

## Education Sub-Group Meeting Minutes

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009  
Western General Hospital, Edinburgh

### Attendance

#### Present:

Jack Jackson (Chair)  
Marit Boot  
Sheelagh Frame  
Sharon MacNab  
Mary Porteous  
Marjorie Smith

#### Apologies:

Lorna Sibbett

#### In attendance:

Krishna Ferguson (Network Secretary)

### 1. Welcome and introductions

Jack Jackson began the meeting by thanking those who were in attendance for coming and conveying apologies for committee members unable to attend.

JJ noted that Hilary Osborne (Network Officer) has moved on to an NHS management position. Krishna Ferguson has replaced Jenny Kerr as Network Secretary on a temporary basis. Both permanent posts will be filled once funding has been confirmed.

### 2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

#### ***Organisations working on public engagement in healthcare genetics:***

All committee members were encouraged to identify any organisations they are aware of working on public engagement in healthcare genetics and submit information about their activities for inclusion on the Gengage website. KF requested any information to be resent.

#### ***Conference 2009:***

Committee members discussed the structure of the conference and other ways to get people engaged – eg. networking over lunch. JJ thought the conference on the whole was a success.

#### ***Contact details:***

The Secretariat circulated the contact details of the committee members.

Minutes of previous meeting accepted.

### 3. Presentation by Dr Marjorie Smith, Dollar Academy

Dr Smith gave a very interesting presentation on interactive discussion material for students and teachers, which she has developed over several years.

The move to include social, moral and ethical issues in the school curriculum has led Dr Smith to develop innovative ways of devising situations that will encourage young people to explore social, moral and ethical issues in science. These materials also encompass the

teachers and expand further to reach the parents as well. The aim of the group is to see if the materials could be used more widely, not just in schools but with other adult groups.

Dr Smith has developed materials boxes on a number of different topics (eg. biobanks, funded by the Wellcome Trust). Most recently she has received a grant from AstraZenica Science Teaching Trust (Independent Trust) for three topics: alcohol/liver; obesity and stem cells. The materials aim to stimulate discussion and debate. The response to the materials has been very positive.

Sharon McNab (Glasgow Science Centre) noted that dialogue projects with science centres across the UK (funded by Excite UK) have developed activities on GM crops, stem cells etc. These activities are more successful when used with pre-existing groups in communities who know each other, rather than with adults who do not know each other.

Marit Boot asked Dr Smith about time and cost to produce a materials box on a new topic. This will depend on numbers, although she estimated three weeks for the materials themselves.

#### **4. Feedback about key messages from Gengage Conference on 17 June 2009**

Discussion deferred until the next meeting.

#### **5. Presentation by Dr Mary Porteous, NHS Clinical Genetics Services**

Dr Porteous is the Head of Clinical Genetic Services at the NHS. She gave a very informative presentation on the four genetic services in Scotland: Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen. Each genetic service is made up of three parts: clinical, molecular and cytogenetic.

The NHS Genetics Services are working to streamline services from diagnosis with a genetic condition (eg. Fragile X) to genetic support for the family.

MB noted that communication with families is crucial.

#### **6. Dates for future meetings**

Next meeting:  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February (Edinburgh)

Agreed, additionally, that JJ will explore with Peter Finegold the possibility of organising an education meeting or workshop in the morning of that day, to bring together representatives of Gengage, Nowgen, ScotGen, Edinburgh Beltane and other organisations and individuals interested in developing and rolling out educational resources for schools and others. To be funded by Gengage; the venue to be provided by the Genomics Forum.