

# BSA Medical Sociology Group Annual General Meeting

## Everyone Welcome

We are keen to invite all conference delegates to our Annual General Meeting which will take place on Thursday 10 September in the bar of the Galleria Restaurant, Rodger Kirk Centre. The meeting will begin at 12:45 and is planned to be finished by 13:45. All delegates are welcome but only BSA Members are eligible to vote on the business of the Medical Sociology Group. The AGM includes our annual report on the activities of the committee and the awarding of the Phil Strong Memorial Prize, as well as news from the *Sociology of Health and Illness* and the *Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness*, and the election for one new member of the editorial board of *Sociology of Health and Illness*.

This year we will be appointing a new Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) committee member. If you are a member of the BSA and you are interested in being considered, please ask a member of the committee at the registration desk for a nomination form and make sure you hand in your completed form by 12 noon on Thursday. Elections, if necessary, will take place at the AGM. Please see below for the 2014 AGM minutes.

## Thursday 11 September 2014, 12:45 – 13:45 Bar Area, Conference Aston Building, Aston University

Fifty four members of the BSA Medical Sociological Group attended the meeting. It was chaired by co-convenors Helen Eborall and Jude Robinson. Elaine Forester was responsible for minute taking.

### 1. Minutes of the 2013 AGM

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 12 September 2013 were agreed to be accurate and correct.

### 2. Matters Arising - None at the 2014 AGM

### 3. Convenor's Report - This report was delivered by Helen Eborall.

There has again been an overwhelming interest in the 2014 MedSoc conference resulting in the largest number a bookings to attend the conference to date. There were 259 delegates in 2010, 305 in 2011, 334 in 2012 and 362 in 2013 and 366 in 2014

The 46<sup>th</sup> Medical Sociology Conference received 337 abstracts, 172 were offered oral presentation slots, with 159 presenting after speaker withdrawals, with 28 posters and 11 symposia/special events including the committee events: Cost of Living Symposium (organised by Ewen Speed and Simon Carter) and the 'Author-Meets-Critics' session with Michael Montoya. As noted above, there continues to be an increase in the number of delegates attending the conference with 366 delegates confirmed to attend this year, 237 for the full conference and 64 as day delegates. The committee maintained the number of funded places again this year with 24 (2 withdrawals) allocated to Postgraduate Students, 4 to unwaged and 4 to sociologists outside academia and 33 funded places allocated to committee members, BSA Staff and invited speakers. There continues to be a healthy international interest in the conference with seventeen7% of delegates attending the 2014 conference coming from overseas.

This year there has been a number of "conference firsts / innovations" introduced to the programme. "Pecha Kucha" a new form of presentation was trialled and initial feedback has been very positive. There was a new prize introduced for the "Best Oral Presentation of the Day" as voted by delegates. Again there has been a great deal of positive feedback about this innovation, and depending on the final conference feedback both may continue for the 2015 conference which will be held at the University of York 9 – 11 September. The Mentoring Corner continued for a second year and as all nine slots were taken very quickly, more slots were released during the conference.

**Early Career Researchers' (ECR) Event** – Following the first successful ECR day at the 2012 MedSoc conference and the very well attended event at the 2013 conference, the third event has taken place at the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference with over 55 attendees. The MedSoc committee would like to thank the organising committee Laura Knight and Tim Banks for the work they have undertaken to make this a very successful and well attended event. This

event was fully supported by the committee in the form of accommodation and reduced registration fees to all attending. To ensure continuity of the PGRS work, Tim Banks will remain on the committee for the 2014-15 year, with a new PGRS member elected during the AGM. .

Report from the 'Medicine, Health and Illness Stream' at the **BSA Annual Conference** April 2014: 83 papers were submitted to the stream, 52 were offered oral slots, 12 'roundtable discussion' and 7 poster slots, with 10 withdrawals from the conference programme. Unfortunately Gareth Williams was unable to delivery his Stream Plenary due to ill health. The MedSoc committee would like to thank Catherine Will and Sally Brown for all of the work undertaken to ensure the success of the Medicine Health and Illness Stream and for helping to promote Medical Sociology. Ex-MedSoc committee member and Co-Convenor Catherine Will is stepping down as the co-stream co-ordinator and will be replaced by Kate Weiner for the 2015 conference. Sally Brown will continue as the co-stream co-ordinator. The abstract submission deadline is 17 October 2014. Paul Bissell is confirmed as the Medicine Health and Illness stream plenary.

**Regional / Special Interest Groups** – There continues to be very buoyant actives from most of the Regional Groups with the newly created South Coast Group and a proposal for a Scottish Regional Group has been suggested (we understand they will be submitting a proposal to the committee). Other active regional groups are London, North and East Midlands, North West, North East, South West, Wales, West Midlands 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. The Special Interest Groups of the Sociology of Mental Health and the Applied Qualitative Health Research currently receive the £400 fund and the committee has agreed to increase this to £800 for the Jan – Dec 2015 financial year. The terms of reference will be updated to reflect the distinction between the way in which MedSoc regional and special interest groups are funded from the way in which other BSA study groups are funded. Any new proposals are welcome from regions who currently do not have a study group. Please contact any to the MedSoc committee for more information.

