

**Department of Paediatrics
Management Committee/Graduate Studies Committee
Tuesday 14th June 2022 12:00-14:00
Via MS Teams**

1. Apologies for absence

Georg Holländer, Alex Jones, Andi Roy, Rebecca Slater, Cameron Baxter, Matthew Wood, Rinn Song

2. Minutes of meeting 7th February 2022

- Minutes of the meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Matters arising and Action Points from meeting 7th February 2022 (not covered elsewhere)

- New IDRМ building is now open and operational. Groups are now migrating over.

4. Graduate Studies Committee (CR) – Annalisa Hauck joined as student rep

- CR would like a list of DPhil students from each group who will be moving into the IDRМ. A science day is being planned for all the students in the IDRМ.
- CR would like updates from each PI/Group on the research themes for DPhil student candidates. The paediatric webpage needs to be updated imminently. Places will also be advertised soon. 15 places for DPhil candidates will be available next year. 11 places available this year (although this may be possible to extend if necessary).
- A discussion is ongoing currently in the Graduate School Committee to uplift the salary for professionally qualified DPhil students. CR supports this initiative. Funding is expected to come from the Department, but if sufficient momentum is gained it is hoped that Medical Sciences may well also provide support.
- HU queried whether a student place is still available if they apply now. CR confirmed that students can apply at any time in the open field, this is usually closed at the end of July, the only limiting factor is normally down to funding. Interviews are planned at the end of July but not yet confirmed. CR urged HU to have the student put in an application ideally by mid-June.
- A social event took place a few weeks ago. It is proving difficult to get students to attend but this is thought to be the Covid effect. It is hoped as things move forward this will improve.

5. Administrative staff update (SO)

- SO reported in Feb that a key member of the admin team had resigned. A successful recruitment campaign was run and Nasir Marwat has now joined the team as a Finance Manager.
- The admin team is now stable with two members of the team who have been on parental leave due to return.
- Following FRGPC it has been reported that the Division has reached its budget targets. Following on from this the protocol on recruitment has been relaxed.

6. Information Security Baseline Compliance Self-Assessment Report (SO)

- SO shared an overview. This is an annual exercise the Department is required to complete. Specifically, IT security has been flagged across the board and is being dealt with at Divisional level. Physical and environmental security is currently being met. Compliance is hoped to be met from now on and will be discussed at the Management meeting annually. Key areas to focus on for improvement are incident management, compliance and mobile device policy and control. SO has produced an action plan for each point. There will now be a webpage to support the information governance policy which is available on the intranet. Reminders will be including in monthly newsletters and Monday morning messages.

7. HR update (CW)

- 10 recruitments live, 8 in process of shortlisting/interviewing. 22 new starters. Aware of possibly 14 looking to leave the Dept. In March the last staff development scheme application, approved all 6 applications received, a total of £21k. CW reminded the group to put forward any staff who may be interested. 01st October is the next deadline. 3 new mental health first aiders are now trained in the Department (Charlie Walber, Stefano Maio and Louise Bates). We also have new bullying and harassment advisors (Louise Bates, Khaya Rowland, Amarjit Bhomra). 17th June is the deadline for awards for excellence. Maheshi has been awarded an associate professor in this year's scheme. Line management training is being organised along with PDR training.
AP queried what the budget for training courses was and how candidates are chosen to be supported. SO explained that so far we have been in the unique position of being able to support all who have applied, but there is a budget and clearly if more applications are received then the criteria for support will have to be more closely applied.
- Peakon will hopefully be implemented after a trial period. More to come on this at the next meeting.
- Visa Fee Support – This is policy is for those who are working here on a visa and their contract is then extended, which then requires a further extension to the visa. Divisional policy is applied to all instances. This does not cover the initial visa application, indefinite leave to remain, British citizenship or immigration health surcharge. It has been agreed that the Dept can support 20% of the cost, however, if an external funder is able/willing to pay for the visa then this option should be accepted. AP explained that in the past some individuals have found it hard to cover the costs of the visas. CW explained that in cases where the 20% is not sufficient and the external funder or PI cannot support the applicant that the University Loan Scheme is used. The applicant then pays this back from salary sacrifice. The Department will underwrite the loan. However, it does cover the NHS surcharge, leave to remain and British Citizenship. If all of this is not enough then a solution could be to use the University Hardship fund, a university panel then assess this. SO added that when the criteria for support was being reviewed other departmental policies were taken into account.
- Priority Nursery Places – We have been granted 4 spaces on a priority waiting list. Please note this is not a guaranteed space, this is merely a way of pushing names further up a list. There are criteria to meet which CW explained should be looked at carefully before applying. A panel will shortly be confirmed who will be assessing the applications.
- Bridging Scheme – This is to provide funding for researchers who unfortunately have a gap in their funding between grants. CW circulated in advance the policy to

the group. Funding is for up to 6 months as a maximum. The Division have discontinued their bridging funding scheme. SO encouraged that all other possibilities for bridging support should be sought before making an application for the Department scheme. All applications will need to be approved via the divisional protocol which can take some time before approval is granted please keep this in mind when making an application.

