

General Practice Registrars Australia

Minutes – Annual General Meeting

Date: 20 November 2021
via videoconference

Meeting open: 12:30pm (AEDT)

Welcome and acknowledgment of country by Scott Williams, GPRA Chair

Attendance:

Scott Williams	GPRA Chair	Wissam Ghamrawi	GPEX
Sama Balasubramanian	GPRA Director	Natasha Nottingham	GPEX
Antony Bolton	GPRA Director	Sophie Hamilton	GPEX
Jessica Tidemann	GPRA Director	Kim Huynh	GPTQ
Xander Alpherts	GPRA Director	Sharon Fitzpatrick	GPTT
Erin O'Donnell-Taylor	GPRA Director/WAGPET	Darran Foo	GP Synergy
Nicki Herriot	GPRA Director	Katie Fisher	GP Synergy
Karyn Matterson	GPRA Director elect	Mohammad Islam	GP Synergy
Kate McCabe-Simon	GPRA Director elect	Genevieve Aisthorpe	JCU GPT
Melanie Smith	GPRA Registrar Advisor	Amanda Cohn	MCCC
Andrew Gosbell	GPRA	Marcus Hall	MCCC
Tyron Clayworth	IGPRN	Mardi Beck	MCCC
Mandy McDonald-Susic	GPRA Minutes	Oliver Hughes	NTGPE

Apologies:

Rebekah Hoffman	GPRA
Sean Black Tiong	RACGP GPiT
Dan Wilson	AMACDT
Aaron Rhodes, Chavy Arora, Michelle Kah, Susan Wang	EVGPT
Andrea Lamprecht	GPTQ
Aaron Hawkins, James Robinson	GPTT
Terri Haworth, Stephanos Eliades	GP Synergy
Erin O'Hare	JCU GPT
Eleanor Woodward	NTGPE
Hannah Goodchild, Humera Khanum, Anthony Rengel	WAGPET

Acceptance of previous Minutes:

Resolution: That the minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting be accepted.

Moved: Sama Balasubramanian Seconded: Xander Alpherts, resolution carried

1.0 Presentation of members elected as Directors for ratification

Resolution: That the appointment of elected Director, Karyn Matterson and Kate McCabe-Simon be ratified.

Moved: Erin O'Donnell-Taylor Seconded: Sama Balasubramanian, resolution carried

2.0 Directors' superannuation payments

- In FY21 it came to the attention of the Board that there are circumstances where directors should be receiving superannuation payments in accordance with the Superannuation Guarantee legislation. Therefore, the Board resolved that, where superannuation payments are applicable, that directors should have the option for this payment to their super fund to be on top of their director fees, not inclusive of.
- While the Board has voted to not increase the stipend amounts, the addition of superannuation exclusive of the paid stipend will result in a modest overall increase in remuneration of \$4,031 (to the total Board remuneration budget) which equates to 0.41% (of total expenditure). It should be noted that such an increase can be met in the current and future financial position of the organisation. The requested amount is to ensure the provision of available funds should a director elect to receive the Superannuation Guarantee. Presently there are Directors who already elect not to receive the Superannuation Guarantee payment.
- In line with clause 11.7(b) of the GPRA Constitution any increase in Director remuneration requires Members' approval.

Resolution: That there be no increase to director stipend in 2022 but that the superannuation guarantee be paid on top of stipend.

Moved: Amanda Cohn Seconded: Kim Huynh, resolution carried

3.0 Chair Report

Presented by Scott Williams.

