.

****

**Briefing from Council meeting held on Monday 13 September 2021**

The meeting was chaired by Dr Steve Boorman CBE and the following items discussed:

# Invited Speaker: Ruth ten Hove

SB welcomed Ruth ten Hove, from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, to the meeting.

Ruth gave a very interesting presentation on community-based long Covid rehabilitation. The presentation outlined the route for rehabilitation of long Covid patients. SB added that there were huge numbers of those facing long Covid and the meeting at the House of Lords had highlighted the necessity of a multidisciplinary approach. The slides shall be placed on the Council’s website.

Ruth was thanked for a most informative presentation.

# National Work and Health Strategic Agenda

**Amy Edens (AE)** from the Occupational Health Policy in the Work and Health Unit, Employers, Health and Inclusive Employment Directorate in the Department for Work and Pensions gave a brief update to the Council. AE, who is responsible for Health is Everyone’s Business (HIEB) stated that the NHSEI work is a second, separate national strategy within the NHS and it was noted that the two strategies do have overlapping needs.

Council were reminded that there had been a joint DWP / CWH meeting on 5 August, which was well-attended. A brief overview of the meeting included:

* Increasing economic output
* Reducing demand on the NHS
* Reducing sickness absence and
* Promoting inclusivity

There were four pillars of work:

1. To develop a sustainable OH workforce
2. To increase the pace of innovation
3. To improve quality and
4. To provide buying support (including subsidy)

# Health Security Agency - Re-organisation of PHE and its activities

It was noted that from 1 October 2021, PHE Health and Work team will be moving to the Joint Health and Work Unit.

# Marketing and Communications sub-group update

Council were informed that how the Board and Council meet in 2022 was discussed by the Board earlier that day. Board had agreed that all 2022 meetings would be held virtually for several reasons, mainly increased attendance, reduced travel, and reduced expenses incurred in attending meetings. Council were happy with this decision.

However, Board had considered the possibility of holding a face-to-face event in 2022, possibly alongside another national event at which many Council members may be attending.

# Governance subgroup update

It was noted that the Governance subgroup were looking at the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Council. Council members were asked to send any suggestions for the TOR to the secretariat. This item would be reviewed at the next Board and Council meeting.

In addition, the TOR for the Board were also being updated to document that 4, or 50% of the Board members, need to be present for a Board meeting to be quorate.

# Consultations

Council members were asked to let the secretariat know of any consultations they receive that we should be aware of. They can then be recorded in the minutes and circulated to the full membership where necessary.

# Mental health subgroup

The group had been formed in 2019 and had met twice in person. The membership was varied. NN asked Council members to look at the ISO 45003 Standard – Occupational Health and Safety management of psychosocial risks. The Council and the Mental Health subgroup are involved in the NICE Mental wellbeing at work consultation.

The subgroup is currently looking at the roles of mental health first aiders. It was added that there was a mental health bed crisis in the UK, with a lack of support and funding for practitioners.

# SEQOHS Review

It was reported that the SEQOHS (Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service) review had been carried out on behalf of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (FOM). Those who deliver and commission occupational health services had been consulted.

# Website statistics

TS presented the latest website statistics and noted that the numbers were slightly up on last year. As usual, blogs were requested.

# Meetings attended by Board members on behalf of the Council

The Chair reported he had attended various meetings with stakeholder groups, including NHSEI and others.

# Any other business

**Long Covid**: The Chair stated that long covid was going to occur within the workforce going forward. Some may not even know they have long covid. It is an issue for pensions and there is an increase in early ill-health retirement.

It was noted that the NHS are seeing a rise in cases of those who do not qualify for ill health retirement due to being unable to prove permanency of their condition.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled to take place on Monday 7 February 2022