



POOSH Summit
Tuesday 1 March 2011
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
15 Hatfields
London SE1 8DJ

POOSH Summit Minutes

Chair: Andrew Griffiths
POOSH Chair 2011

Guest: Dame Carol Black

Present: Ms Susanna Everton	AOHNP
Mr Steve Bailey	BOHS
Mr Graham Jukes	CIEH
Mr David Kidney	CIEH
Mr Reg Sell	IEHF
Mr David O'Neill	IEHF
Dr Peter Griffin	IIRSM
Mr John Holden	IOSH
Ms Caroline Minshell	RCN PHF
Mr Harry Hopkins	SARS
Mr Paul Madgwick	RSPH
Ms Helen McGill	HSE
Mr Roger Bibbings	RoSPA
Mrs Anna McNeil	Secretariat

1. Welcome and introductions

Andrew Griffiths welcomed everybody to the meeting, and especially Dame Carol Black who had agreed to come and talk to the POOSH group about the background to the new Responsibility Deal which was due to be launched in mid-March.

2. The New Responsibility Deal – guiding principles

Dame Carol informed the group that there were three pillars to the New Responsibility Deal. One stream was Health and Work, chaired by Dame Carol, and work had started on that stream approximately twelve months before the election.

Dame Carol's group had been working with 3 companies on industrial parks to help small businesses to achieve what they wanted regarding workplace health.

It was noted that Olivia Carlton, current President of the Society of Occupational Medicine and President-elect of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (to be President from May 2011) was chairing one section of the project. She was working with employers to find out what they would need regarding occupational health in an ideal world. Just as important was to find out what SME do not want or need.

Chronic diseases, including obesity, were major areas of concern. Consideration was given to developing information to help employers and offering guidance on good practice when dealing with employees with chronic diseases. These guides were to be hosted electronically and may be the first project to be published, possibly in autumn 2011.

3. Response from delegates

David Kidney asked Dame Carol what her ambition was. Dame Carol replied that she wanted to work on topics that needed to be addressed, gaps identified and guidance delivered to SMEs. Smaller companies need guidance on what they need regarding occupational health services.

Reg Sell: Mental health and HSE was raised and he stated that HSE were not intending to cover this topic. Dame Carol replied that she was unable to comment on the HSE situation but she did add that Lord Freud was very keen on mental health in the workplace.

Andrew Griffiths added that there was a feeling that HSE were being steered towards not including mental health. Dame Carol asked the group to send her any information as she was not aware of this approach and she felt it would not fit with her impression of the HSE's approach.

Roger Bibbings: Data collection, by employment sector, on which businesses were investing and also what they were investing in, would be valuable information.

Dame Carol suggested that this information may already be being gathered by the regional Chambers of Commerce or the Federation of Small Businesses. She added that currently many businesses may not be focussing or investing in health work and wellbeing, which was not surprising in the current economic climate. It was noted that the Challenge Fund had been well used and done good things that had made a difference to small businesses.

There was discussion on the Fit Note, which was now established in law. Dame Carol stated that when they were well written, well completed and sent to a willing employer, then the result was very positive. Otherwise that was not the case and

there was therefore a long way to go. However, a lot of GP training had taken place and ACAS had also been training employers. It was noted that the Fit Note would be accessible electronically later in 2011.

The Fit 4 Work services were discussed. Currently there were 11 pilots in the country. It was noted that 50-56% of the referrals were nothing to do with medical issues, but amongst other things relationships at work and psychosocial matters. Dame Carol stated that people's problems needed addressing and evaluation should to be carried out to show if these areas were addressed would here be financial benefit.

Referrals to the Fit 4 Work services had been received from many areas. Some pilots were scheduled to finish this summer and others had secured funding for a further year.

Graham Dukes asked how, once the topics had been identified, the solutions could be delivered more effectively. He asked if there was a role for the Professional bodies in this role.

Dame Carol informed the group that she envisaged that the Council for Health and Work would be the vehicle of delivery.

Dame Carol reminded the group that many changes were afoot; GP consortia and Health and Wellbeing Boards were being set up. Barking and Dagenham had recently published their annual review and Dame Carol was delighted that health and work was at the centre of their review.

Dame Carol added that the health and wellbeing of staff equalled productivity. She added that Michael West carries out the NHS Staff survey and it was reported that as staff engagement goes down, then patient mortality goes up.

Andrew Griffiths asked the group to consider whether it would be beneficial to hold a conference to raise awareness of these issues.

Caroline Minshell asked if there was a planned outcome. Dame Carol replied that the government hoped that larger companies would be willing to share their services and also what they had learned with small businesses locally. She added that there were many small organisations that were unaware of services they could access free and locally. Tax anomalies could also be addressed, however in the current economic climate this may not be the right time.

Steve Bailey asked how this group could support Dame Carol – data collection, publicity, or even supporting smaller companies.

Dame Carol replied that all help would be appreciated. Anything that this group felt they could do would be valuable. It was also reported that the Regional Co-ordinators in Wales would continue in post, in Scotland the situation was to be advised and the situation in England was currently unsure. These posts were vital at getting the message circulated.

Dame Carol stressed that this group must comment on the Public Health Framework consultation document; the consultation period closed at the end of March 2011.

Andrew Griffiths thanked Dame Carol for her input to this meeting.

Dame Carol left the meeting.

4. Future actions

Andrew Griffiths listed the possible future actions this group could consider:

- Possible POOSH Conference
- Response to the White Paper
- Raise awareness
- Baseline data collection
- Delivery to workplaces

Caroline Minshell asked the group to consider its purpose and to reflect on whether this group was still required. If so, what was this group's purpose and if this group planned to continue it would require a formal workplan.

Andrew Griffiths stated that this was a changing, flexible group and if it could be fast moving it would be possible to raise the POOSH profile.

David O'Neill added that he felt the Council for Health and Work may be seen as an offshoot of the Department of Health, whereas POOSH could be seen as independent.

Susanna Everett recommended inviting representatives from mental health, rehabilitation and welfare advisors to join this group and all agreed this was a good idea.

Post meeting note: SE has submitted names for consideration

Helen McGill reported that the priorities for HSE have changed due to the 35% reduction in budget and therefore they were unable to lead on projects they would have liked to in the past.

Roger Bibbings recommended bringing together key intermediaries including:

Francis Outram's group
SSIP
FSB
Trade Associations
Major clients

Andrew Griffiths recommended holding a seminar to kick start work in certain areas.

Andrew Griffiths also recommended a joint POOSH response to the Public Health White paper. It was agreed that each organisation would send their response to the

secretariat; Andrew Griffiths would then create a statement and formally present it to the Secretary of State. Andrew Griffiths agreed to circulate a draft to the group before submission to the Secretary of State.

Possible speakers for the next POOSH meeting were considered:

Diana Kloss – how can POOSH help the Council

Regional Co-ordinators – make contact and obtain case studies for consideration.

5. Dates of next meetings

It was agreed that the proposed dates of the next meetings would be circulated to the group.