- On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to provide the Chairperson's report for General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA) for 2020-21. Last year I reported on the disruption to our lives generally that COVID had brought about and even though we are 12 months on, for many, this disruption remains just as relevant today as it did back in June 2020. As a Board we have continued to be challenged operating in a virtual world and have risen to each and every occasion.
- Our CEO Andrew Gosbell and all of the GPRA team continued to operate during these very challenging times, with Victorians enduring the longest period of lockdown in this country. Despite this they have continued to respond to our member needs who are facing their own unique challenges in a pandemic world. The GPRA team have maintained the important informing and reporting relationship to the Department of Health on matters such as our grant funding acquittal.
- Many had hoped the beginning of 2021 was the start of something new but even now we continue to exist in a world of border closures, self-isolation and a vaccination roll-out program, which thankfully as we know we are slowly emerging from. As a Board we have continued to be ever vigilant as to the full impacts of the pandemic in regard to physical, mental and financial that are yet to be fully realised.
- In relation to governance matters the organisation's internal practices and procedures remain a focus for the Board. The radical shifts to our everyday lives highlight the importance of a continued focus on governance to be able to respond to various regulatory and reporting requirements. I am pleased to report that as with the prior years we have had no regulatory breaches for 20-21.
- We completed the annual Board evaluation as with previous years and during a brief, fortunate window of reduced travelling restrictions a large proportion of Board members were able to attend a training session in person on Risk Management. Unfortunately, three Directors were required to join remotely due to local border restrictions. Risk Management remains a priority area with the outputs from the training being a review process of our existing risk register and introduction of new relevant policies. All of these changes are with the view to enhancing what

was already in place. Performance evaluations were also completed for the CEO, Chair, President and Directors in 2020, which are executed on an annual basis.

- In line with our Board renewal practices there were only a few changes to the Board membership and roles which provided some much-needed stability after the numerous changes in 2019. These changes relate to completion of tenures.
- We appointed a new President Dr Antony Bolton, who had joined the Board as Director in April 2020, following the completion of Dr Sama Balasubramanian's tenure in his role as President. Given the challenges being faced by the Board and for continuity, Dr Sama Balasubramanian then took up an Appointed Director role being able to support Dr Bolton in his first year as president.
- Nicki Herriot, also joined the Board in May 2021 to the vacant Appointed Director role. Nicki joins the Board with significant experience within the primary health sector including having held the CEO role for the Northern Territory Primary Health Network. Nicki has also assumed the Chair role of GPRA's Nomination and Remuneration sub-committee.
- Ingrid Williams completed her final term as an Appointed Director. I would like to thank Ingrid for her contributions to the Board during her long tenure, especially some earlier periods where the organisation faced some significant challenges.
- The Board continues to support the equality agenda for Boards and has maintained a gender ratio of 50:50, well ahead of the industry average.

Acknowledgements

- As Chair, I would like to thank all the Directors, our new appointees and retiring Directors in 2020-21 for their outstanding contributions to the Board. It was only in early 2021 that the majority of Board members met in person for the very time given that appointments occurred just ahead of the 1st wave of the pandemic. Indeed, one Director is still yet to meet the Board in person.
- While not strictly within the 20-21 financial year reporting period I would like to take this opportunity to thank Board Directors Dr Rebekah Hoffman and Dr Sama Balasubramanian for their diligence and contributions throughout their tenure as both Directors finish their terms in this new financial year in November and December respectively.
- In closing it is very appropriate that I finish with another type of closing, in particular this latest chapter in GPRA's history as we will soon farewell Andrew in his role as CEO. GPRA and indeed I as Chair have enjoyed the continuity of Andrew's tenure for nearly 5 years. I know that in December Andrew leaves GPRA in a strong position which is very much needed given that we are facing the biggest disruptors to the GP training industry for some time. So, on behalf on the Board, our members, and our stakeholders thank you Andrew and we wish you well in this next chapter of your career

Resolution: To accept the Chair Report.

Moved: Xander Alpherts Seconded: Jessica Tidemann, resolution carried

2.0 President Report

Verbal report presented by Antony Bolton.

