

HEALTH ARCHIVES AND RECORDS GROUP

Minutes of the general meeting of the Health Archives and Records Group, held on 13 June 2007 at the Wellcome Institute, 183 Euston Road

Present

Karen Waite	(Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust)
Geoff Browell	(King's College London)
Colin Gale	(Bethlem Royal Hospital Archives & Museum)
Patricia Methven	(King's College London)
Eleanor Burgess	(Healthcare Commission)
Claire Jackson	(Royal College of General Practitioners)
Nick Bhagat	(Royal College of General Practitioners)
Samantha Farhall	(Barts and the London NHS Trust)
Allie Dillon	(British Psychoanalytical Society)
Julia Sheppard	(Wellcome Library)
Sarah Coombs	(Barts and the London NHS Trust)
Catherine Redfern	(Barts and the London NHS Trust)
Jenny Haynes	(Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists)
Helen Wakely	(Wellcome Library)
Nick Baldwin	(Great Ormond Street Hospital)
Louise King	(Royal College of Surgeons of England)
Graham Stanley	(The National Archives)
Andy Blake	(British Psychoanalytical Society)
Kevin Mulley	(The National Archives)
Natalie Walters	(Wellcome Library)

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 The following apologies for absence were received:

Vicky Rea	(Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust)
Kevin Brown	(St Mary's Hospital / Alexander Fleming Laboratory Museum)
Kath Webb	(York Hospitals NHS Trust)
Ann George	(Sheffield Archives)
Hilary Ritchie	(Addenbrooke's Hospital Cambridge)
Fiona Watson	(Northern Health Services Archive)
Susan McGann	(Royal College of Nursing)
Gordon Jones	(Queen Mary's Hospital Roehampton)
Linda Lamb	(Queen Mary's Hospital Roehampton)
Victoria Killick	(London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)
Kate Ratcliffe	(Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust)
Alexandra Eveleigh	(West Yorkshire Archive Services)
Stephen Soanes	(University of Warwick)
Eva King	(Nursing and Midwifery Council)
Laura Taylor	(London Metropolitan Archives)
Jonathan Evans	(Barts and the London NHS Trust)

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

2.1 The minutes of the last committee meeting held on 26 September 2006 were confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Matters arising from the last meeting:

2.2.1 Ref. 8.5 – ASA Article

- Colin Gale's (CG) article on the UK health archives sector has been published in the Bulletin of the Australian Society of Archivists and is available on the HARG website.

3. Resources of Wellcome Library's Archives & Manuscripts Department

- 3.1 Chris Hilton and Lesley Hall from the Wellcome Library gave a presentation on this topic. Slides used in the presentation are to be made available on the HARG website.

4. Update on matters discussed at HARG committee meeting

- 4.1 CG gave a report on the committee meeting:

- Noted that the finances of HARG were limited to the £250 given by the Special Repositories group. This budget is spent on meetings, travel and the website. Members' attention was drawn to the details on finances in the Chair's report, circulated prior to the meeting.
- Updates to the website were noted including the introduction of a 'What's New' section and Records Management documents.
- TNA meetings having not been held for a while, the committee had decided that future meetings should be issue-led instead of regular fixtures.
- The issue of HARG meeting locations was touched on and suggested as an issue for the open forum section of the meeting.

5. Report of Research Value of Health Archives sub-group

- 5.1 Reported by Jenny Haynes (JH) on behalf of Kath Webb (KAW).

- Appraisal had been the main topic of discussion for the group. The current NHS Code of Practice has the bare minimum retention period with the concession that some records may have archival value. The group is hoping to create guidance for the long term retention of records. The group have created a discussion paper looking at the research purposes to balance the need for appraisal. This paper is available on request from KAW.
- Also looking at the advocacy for long term preservation. any questions on this should be directed to KAW at kw10@york.ac.uk

6. Report of Records Management sub-group

- 6.1 Reported by Catherine Redfern (CR)

- The policies and templates gathered by the group have been published on the HARG website and can be found in its 'Resources' section. These include information on electronic records management, retention schedules and some information governance work. The group would welcome more policies and templates, and would post anything received on the website, subject to permission.
- Michael Goodson of the sub-group is representing HARG on Connecting for Health's Records Advisory Group (RAG), which has produced guidance and templates in records management and information governance policies. Records inventory survey forms, training presentations, audit forms and other useful documentation can be found at: <http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/systemsandservices/infogov/policy/records>.
- Later in the year the group are planning some work around the NHS Code of Practice.

- 6.2 Business Classification Scheme Project reported by Karen Waite (KJW)

- The project has been developing the Scheme since January 2007 and now also has representation from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The group meets every two months in London. The group expects to have reached agreement on NHS Trusts' core functions by July 2007, and to publish version 1 of the Scheme (on the Department of Health website and elsewhere as appropriate) in December 2007.

7. Access

7.1 CR reported that ICO guidance on records of deceased persons had now been published. There are no surprises in the guidance, which contains a full discussion of the exemptions which might in certain circumstances cover such records. It was expected that a "Working Assumptions Group", convened by TNA and with HARG representation, will carry forward the work of applying the guidance to archivists' working practices on access.

7.2 SC reported that the ICO may be prepared to allow Trusts to amalgamate requests targeted at multiple NHS bodies for the purposes of calculating the cost of responding, and that the consultants Public Partners (<http://www.publicpartners.org>) may be prepared to act as a clearing house in order to identify such multi-targeted requests.

Public Partners also facilitate meetings to discuss Freedom of Information issues, the next meeting being scheduled for 27 June 2007 in Birmingham. HARG has no formal representation on this group, but members who have attended previous meetings reported that they are likely to be of use to those with responsibility for Freedom of Information within NHS Trusts.

Post meeting note: Public Partners have subsequently stated that they will only act as a 'clearing house' for public sector wide requests for those authorities which are members of their paid subscription service, FOI+.

8. Open Forum

8.1 Kevin Mulley (KM) mentioned that the Code of Practice on Records Management issued under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act was currently under revision to take better account of issues concerning electronic records. He also reported that TNA are currently carrying out their first inspection under the Code at the request of the ICO. Any resulting guidance or enforcement notice will be issued by the ICO, to whom TNA will report.

8.2 KJW asked the group how they felt about meetings held outside London.

- SC raised the issue that if more than one person from the same organisation was a member of HARG then it was likely that only one would be able to attend meetings held at some distance.
- KM pointed out that attendance might be maximised at regional meetings by arranging them at venues that could easily be reached via public transport from London and elsewhere, remarking that Edinburgh or Glasgow might have been more convenient than Dundee as a venue for the previous meeting, for example.
- The meeting agreed on the ongoing need to plan meeting venues with an eye to their accessibility.

9. Date and time of the next meeting

9.1 The next meeting was scheduled for 2.00pm, 28 September 2007 at West Yorkshire Archives Service HQ, Registry of Deeds, Newstead Road, Wakefield.