8. Finance update (KS)

- The Department is in a very healthy position. Update available is up until April. £1.9m surplus. This is due to overheads generated from Covid related projects. Year to date position is favourable against the Q2 forecast (£365k) due to the purchase of large medical sequencing equipment and unplanned royalties' income. Q3 forecast is £2.3m surplus. 2022/2023 budget is in aligned with this year, £2.2m surplus. A change in the next year budget is the strategic investment in IDRМ. The Department is seeing some increased overheads where new PI's are joining, this is partly offset by the departmental strategic investment in the IDRМ. More details are available in appendix 3. AP queried whether the IDRМ costs are related to the whole building or just the Paediatrics related parts. KS advised that these are Paediatric costs only. The financial model looks to break even at approximately year 5 and the intention is to monitor the finances with strict controls. The space has been allocated to non-institute members in order to make it more feasible financially. SO added that the financial model was designed to generate income which can then be invested by the Director and used to payback any deficit.

9. Comms (BG)

- Website will be reviewed from the last 6 months, particularly looking at performance from the update which took place at the end of 2021. Page views have a total of 52,811 from June 2021-Jan 2022, bounce rate is down by 10% and percentage of new users; 1) organic search engines 63%, 2) direct searches 29%, 3) referrals 4% and social media 4%. It is clear the analytics are positive and points towards the website being more intuitive and user friendly.
- BG working with Yama from OVG to update their home page and other key landing pages to bring in line with the department digital comms strategy and utilising Haiku's full functionality and capabilities. This will be shared as soon as ready.
- Department twitter channel has now grown to 474 followers with a total impressions of 43,398. Average engagement rate from audience is 3%. Instagram profile has now also be launched in April 2022 with 146 followers, still in early stages and it is hoped this will grow. LinkedIn followers are at 66. The social media pages are forming a vital role in the comms strategy. In last 6 months 3 twitter campaigns have been run, piggy backing off of key awareness days to capitalise on audience engagement but also promote the research activities in the department. The new channels set-up is due to seeing the success of the OVG Instagram page plus looking at the other MSD department accounts. BG has a social media strategy template if anyone would wish to view this. In the last few weeks BG has accepted the Strong Groups proposal for a twitter channel, this is with the intention to grow and engage online communities and assist with building the profile as a thought leader.
- BG has been assisting Iris Hoffman and Tabitha Smith to create a Comms strategy for the IDRМ. This has been focused on the intranet which has now been launched.
- Newsletter for the IDRМ is now being prepared and due to go out in July.

- IDRM social media is also up and running. The twitter channel is now just under 1000 followers.

10. OUCAGS/ACF/ACL updates (MS)

- ACF – Becky Haughton was appointed to post for September 2022 at ST1 level, she has an interest in neuromuscular diseases and will be working in Laurent’s group. Already in post is Roshni Mansfield, ST1 and will be going to work with Rebeccah Slater for a research block in 2023. Nisreen Khambati who is ST3 working with Rinn Song and Rachael Atherton who is now at registrar level but due to Covid was unable obtain a slot will now be working with Andrew Pollard.
- ACL – In post is Emily Lees who is second year of a 6-year appointment. James Gilchrist is now in post which potentially could be up to 6 years. Silesh post was vacant and a locum post was advertised, this has now been provisionally filled but there is a complication with inter-deanery transfers so this is being worked through. AP advised that there will hopefully be an arrangement made, but there is an issue with training numbers. Further updates will be given in due course. There is a back-up candidate who would be appointable. The NIHR are due to advertise a Clinical Lecturer post through the OUCAGS scheme and the candidate would be eligible for this so this may be an option, although this is a very competitive post with other specialities. The plan that Anna Rose, who is currently in an OUCAGS NIHR funded ACL post which expires in 2023, could transfer into a Departmental post has been settled and it is hoped she will transfer, CW will confirm. AP queried if Anna already has a training number attached to her current academic training. If she is an ACF with a number is it possible that when she is released the number can be used, or what happens to it? MS will check with Denise Best at OUCAGS.
- Two people have been appointed to the Victoria Smallpiece Award in the last round Tim Champion-Smith for Rebeccah Slater and Jacob Reading for Laurent Servais group. MS highlighted that the advert for next year should be activated in the second half of 2022, with notification to Geeta Anand and MS. This should be circulated within the Oxford School of Paediatrics.

ACTION: CW to activate the next advertisement in second half of 2022.

11. AOB

- None noted.

12. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 5th October 2022, 1200-1400