- Noted written report in Annual Report.
- Transition to college led training:
 - GPRA has continued to advocate wherever possible, verbally and in writing, corresponding directly to the Minister about significant issues particularly regarding short timeline and slow progress, with acknowledgement received of the communication and engagement.
 - Reference group of GPRA members initiated to assist with the transition process, has been and will continue to be very helpful in shaping our advocacy.

- Continued to strengthen our relationship with stakeholders in the sector but note that the Dept is ultimately the decision maker. The Grant Opportunity for college-led training is soon to be published which will outline expectations from the Colleges and how success will be measured. This will enable consultation with members more widely once published.
- Employment reform - Parental leave proposal for AGPT registrars discussed GPTAC. Good proposal meeting the needs of members, currently with the Minister and hopeful of a positive outcome.
- Continuing to work with General Practice Supervisors Australia (GPSA) and agree on principles for employment conditions to be based. The document has been accepted by the Department, and will be able to share with members in near future. Indicates a good working relationship with GPSA in the future.

Resolution: To accept the President Report.

Moved: Natasha Nottingham

Seconded: Sama Balasubramanian, resolution carried

3.0 CEO report

Verbal report presented by Andrew Gosbell.

- GPRA has nearly 9,000 GP trainee and early career GP members, with at least 60% of registrars on AGPT pathway in our member database. In addition, almost 7,000 prevocational doctors and 5,000 medical students are associate members.
- COVID-19
 - The global coronavirus pandemic continues a period of sustained disruption, uncertainty, and significant challenge, with the duration of the pandemic and the long-term impacts on our society and on GP training unclear. Nonetheless, GPRA has continued to provide support for, and advocate on behalf of, GP trainees in this period of ‘pandemic affected training’ to ensure the post-COVID, future of general practice.
 - As many GPRA members raised concerns over the impact of the pandemic on progression through training and ability to attain Fellowship, GPRA was supportive of the RACGP’s intention to transition Fellowship exams to online platforms in 2020 so that both GP colleges could continue to offer examinations during the pandemic. However, technical failures and resultant cancellation of the RACGP written exams in October 2020, along with issues with ACRRM’s online examinations in September 2020 were traumatic events for many GP trainees who were already highly stressed by the impacts of the pandemic on their training and personal circumstances. GPRA provided significant support and vigorously advocated on behalf of these exam candidates for both Colleges to do everything possible to make appropriate and meaningful reparations to the affected trainees.
 - The public health measures, of suppression and vaccination roll-out, have been a necessary response to managing the pandemic; however, the extended lockdown in Melbourne, in August - November 2020 and again for various periods in 2021, have impacted our office and staff, plus the ongoing uncertainty has made in-person events and travel very challenging in the past year. Despite this GPRA has continued to deliver for our members and we look forward to 2022 as national vaccination rates will allow greater opportunities.
- Support and advice for GP trainees
 - Support and advice for members in relation to employment and training issues is a highly valued service provided by GPRA. We were delighted that Past-president Dr Sama Balasubramanian joined Dr Melanie Smith, as our Registrar Advisors in 2021 to continue to provide individual advice to members enquiries.

