

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Saturday 31st May 2008, 4.30 pm to 5.30 pm
Rokpa House, 7 Ashley Street, Glasgow G3 6DR

CHAIR: David Home

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Cliff Jenkinson, Catherine Scanlon, Elizabeth Davies, Tamsin Grainger
(Vice Chair)

MINUTES: Samantha Haywood

PRESENT: 39 members

INTRODUCTIONS

Samantha Haywood took a register. David Home confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

(1) APOLOGIES

Mick Duncan, Sarah Ashcroft, Cynthia Shuken, Mary Parr, Thea Bailey, Doris Block, Daniela Coronelli, Isobel Gordon, Margaret Burton, Carol Dean, Artemis Papert, Annie Dickson, Irene Schenk, Nina Jones, Ray Harris, Andrew Colclough, Paul McKay, Tim Mason.

(2) MINUTES OF THE 2007 EGM

David Home proposed that the minutes were accepted. There were no objections so the minutes were approved and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

(3) MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the 2007 minutes.

(4) PROPOSALS

(Tamsin Grainger took the Chair for this item).

PROPOSAL 1

Proposed by: David Home, MRSS(T)
Seconded by: Mick Duncan

“To set up a second lower level of Shiatsu skill acknowledgement with its own register – working title of Shiatsu Society Massuer(se) (SSM).”
Initial approximate guidelines to look into are about 240 hours including treatment records over a minimum of 1 year, emphasising the practical side of Shiatsu through qualities of touch and techniques with no diagnostics, a basic knowledge of Oriental Medicine theory yin/yang, 5 elements, contraindications, anatomy and physiology, ethics and counselling skills. There are quite a number of areas in the Rules and Regulations that need to be adjusted which will take time, from ethics to membership categories and from registers to a sub-section of the core curriculum.

A discussion took place.

David Home wanted it noted that this was a personal proposal, he had brought this subject to the EGM as it keeps cropping up and some schools are already offering shorter courses. David gave an overview of the proposal and confirmed that some European countries were also looking at different levels. Do members want this considered by the Board? The Shiatsu Regulatory Group are also setting a standard of training for the regulator which will be lower than the Society's.

Cliff Jenkinson asked David if he had intended the proposal to read that he specifically wanted a second register? Cliff suggested it would be better if the proposal was written stating that the Board would investigate the feasibility of the setting up of a second level of Shiatsu and to report back to the next AGM. David accepted this amendment.

Jean Robertson-Molloy and Susan Lakey wanted the title of SSM removed and suggested that the proposal read that a title could be looked at later through the process. David also accepted this amendment.

Elaine Liechti spoke against the proposal and also read out emails from several teachers who were also against the proposal – Cliff Andrews, Carol Dean, Veronica Howard, Sibs Walter and two of Elaine's students. Elaine felt that we would be doubling up with the work of the Shiatsu Regulatory Group (SRG) and this was more the business of the schools. The Society's energy should concentrate more on marketing and research.

Brian Allen felt that as the Society was short of funds for marketing then this may enable new students to join which meant more money. Elaine replied that there is a clear crossover between the schools and the Society and that the Society should maintain high standards that the public recognise. Several members felt that this was not relevant as most of the public were not aware of the MRSS and the high standards. Everyone in the room confirmed that they had virtually never been asked whether they were MRSS or not.

David Home asked that as the SRG are lowering the standards then should we have a register of 'Japanese Bodyworkers'? People could do a shorter training. If we don't introduce a lower level then people will say they are joining the regulator's register and not bother with the Society. Do we go back to being a small friendly Society or do we maintain the MRSS level? Elaine Liechti replied that we need to promote the MRSS more to the public.

Elizabeth Davies stated she felt the Society's existence was in danger as we do not have much money for promotions, research etc and fewer members would mean even less money. Members will vote with their feet. It is happening already. By incorporating all the training we are also recognising it.

Laura Davison felt that the standards should be maintained as members want to belong to a centre of excellence.

Lynne Bates said all this sounded like an economic push from the Society as more members are needed to get more money. It is up to the schools how they get their students in and whether they offer shorter courses or not.

Tamsin Grainger asked if it mattered to schools whether the Society endorsed their shorter courses or not? Lynne Bates replied no, as schools should push membership to their students. The Society should focus on where it wants to go.

Helen Thomson and Susan Lakey felt that schools should be allowed to continue with what they are currently doing and allow their students to be members. Leave the system as it is. Helen also suggested that people train for 1-year and obtain a certificate but no title is given. Michael Shilson felt that standards should not be lowered.

Tamsin Grainger stated that the ESS already run a 2-year course. Ruth Anderson asked whether these students were all members. Tamsin replied no but they could be.

John Williamson suggested that the current system remains but the Board keep monitoring the situation, so should the Society need to make changes quickly they can be ready. Many members felt this was a sensible idea.

David Home was concerned that if someone was already an acupuncturist then they would still have to undertake the full 3-year Shiatsu course which meant a minimum of 7 years training before recognition. The process of acknowledgement should be looked at. Shiatsu is about being inclusive and not exclusive. Laura Davison replied that it is up to the schools to acknowledge prior study. Cliff Jenkinson asked whether we should be inclusive of all as our members do not recognise standards or the hundreds of graduates we currently have would choose to become MRSS and not remain on the Graduate register for so long.

Stephen Camp felt that if there was a lower level of standard then the public would expect a lower standard.

The proposal went to a vote with the amendments (Jean Robertson-Molloy withdrew hers).

For: 10
Against: 22
Abstentions: 6 The proposal with the accepted amendments failed.

Elizabeth Davies gave an overview of the regulation process and confirmed that the Shiatsu Regulatory Group will address the MRSS issue and standards. David Home confirmed that Balens would insure a 100 hour course, as long as there were case studies and outside assessment.

Linda Henderson felt that the MRSS means nothing to the public whereas things like Reiki was well known as the terminology was simpler e.g. level 1, level 2, master etc. Elaine Liechti replied that the public may not recognise MRSS but it was important for oneself to know that you are at a certain standard. The acknowledgement comes from the inside.

(4) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A member asked whether regional representation had been considered. David Home replied yes without success but regional forums were currently running.

David Home thanked everyone for attending and for the productive comments and discussions which gives the Board a better idea of where its members want the Society to go in the future. Cliff Jenkinson also thanked everyone for attending and ensuring the meeting was quorate.

The meeting closed at 5.20 pm.