



## **Briefing from Council meeting held on 20 May 2015**

The meeting was chaired by Diana Kloss and the following items discussed:

### **Presentation by Keith Johnston with an update on the work of Syngentis**

Keith Johnston (KJ) informed the Council that Syngentis was registered as a Community Interest Company with the purpose of assisting NHS occupational health services in protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of NHS employees and more generally to give advice and assistance to improve the fitness, health and productivity of working age people.

The objectives of Syngentis are to:

- increase access to high quality health and work services for those in employment to promote and maintain health;
- assist those absent from work through illness to make a timely and effective return to work; and
- advance education and dissemination of knowledge in the field of health and work for the benefit of the public.

Syngentis was preceded by NHS Plus, which was a government funded project from 2001 – 2012 set up with the purpose of improving the quality of NHS OH services. During its time NHS Plus had many achievements, for example influencing DH, DWP and NHS Employers, and feeding into the Black and Boorman reports.

NHS Plus created the Health4Work Adviceline (H4W) which was funded by DWP. Initially Dame Carol Black recommended it could be a two-year project but it ended up running for five years. There were 11,337 unique website visitors per month, a monthly newsletter was sent to 26,320 registered users, approximately 2400 management guides were downloaded every month and there was 94% satisfaction with the specialist telephone advice visitors received.

Syngentis is now in partnership with HML / Maximus to support the DWP Fit for Work Service to which the advice line has been transferred. The H4W IP had now been sold to HML / Maximus and the service was being rolled out in Sheffield and North Wales, with Kent and North and East Yorkshire being included by the end of May 2015 and the whole of England and Wales by the end of the year.

Benchmarking tools were discussed, in particular MoHaWK and STEM.

MoHaWK is a tool to measure service against evidence based practice and to benchmark against others. This identified areas of improvement, supported local audit and improved practice.

STEM is a tool for NHS teams to benchmark costs and prices and therefore the profitability of service delivery. It was used by 64 teams during 2014-15.

KJ informed the Council about the NHS Health at Work Network. It was a strong network with 129 renewals in 2013-14 and currently 115 renewals in 2014-15. The annual conference received 100% satisfaction rating. This network had been able to influence NHS Employers, NHS England, NICE and DH. It had also contributed to policy development. The Network has also set up a Network Trading Group to encourage NHS collaboration and to support obtaining contracts. The Network would be providing face to face assessments to the Fit for Work Service in cases where telephone consultations were unsuitable.

The priorities for Syngentis in the year ahead include:



- partnering HML in the successful launch of the Fit for Work Service
- developing the Network Trading Group as a provider of services to national organisations
- developing MoHaWK further

The Chair thanked KJ for his very informative presentation.

#### **Council strategy and business plan**

A revised strategy and business plan had been circulated. The history section had been refreshed and in the 'who we are' section the Chair asked all members to provide a brief paragraph, or to review what was currently on the website. Members were asked to review the business plan and feed back their comments.

#### **Occupational Health Workforce Planning Group**

It was noted that a very successful, well attended, meeting had taken place on 9 March 2013. There were currently three consultations in progress, the future, paradigm shift and generic occupational health competencies. Two reports were currently in preparation and the draft of the first was due to be circulated after Vanessa Hebditch had reviewed it, which was hoped to be within the next 14 days.

#### **Financial report**

A financial report (to 25 March 2015) had been circulated and it was noted that at that date total funds in the bank were £22,325.92, of which £17,707.04 was in restricted funds.

DK reported that the accountants (BBK) had been replaced by Coulthards Mackenzie. The Secretariat had previously worked with Coulthards Mackenzie and found them to be extremely professional and supportive.

#### **Request for regular financial contributions for organisations represented on the Council**

It was noted that follow up action had taken place and all those invited to contribute (but who had not responded) on 12 December 2014 had been contacted. The total pledged (received or pending) was £6700.00 plus £6000 IOSH Secretariat funding.

#### **Website**

The website statistics were noted as follows: from 1 January to 30 April 2015 there were 1986 hits on the Council's website.

#### **ACPOHE**

It was noted that ACPOHE was looking at setting up an independent Faculty of Occupational Physiotherapy.

#### **EAPA Membership of the Council for Work and Health**

The Chair asked Andrew Kinder, who was attending the meeting as an observer, if the EAPA would like to apply to be members of the Council for Work and Health. It was agreed that Andrew Kinder would send a letter requesting membership of the Council for Work and Health.

#### **Speakers at future Council Meetings**

It was noted that the following would be speakers at the next Council meeting (8 October 2015): Nattasha Freeman (IOSH) and John Pilkington (VRA).

**The next meeting of the Council will take place on 8 October 2015.**