- Education and exam preparation support
 - Examination preparation activities specifically targeted to IMG doctors were successfully expanded, in the past year, as a webinar series to assist with preparation for the RACGP written exams and online study workshops for the RCE. GPRA acknowledges the contribution of Dr Abdul, who has worked with us to present these exam preparation events.
 - New editions of GPRA's suite of three low-cost exam preparation books - General Practice Written Exams and Clinical Cases (Volume 1 and 2)- were released in the past year. The new editions have been updated to ensure alignment with current clinical guidelines and college examination requirements.
- Our networks
 - We have been working to re-establish and strengthen engagement with prevocational doctors through the development of the Future General Practitioners (FGP) Network. The FGP Network is based on state/regional FGP Advisors, who are a late stage registrar or early career GPs, linked to hospital-based FGP Ambassadors within their region. The initial pilot of this program has been successful in three regions - WA, SA and Victoria - with expansion into NSW progressing in 2021. Five FGP Advisers have been engaged across these four regions. and they have recruited junior doctors as FGP Ambassadors in a number of teaching hospitals.
 - GPRA continues to support a vibrant and active cohort of medical students through a national network of GPSN clubs engaging students with interests in general practice at every Australian University medical school. Despite the pandemic a number of state-based events and project initiatives were successfully held over the past year enabling students from across universities to connect, participate in skills workshops and gain exposure to GPs and GP registrars. Well done GPSN!
- Operations
 - A substantial redesign and redevelopment project over the past year enabled a new GPRA website to be launched in August 2021. In addition, a redesigned, 'mobile device friendly' eNewsletter has improved access and engagement of members with communications and information provided by GPRA. A particular acknowledgement to our Design & Digital Advisor, Mylo Norman, for his outstanding work on these initiatives.
 - Continuing robust financial management and the extension of government funding through our Department of Health grant to at least the end of 2022, supplemented with revenue from advertising and sales of goods and services, has ensured GPRA's stable financial position is maintained.
 - Finally, as I step down as CEO in a few weeks' time, I reflect on the profound significance of our organisation and the value it provides to both members and the GP training sector and want to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity and privilege of leading GPRA over the past 5 years. I am very grateful to Board Chair, Scott and the three Presidents I have had the privilege of working with, Mel, Sama and Tony. Thank you to the GPRA Board for their guidance and support, and the Advisory Council and GPRA members for your input and support. And last but not least, to the GPRA staff – though small in number, you are a great team who are truly dedicated to delivering for GPRA and its members – thank you very much Mandy, Rachel, Mylo, Eddie, Vicky, Ayshika and Rhys.

Resolution: To accept the CEO Report.

Moved: Nicki Herriot Seconded: Sama Balasubramanian, resolution carried

4.0 Nominations and Remunerations Report.

Presented by Nicki Herriot.

- Policies and procedures register monitored and approval of updated HR Manual.
- Given the challenges from the coronavirus pandemic maintained a strong focus on governance to support the organisation in supporting members and staff.
- Completed the annual Board evaluation.
- Conducted a Risk management Board development session.
- Ensured Board remuneration policy is in line with national superannuation guarantee requirements.
- Completed annual performance evaluations of the CEO, President, Chair and all Directors.
- Acknowledgement of the work done to establish sound governance processes and a continuous improvement approach.
- The Board acknowledges the support offered to members and staff were a focus during the difficulty of the pandemic.
- Risk management training completed and raised the focus on being aware of engagement and making sure the Board stays connected.

Resolution: To accept Nominations & Remunerations Report

Moved: Erin O'Donnell-Taylor Seconded: Antony Bolton, resolution carried

5.0 Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee Report

Powerpoint presentation report presented by Xander Alpherts.

- FY21 Financial Results
 - Revenue up 2%, driven by stronger revenue from operations; reduced cash flow boost and other revenue
 - Salaries and wages up but other costs materially down, mostly due to Covid environment
 - Net surplus up due to cost savings; timing of expenditure.
- Financial position
 - Current assets up mainly due to cash
 - PP&E is head office
 - Liabilities stable
 - Net equity up
 - Overall financial position remains strong.

Resolution: That the 2020/21 Annual Report be received.

Moved: Jessica Tidemann Seconded: Xander Alpherts, resolution carried

Resolution: That the 2020/21 Annual Financial Statements be received.

Moved: Erin O'Donnell-Taylor Seconded: Nicki Herriot, resolution carried

Resolution: That the 2020/21 Auditor's Report be received.

Moved: Xander Alpherts Seconded: Marcus Hall, resolution carried

Resolution: To accept Finance, Audit & Risk Management Report.

Moved: Erin O'Donnell-Taylor Seconded: Nicki Herriot, resolution carried

8.0 Business arising and members queries

- Nil

AGM close: 1:08pm