The University of Western Australia  

SCHOOL OF PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE  

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee held in the Ten Seldam Seminar Room 1.6, First Floor, M Block, The Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre on Thursday, 25 June 2009 from 8.00am to approximately 9.00am.

MINUTES

PRESENT

Winthrop Professor Paul Waring, Dr Melissa Gillett, Mr Brett Tizard, Dr Jill Finlayson, Winthrop Professor Martyn French, Clinical Associate Professor Keryn Christiansen, Winthrop Professor Frank Christiansen, Professor Patricia Price

APOLOGIES

Dr Ashleigh Murch, Clinical Associate Professor Dominic Mallon, Winthrop Professor Jennet Harvey, Professor Frank Van Bockxmeer

DECLARATIONS OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 May 2009 were confirmed to be a true and accurate record.

2 UPDATE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

2.1 PaLM strategic planning retreat

There has been considerable information collected as part of the Teaching and the Research Retreats. Given the primary data collection has been completed, it was resolved that a small group would be more appropriate for the compilation of the School’s strategic plan. Once the document has been formulated it would be distributed for further discussion and comment.

2.2 New adjunct and clinical appointments

A additional list of proposed adjunct and clinical appointments and promotions was attached to the agenda. Comments were sought on the level of appointment from the meeting. Additional appointments will continue to be made and Committee Members are encouraged to suggest new candidates where appropriate.

2.3 Committee membership

PathWest is about to appoint Heads of Disciplines to replace the current position of Chair of the Discipline Planning Committees. Once this process is complete, the Heads of Disciplines should be appointed to this Committee as ex officio members replacing the Chairs of committees. In addition, the newly appointed Chief Pathologist, Clinical Associate Professor Dominic Mallon, should be invited to join the School Executive Committee ex officio.

Clinical Associate Professor Keryn Christiansen reported that she will be stepping down as Chair of the Microbiology Discipline and is not seeking appointment as Head of Discipline. Therefore this will be the last Executive Committee meeting that she will attend. Winthrop Professor Paul Waring thanked her for her contributions to the School Executive and noted that she will continue to be part of the School through her research collaborations.
Winthrop Professor Paul Waring has been appointed as Head of the Genetics Discipline and will replace Dr Ashleigh Murch as the Genetics representative. However this will leave the Executive without a representative for the PMH and KEMH sites. Dr Murch will be invited to continue on the Executive to provide representation for those sites.

2.4 Board of Studies – BSc.

Winthrop Professor Paul Waring has been appointed to the Interim Board of Studies representing the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences.

3 UPDATE FROM SCHOOL MANAGER

3.1 Ongoing Contingent Funded Research Staff

With the introduction of the new Staff Agreements, a new category of staff has been created - Ongoing Contingent Funded Research Staff – to supplement the existing Fixed-term Contract and Ongoing positions. Staff employed under the new arrangement will be eligible for additional severance payments should their funding cease. As severance payments are funded by the Faculty, this will not affect the School budget.

3.2 Management Committee Update

The Management Committee is developing a planning tool listing all of the School Critical Dates and the responsible officers. Although this is intended to be a living document, once completed it should form a sound basis for allocating resources to priority areas. A draft copy will be distributed for comment with the final document residing on the School Website.

The School will be representing the Faculty at the UWA Open Day, 9th August 2009. A display will be located in the Molecular Biology Building on the main campus which will provided students with information on the pathology major as well as postgraduate studies within the School.

There has been significant positive feedback about the School Bulletin which is now published on a monthly basis. Some additional features will be added over the next few editions.

3 UPDATE FROM TEACHING COMMITTEE

There has been significant activity from the Teaching Committee examining all aspects of the teaching role of the School:

3.1 Medicine

Case based teaching modules are being developed by Associate Professor O’Connor and a discussion paper has been distributed concerning a “Bench to Bedside” model integrating laboratory medicine into the Pathology teaching. A copy of the discussion paper was attached to the agenda for this meeting.

3.2 Science

There is an urgent need to progress the review of the Science courses, majors and units and the Interim Board of Studies has requested the outline of majors be presented to the Faculty Board in November and then to the Board of Studies in early 2010. A discussion document was attached to the agenda for this meeting and has been circulated to the Teaching Committee.

There was some discussion about the possible host Faculty for the Pathology major – either FLAPS as per the current arrangement or transferring management to FMDHS. Given the history of the Pathology major and the need to closely collaborate with FLAPS on units for the major, the Committee resolved to place the Pathology major under the management of FLAPS.

3.3 Master of Laboratory Medicine
Clinical Professor Richard Herrmann has been undertaking consultations with Principal Medical Scientists to ensure that the new MLM meet the needs of each of the disciplines. The implementation schedule for discipline specific streams will depend on the support and input from the representatives of each Discipline Group.

4 UPDATE FROM RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Professor Frank Christiansen provided a Report from Research Strategic Planning Retreat. The Research Retreat was considered to be a success highlighting discipline specific needs to progress research in PathWest and the School.

However it was noted that many of the issues were common to all of the disciplines and some areas have achieved great things utilising current resources. A draft of the Meeting Summary is being prepared and a report will be presented to the next Research Advisory Committee meeting. The report will identify a number of issues including changes that can be made now to improve research productivity as well as list strategic opportunities supplementing core activities and new initiatives.

Work will need to be undertaken by each of the disciplines to develop a clear vision of what is required in the short, medium and long-term. Areas of strength need to be identified along with potential collaborations within the School and PathWest as well as locally, regionally and internationally.

Student engagement was identified as an important goal. Disciplines were requested to develop 30 – 40 Honours projects to attract prospective students in all disciplines and sites.

In order to facilitate the recruitment of Honours and PhD students together with developing long-term collaborations within the research community, it was felt that the School website should contain extensive information on each of the research groups and have information on each researcher detailing their research interests.

ACTION: The Management Committee examine ways to incorporate the promotion of research groups into the School Website (Brett Tizard)

5 UPDATE FROM DISCIPLINE REPRESENTATIVES

There were no reports from the Discipline Representatives

6 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 25 July 2009.