**Title of paper:** Minutes of a meeting of the BGS Northern Ireland Council Committee held 21 October 2021 via MS Teams

Author**: BGS**

Purpose: **For information and approval: item 2**

BGS Northern Ireland: Dr Patricia McCaffrey, Dr Mark Roberts (Chair), Dr William McKeown, Dr Jan Ritchie and Dr Stephen Todd.

BGS Secretariat: Sarah Mistry (BGS CEO), Janet Sarll (for item 7), and Mark Stewart.

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

1.1 Apologies were received from Stacey Finlay and Dr Dominic Hart.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting held on 28 April 2021**

2.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3. Report from the Chair of BGS Northern Ireland**

3.1 Dr Roberts gave a brief update (see Appendix 1). Key issues:

* Dr Jennifer Burns, the BGS President, and Dr Roberts met with the Northern Ireland Health Minister, Robin Swann, some time ago about re-starting services post-pandemic and to encourage the expansion of the specialty’s workforce. Dr Roberts felt it was now time to follow up on this meeting. **ACTION: Dr Roberts and Sally Greenbrook, the BGS Policy Manager, to contact Robin Swann to arrange a further meeting.**
* Dr Roberts is sitting as Chair on the Regional Integrated Care Board to represent BGS NI interests; the Board is seeking to agree metrics for acute care in the context of hospital at home (the next meeting is in November).

**4. BGS Update**

4.1 Sarah Mistry, the BGS CEO, gave a verbal update.

* Key issues: the BGS is focussing on the issue of delayed discharge from hospital which will include a blog campaign and working with other organisations on possible solutions associated with social care staffing levels; shortages in the specialty’s workforce continue to be a cause for concern; the BGS is monitoring the worrying rise in covid infection rates and its impact on our members and their working environment.
* The BGS is about to publish guidance on hospital acquired covid and how best to prevent this. Recent BGS publications include a second workforce report called [*Through the Visor 2*](https://www.bgs.org.uk/policy-and-media/%E2%80%98through-the-visor-2%E2%80%99-%E2%80%93-second-report-highlights-continuing-toll-of-the-covid-19); a BGS Care Homes position statement called [*Ambitions for Change*](https://www.bgs.org.uk/policy-and-media/%E2%80%98ambitions-for-change-report-on-improving-healthcare-in-care-homes-launched)*; and* [*Right Time, Right Place*](https://www.bgs.org.uk/policy-and-media/%E2%80%98right-time-right-place-urgent-community-based-care-for-older-people-%E2%80%93-new-bgs), focussing on preventing avoidable hospital admissions though the provision of community-based urgent care.
* BGS meetings are online until the end of the year but hybrid from 2022, including the joint EUGMS/BGS Congress 28-30 September. BGS membership is growing all the time (and now stands at 4,500 members) and the Society’s profile has increased during the covid pandemic. An overhaul of BGS prizes and grants is underway, which may create new funding opportunities next year.
* The Chancellor’s autumn budget statement:

**5. BGS Northern Ireland Council Committee Current Vacancies and support for the region**

5.1 Volunteers to step into the role of Chair of BGS Northern Ireland are still being sought. The BGS would be very happy to hear from anyone who might be able to support the NI Council by taking on this vital role. It was suggested that further work needed to be done on re-engaging with and re-energising the wider membership, possibly with the new Chair taking on the role in conjunction with a motivated registrar. The lack of face-to-face meetings is perhaps inhibiting volunteers from coming forward. The BGS would be very open to helping to highlight, celebrate and reward the work done by the members of the Council Committee. A recruitment campaign is planned to boost NAHP numbers in Wales and a similar effort may also help in Northern Ireland. Anyone interested in the position of Chair is asked to contact Dr Roberts via [doctormarkroberts@gmail.com](mailto:doctormarkroberts@gmail.com)

**6. Trainees Update**

6.1 Dr McKeown reported on the upcoming changes to the new curriculum for care of the elderly, specifically: the longer secondments (slightly more than previously expected); the fact that trainees will have to declare a special care interest (e.g. movement disorders, incontinence or community medicine); PYAs appear to have been dropped; training is to be completed in four years rather than five, as was previously the case.

Post-meting note: As he was unable to participate in the meeting, Dr Hart asked for the following update to be circulated to the Council Committee:

*“I wanted to ensure the committee were aware that the new curriculum was approved on the 7 October and that it will be rolled out from the start of August 2022 and that the geriatric medicine SAC would advise reviewing the proportion of training delivered locally in stroke units. Also to pass on that when the college develops its learning materials around the changes I will set up a series of events to disseminate it. In the meantime, I would encourage educational supervisors to meet with their colleagues to look at how the curriculum can be delivered. I would also like to point out that the Stroke TPD and the Stroke SAC feel that ‘theme for service’ in stroke should only be delivered in centres with access to specialist imaging which will have an impact on peripheral units. Local stroke leads should discuss this within stroke circles and their educational leads and come back with an agreed local view in the context of the competencies required for the stroke theme for service. The competencies can be found in the updated curriculum* (Appendix 2).”

**7. BGS Northern Ireland finance update**

7.1 The Council Committee noted the pre-circulated paper, which was summarised by Janet Sarll.

* At 31 March 2021, the total NI fund was £12,413 (2020: £16,082). The fund has been audited by BGS auditors Sayer Vincent and is separately identifiable in BGS Statutory Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021.
* The local funds held at Ulster Bank were safely transferred to BGS central on 12 July 2021 where they will be administered by the BGS finance team.
* To 30 September 2021 an additional £177 has been received relating to the autumn meeting.

**8. AOB**

8.1 Regional Specialty Advisor: Dr Todd is seeking to demit; a volunteer to take on this role would be very welcome; this would be a good role for a newly appointed consultant. Please contact Dr Todd via [stephen.todd@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:stephen.todd@westerntrust.hscni.net) if you are interested.

**Summary of actions arising**

1. Dr Roberts and Sally Greenbrook, the BGS Policy Manager, to contact Robin Swann to arrange a further meeting.

2. Anyone interested in the role of Chair for BGS Northern Ireland to contact Dr Roberts via [doctormarkroberts@gmail.com](mailto:doctormarkroberts@gmail.com)

3. Anyone interested in taking on the role of Regional Specialty Advisor to contact Dr Todd via [stephen.todd@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:stephen.todd@westerntrust.hscni.net)