

BRITISH SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION MEDICAL SOCIOLOGY GROUP Annual General Meeting

Thursday 14th September 2017, 12:45 – 13:45
Galleria Bar, University of York

Forty two members of the BSA Medical Sociology Group attended the meeting. It was chaired by co-convenors Fiona Stevenson and Sasha Scambler. Elaine Forester was responsible for minute taking.

1. Minutes of the 2016 AGM

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 8th September 2016 and available to view on pages 151 to 153 in the conference programme, were agreed to be accurate and correct.

2. Convenor's Report - This report was delivered by Fiona Stevenson.

The 49th Medical Sociology Conference received 377 abstracts, compared with 264 in 2016, with 268 offered oral presentation slots, and 229 presenting after speaker withdrawals, with 315 presentations at the conference in total including posters, Pecha Kuccha's and Special Events. (12 symposia/special events including the committee events) In summary the demand for conference attendance has risen back almost to the 2015 levels. The committee maintained the number of funded places again for the 2017 conference, with 54 applications received and 24 offered this year, 15 to students and 9 to unwaged or outside academia delegates. The committee will continue to utilise funds to support members of the group to attend the conference whenever possible. Attendance of the Early Career Day this year has been low with just 18 bookings compared to 32 in 2016. This slow uptake could be related to the reduction of the subsidy for the day being reduced from £125 to £18 per delegate. In total 30 funded places have been allocated this year to committee members, BSA Staff and invited speakers up from the 19 in 2016 but down from 33 in 2015. There continues to be a healthy international interest in the conference with 19.5% of delegates attending the 2017.

Conference Innovation

In 2017 the committee have decided to trial a panel of speakers as the closing plenary Paul Higgs, James Nazroo and Karen Lowton will speak on the subject of "Why Aging Matters" If successful this form of panel presentation will be included in subsequent conferences. 7 Special Events 3 Symposia and 2 Committee events are included in this year's programme with "Introduction to Norwegian Health Sociology" being included for the first time.

Report from the 'Medicine, Health and Illness Stream' at the BSA Annual Conference April 2017 from Ewen Speed: 88 papers were submitted to the stream (an increase from the 50 in 2016 and slightly up from the 80 in 2015). The committee would like to thank Catherine Pope for delivering the Stream Plenary for 2017 and confirm Judy Green will be the stream plenary for the 2018 conference at Northumbria University.

Regional / Special Interest Groups – There continues to be very buoyant actives from most of the Regional Groups, the current active regional groups are East Midlands, North West, North East, South West, Wales, West Midlands, London, Scottish, South Coats and Yorkshire. All regional groups are self-sustaining and can draw on a fund of money which will remain at £400/year per group to help support their activities. New proposals are welcome from regions that currently do not have a study group. Please contact any to the MedSoc committee for more information.

3. Financial Report – Kerry Collins, BSA Company Secretary presented the financial report

At the end of the financial year (31st December 2017) the BSA audited accounts show a credit balance on the MedSoc account of £95,173. Again the funds were utilised in the year so that reserves decreased in line with planned expenditure. The conference fees increased by £35 for a full conference registration (£295) from the previous year but only just above the 2009 rate (£285), in an attempt to break even rather than incur a substantial deficit. Based on current forecasted figures for this year's conference the plan is to make a deficit of just under £7,000, compared with a final deficit of £14K for last year.

4. MedSoc Committee Nominations

There are 6 committee vacancies: 1 Postgraduate Researcher (PGRS) member vacancy and 5 ordinary committee member vacancy.

2 nominations were received for PGRS and 6 for ordinary members.

Votes were collected at the AGM and after a count of votes Yesmean Khalil was elected as the PGRS representative and Kylie Baldwin, Cath Coveney, Sarah Hoare, Jenny Remnant and Michelle Webster as ordinary committee members.

It was proposed that changes be made to the way in which nominations are received for new committee members. The proposal was for all vacancies to be advertised via JISCMail as the current procedure and to all who have registered to attend the conference (new introduction) with a cut-off date for nominations to be received two weeks before the conference. Mini biogs are to be submitted from each nominee and circulated to all BSA members who are attending the conference. Voting can be on line or at the conference and will close 1 hour before the AGM. Cathy Pope suggested using an Elections Services provider to facilitate the new type of election. As no final agreement was reached at the AGM this proposal will be taken to the next committee meeting for further discussion and any required constitutional change.

The MedSoc committee would like to formally thank Anika Baddeley, Lynne Stobbart, Fiona Stevenson, Jenny Remnant and Paul Whybrow for all their work and commitment during their period on the committee.

5. Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness – Trustee’s Report delivered by Jonathan Gabe

a) Trustees.

Professor Joan Busfield took on the role of Treasurer in place of Professor Lindsay Prior in September 2016. Prof S. Nettleton and Dr L. Monaghan also commenced their role as Trustees in September 2016. Prof K. Hunt resigned as a Trustee in September 2016 and was replaced by Prof C. Williams. She attended her first Trustees meeting in March 2017. On behalf of the current Trustees we thank Prof Hunt for her work over previous years.

The Treasurer now has a Financial Assistant for four hours a week.

b) Contract for Editorial Services with Cardiff University:

The Contract with Cardiff University for the provision of Editorial Services for Sociology of Health and Illness had been renewed for a three year period from September 2015. Discussion has already taken place with the new Chair of the Editorial Board of Sociology of Health and Illness, Prof C. Pope, who is responsible for initiating the search for new Editors for the journal.

c) Contract for publication of the Journal ‘Sociology of Health & Illness’:

The contract to publish the journal for which the Trustees are responsible is due for renewal in January 2018. One year’s notice to terminate any existing arrangements is required by the parties involved, namely the Trustees and the publisher; John Wiley & Son. As a consequence, the Trustees have been involved in negotiations with the current publisher during the year about terms of renewal. Wiley offered an improved financial arrangement and the Trustees decided to extend the contract with Wiley. A new contract has now been signed covering the period January 2017 to December 2024.

d) Foundation Awards:

The following awards were made during 2016-2017.

Post Graduate International Conference Travel Grants - During the year 22 applications for these awards were received by the Foundation, as against 13 applications during the previous year. Twelve awards were offered against only four in 2015-16.

Mildred Blaxter Post-Doctoral Fellowships - These were advertised twice during the financial year. There were 18 applications across the two rounds and two were awarded, one in the first round and one in the second. One was awarded to Kylie Baldwin of De Montfort University, the other to Faye Dennis of King’s College London.

Symposia & Workshops Support Awards - There were 15 applications for these awards during the year (against 7 in 2015-16), and 6 six were supported by the Foundation.

Research Grant Development Awards.

There were six applications in the first round and none in the second (there had been none in 2015-16 when there was only one round because of financial constraints). Two awards were made, one to Gillian Bendelow, the other to Celia Roberts.

e) Proposed schedule of awards to be made in 2017-18: As well as supporting the continuing work of the editorial team at Cardiff, the Trustees intend to advertise and fund two Mildred Blaxter Fellowships, up to 16 Post-Graduate travel awards (with the maximum value increased from £600 to £800), up to six Symposia/Workshops, and up to four Research Grant Development Awards. Details of how to apply for the awards and closing dates for applications are provided on the Foundation’s website.

6. Cost of Living Blog

The 'Cost of Living' blog has been operating for 5 years and during this time we have published an article every week except for short breaks during Christmas and Easter. Every article published is peer appraised by two editors. Over the last year we have had 23,000 pageviews of our articles. Our bounce rate (indicates if people view more than one article when they visit to site) has now improved to around 70% and this is above average for a blog of this type. Around 50% of visits to the blog come from the UK. The next largest region to access the blog is North America (15%) with the remaining visits from around the world.

The majority of our articles are written by the Editorial Collective (Ewen Speed, Simon Carter, Hannah Bradby, Charlie Davison, Judy green, Lesley Henderson, Jen Remnant, Sasha Scambler, Carl Walker, and Catherine Will).

About 25% of our articles are from guest authors. We welcome post from guest authors and have a policy of aiding authors to develop their work for publication on the blog.

The blog is an engagement blog to bring sociological analysis and understanding to a wider audience. Over the last year our authors have been contacted by the Financial Times and the Guardian as a result of blog articles.

7. Phil Strong Memorial Prize

After previous years concerns regarding the lack of nominations received to this prize, promotional activities were increased resulting in three nominations received for 2017. The winner of this year prizes will be announced at the conference dinner. Selection will again be at random as clarification is still required regarding the implementation of the selection criteria for the 2018 prize.

8. MedSoc Committee Update

After three years being co-convenor Fiona Stevenson is stepping down and is succeeded by Flis Henwood.

9. Any other business

The next Annual General Meeting will be held at the Glasgow Caledonian University, during the 50th Annual Conference on Thursday 13th September 2018.

The minutes of the 2017 AGM will be printed into the programme of the 2018 conference.