ensure that we are well placed to make the transition to maturity. As part of that review, we are reassessing our priorities to ensure that we are spending our money wisely and in alignment with our mission.

I would now like to call on the Treasurer, Kristine Whorlow, to report on the financial outcome for the financial year ending December 2015.

## Treasurer's Report 2016 AGM

- I am pleased to present to you the Directors' Report and Financial Statements for the 2015 financial year which were distributed with the agenda.
- As you can see, we have had a challenging year
- Looking at the Statement of Financial Activities and Income and Expenditure Account:
  - Total Income and endowments, a small increase in 2015 of £420,714 from 2014's £362,042. This increase is mostly from the Fresh Air funding.
  - However, Total expenditure, an increase in 2015 of £555, 473 from 2014's £368, 499
  - This increased expenditure largely reflects our having taken the conference management in-house; refer Education of \$435,203 which is largely made up of the Singapore costs plus other education activities.
  - Leaving us with a Net loss of £134,759 compared to the previous year's £6,457
  - There is a reduced currency loss of £28,988 and I remind you that this is a paper loss, only realised if we actually convert the euros in our euro account into pounds.
  - However, this means the total operating deficit in 2015 to be £163,747
  - Leaving us with total funds of £519,127
- Looking now at the Balance Sheet, Debtors (money owed to us) are £140, 616:
  - £96, 346 includes £63,212 from pharmaceutical companies which had not paid us during the audit period. £43,606 of this is still outstanding and is being pursued.
- Looking at the auditor's remuneration, you will see the actual audit fee of £9270 and separate to that, we spent £13,788 on advice from our auditor, largely about our taking on VAT for the first time, not a simple proposition.
- So, we have had a difficult year but still have reserves of £519,127 and are working hard to improve our situation.
- I would like to thank our corporate supporters, the pharmaceutical companies for their support.
- I also acknowledge the guidance of the Governance Committee, Ron Tomlins, Barbara Varney, Sian Johnston, Geoff Williams and Michael Barron who has just joined us, as well of course as Sian Williams and Sam Louw for their dedication and hard work.

I move that the Financial Statements be received, that the

- (1) Financial Statements for the year ending December 31, 2015, and the
- (2) Report of the Auditor and the Directors be received, considered and adopted, and the
- (3) Re-appointment of the Auditors, Scott Moncrieff, be confirmed and payment of their remuneration (2015 - £9270) of no more than £10,000 be confirmed
- (4) Subscriptions for 2017 remain at the 2015 rate i.e.
  - Ordinary Members zero
  - Associate Corporate Members €36,750
  - And €6300 for device companies

Kristine Whorlow, May 25, 2015

## President Further Report

Ladies and gentleman, you have heard the Treasurer's report and now it is my duty to report to you about how your Board is intending to build the long term sustainability of the IPCRG.

I need to take a minute to explain the legal responsibilities and obligations that members of the Board of IPCRG take on when they agree to be Directors. IPCRG is a charity registered in Scotland and an incorporated company subject to the Companies legislation of the United Kingdom. Under that legislation, it is illegal for a company to trade if insolvent - in other words it does not have adequate funds to pay its bills as and when they fall due. If that were to occur, the Directors could be liable to financial penalties or imprisonment. I can assure you that my Board members do not relish either prospect.

In the earlier days of IPCRG, we had a firm policy that we would not commit to spending money on projects until we had the money in the bank. As I mentioned before, we have received some large grants that run over a few years. We recognise the need to account carefully to ensure that we have the funds in the future to satisfy our obligations to complete the work for which we have already been paid. In this regard, the Board has determined that we need £160,000 in hand to complete the work for which we have been paid. If we have less than that amount on hand, we are obliged to wind up or close the IPCRG. This is NOT an outcome that we want to occur. In addition, we have maintained a policy of building reserves against the time that a conference would fail to break even. That time may have come - it is likely that there will not be profit on this conference.

How has this state of affairs come about? In recent years, for regulatory and economic reasons, the pharmaceutical industry has been moving away from unrestricted grants to bodies like IPCRG. In addition, there is less interest in sponsoring conferences and there has been a worldwide shift away from supporting doctors to attend overseas conferences. In addition, the Board decided to fund some research and education activities from our accumulated savings instead of supporting only those projects for which we had received funding. As a consequence of these changes all occurring at the same time, we face a serious financial crisis. As Kristine has reported to you, we had over £500,000 in the bank at the end of 2015 but we are anticipating a further trading loss this financial year that might reduce our assets to £350,000. This trend is worrying and we are getting very close to the amount that the Board believes is necessary for us to continue to trade.

It is clear that the business model that we have used since 2002 is no longer valid. In fact, we have continued to receive the support of pharmaceutical companies for longer than most other bodies. We have project commitments to fulfill but we do not currently have sufficient new funding to underpin the normal machinery of the organisation. If we want IPCRG to continue to survive and contribute, we must broaden our revenue base and contain costs; in short, we need to become more commercial!

The Board has started to explore alternative funding opportunities, such as donations and bequests, crowd funding for projects, and running more but smaller conferences. There are also opportunities to take advantage of our expertise in educating GPs and in carrying out GP research. Similarly, there is scope for the development of e-learning resources. There is a lot of work to be done but it all takes time.

It may be that we need to bring in expertise to assist us to commercialise and promote our assets, but no decision about this has been made.

Your Board will continue to keep you informed about progress towards long term sustainability. For the time being, I would ask you to understand that any cuts in expenditure that may impact

on our programs are being made in order to ensure the survival of the IPCRG over the next 2 to 3 years.

Ron Tomlins  
President

25th May 2016