**Further MedSoc Activities (in the 2013-14 year)** include:

- 1) The committee continued to provide funding to support the 'Cost of Living' blog.
- 2) The committee continued to provide funding to support the MSo editorial team until the end of their term June 2014. The committee are planning to hold a celebratory event at the 2015 conference in York. (originally planned for 2014) This event will replace one of the plenary slots to mark the achievements of MSN/MSo over the years. More information will be available on this event as plans are made towards the end of 2014.
- 3) Communication Strategy: The planned "New BSA website launch" for 2014, has been delayed due to problems/issues with the provider. The MedSoc committee have communicated their disappointment with this delay and ES from the committee has joined the BSA working group to aid the process going forward.

#### **4. Financial Report** – Helen Eborall presented the financial report

At the end of the financial year (30 September 2013) the BSA audited accounts shows a credit balance on the MedSoc account of £157,411 compared with £183,296 in 2012. The funds were utilised in the year so that reserves decreased in line with planned expenditure. The conference fees increased by £10 for a full conference registration, the previous three years had a reduction in fees by £25 per member delegate which was introduced in 2011 but continue to be below prices since 2006. Based on current forecast figures for this year's conference at Aston University, Birmingham, it is anticipated a planned deficit of just over £30,000 will be generated (based on 348 delegates), compared to a £18,000 deficit from last year's conference. This deficit has been planned to spend down the surplus fund and has been undertaken by the following measures: 1) maintaining reduced fees for BSA members, 2) funding 32 free places for the conference, 3) supporting the early career researcher event 4) funding the Cost of Living blog and MSo, 5) supporting the regional and special interest groups. Based upon the forecasted deficit for the 2014 conference, the closing balance for 2014 should be about £113,290. Note that part of the annual spending is the annual payment to the BSA for staff which has been £25,000/year over recent years.

Reduced spending (in terms of activities) is planned for the 2014-15 year to bring the reserves down to the recommended level of £100,000. All the planned spend down measures are fully reversible and if not financially sustainable can easily be removed from the group's yearly activities.

#### **5. Election Results**

##### a) SHI Editorial Board

There were nine nominations for the two vacancies on the editorial board. The full list of nomination has been displayed on the notice board at the registration desk. The online nomination processes had also been

published on the conference booking confirmation generated by the BSA office and distributed via the MedSoc JISC mail.

After a count of votes Catherine Will and Rose Barbour were elected to the Editorial Board.

- b) Medical Sociology Group
- c) There were five ordinary member vacancies for the MedSoc committee and one PGRS member seven nominations were received for ordinary committee membership and four for the PGRS member After a count of votes Paul Bissell, Donna Bramwell, Flis Henwood, Sasha Scambler and Sharon Spooner were elected to the main committee and Sarah Hoare as the PGRS representative.

## **6. Phil Strong Memorial Prize**

Catriona Rooke reported that this year the Phil Strong Memorial Prize received one applicant: Rose Closson from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine will receive the award the £1,200 will go towards her field work in Kenya.

## **7. Sociology of Health and Illness – Editor’s Report**

- a) Justin Waring has been appointed Chairperson of the board, following a highly successful stewardship of Joan Busfield
- b) We announced and held elections for new appointments to the editorial board to which Rose Barbour and Catherine Will were elected

## **8. Cost of Living Blog - 1st ANNUAL REPORT MEDSOC AGM**

The ‘Cost of Living’ blog went live on September 3 2012. Since this date we have had 40,500 unique visitors to the site and 69,300 page-views. Over the last year we have had 20,900 visitors and 32,700 page-views. The majority of visitors viewed the blog from within the UK (54.4% of page views) with the USA being the next biggest viewer of the site (16.9% of page views). We have had visits from another 154 countries.

As well as weekly articles from the eight editors we have had post by 23 guest authors over the last year. We hope to continue the trend of attracting guest authors over the coming year.

This year the editorial collective is being joined by Adam Fletcher, from Cardiff University.

Last year the ‘Cost of Living’ blog was nominated for a Bevan Award.

## **9. Any other business**

As Helen Eborall and Jude Robinson are stepping down as co-conveners the whole committee would like to thank them for all of the hard work they have undertaken. Fiona Stevenson and Ewen Speed will take over from Helen and Jude from the end of September 2014.

Denise Hinton, Julia Hiscock, Laura Knight, Catriona Rooke and Ian Spencer are also stepping down from the committee and all of the committee would like to thank them for work undertaken and wish them luck for the future.

The next Annual General Meeting will be held at the University of York during the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Thursday 10 September 2015.

The minutes of the 2014 AGM will be printed into the programme of the 2015 conference.