



Minutes of meeting 16th June 2010  
at Indian YMCA, Fitzroy Square, London

**Present:**

Martin Grasby **MG** (BTER/BA), Nikke Ariff **NA** (BTER), Penny Gibbings **PG** (BTER), David Howells **DH** (BTER), Keith Cherrington **KC** (representing John Francis (BTER))

**PSB observers:**

Alastair Rattray **AR** (BTER), Sarena Baxter **SB** (BAuk)

**Apologies:**

Maureen O'Mara (Lay member), Sheila Whyles (BA UK), Gillie La Haye (BTER), Angela Cannon (BAUK), John Wilks (BAUK), John Francis (BTER)

**1. Welcome** MG welcomed all, including new members DH and PG

**2. Minutes of meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010** The minutes had been circulated and were agreed.

**3. Feedback from CNHC/PSB meeting on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010** AR / SB

CNHC managers Maggie Dunn and Maggie Wallace stated that concerns had been expressed from a number of areas about consistent verification for practitioners applying to be included on the Complementary Natural Health Council (**CNHC**) register. MG had written a letter on behalf of the Forum because it does not appear that all Professional Associations (**PAs**) are demanding the same verification level for Bowen practitioners.

Agreed Bowen verification criteria had included National Occupational Standards (**NOS**) + Core curriculum (**CC**) + continuing Professional Development (**CPD**).

The CNHC now accepts NOS as the minimum standard for verification.

There appears to be a lack of experience amongst CNHC managers and that rules seem to have been changed without reference to relevant Profession Specific Boards (**PSBs**).

AR had commented at the meeting with CNHC that anyone could get an internet training package from Canada to train in Bowen, at which CNHC expressed surprise.

CNHC managers have invited individual meetings with PSBs to discuss such matters in more detail. PSBs have been asked to provide qualifications required in writing. (This has already been done as part of the vast amount of work carried out by the previous Bowen Forum). AR will be attending this meeting.

There was some discussion concerning CNHC's acceptance of The Federation of Holistic Therapists (**FHT**) as a multi-disciplinary PA who would be able to verify Bowen practitioners for CNHC registration. FHT are happy with NOS as the only qualification required for registration with

CNHC. FHT are a company with paid directors and have a very different agenda to Bowen specific PAs – BA UK and BTER. However FHT do have a large number of therapists and the CNHC do need to be self financing in the near future. FHT are a closed company who currently will not share data. AR suggested FHT should contact all their members and only allow those members who are prepared to disclose appropriate details to be registered with the CNHC. FHT requirements for CPD are currently very different from those agreed by the Bowen Forum (and hence by the 2 Bowen specific PAs – BA UK and BTER)

AC had encouraged a friend to register with the CNHC via FHT. It appears the registration occurred without any check on her CPD status.

SB commented that there are similar concerns with the Alexander Technique.

AR said that a meeting between CNHC, FHT and the Bowen PSB was needed to ask key questions re qualification/CPD etc.

NA asked why the CNHC were not referring to the original verification requirements produced by the Bowen Forum. AR replied that the CNHC were simply 'managing' and not wishing to gain specific knowledge of the requirements for each therapy. The key point is that, if the system is to work and the CNHC are to prosper and fulfill their role in protecting the public, they MUST liaise efficiently with the PSBs.

MG had written to Mike O' Farrell (Chief Executive of the British Acupuncture Council and on the board of the CNHC) expressing his concern if acupuncture were to be accepted under the current CNHC guidelines. Mike replied in agreement.

DH commented that multidisciplinary therapists need to keep up CPD in all their areas of expertise. There does need to be some harmonizing of CPD to enable therapists to manage. However the meeting agreed that specific CPD was a priority.

KC said that CNHC managers come from a nursing background and are used to CPD requirements similar to those stipulated by the FHT. In addition, NHS staff is constantly peer reviewed and that therapists are not – most of them work on their own. This might indicate why CNHC management is not as obviously concerned as we are with CPD standards.

AR stated that we want all Bowen therapists on the CNHC register whether they are in a PA or not. Both BTER and BA UK have offered to check the qualifications etc of any Bowen therapist who wishes to join the CNHC.

Concern was expressed at the future viability of BA UK and BTER if FHT were allowed to continue as now. NA commented that the Association of Reflexologists is facing the same problem. MG said that strong representation is needed from the Bowen PSB to move this forward.

It seems that the CNHC are demonstrating a wish to rectify their shortcomings on verification and we look forward to feedback from the Bowen PSB on their meeting with them.

MG thanked AR and SB for their feedback.

#### **4. Letter from A C**

A discussion ensued as to whether the Bowen Professional Forum (BPF) was still needed in addition to the Bowen PSB.

The conclusion was that, at the current time, both the Bowen PSB and Bowen therapists need a group of people to refer to as needed. This group (BPF) would seek and express the views of Bowen therapists as the need arises. The BPF should represent all Bowen therapists (not just BA

UK/BTER members). AR stated that the PSB needed the BPF to act as a 'sounding board'. The BPF would be a 'low key', informal group and would not need to vote on issues. It was agreed that the BPF would continue and meet when required. There is some funding remaining from the Bowen Forum which will be used for travel expenses for the immediate future. How essential the existence of the BPF is will become clearer over time.

## **5. Governance**

### **a) Committee members**

It was agreed that the BPF should continue as it is. AC has offered to invite more BA UK members. SB felt a lay person should be on the forum. It was agreed that it would be very helpful if Forum members could send a representative if they were unable to attend a meeting. The meetings would be open to occasional visitors if pre-arranged.

MG stated that he did not wish to continue as chair of the BPF. He had accepted the position with some reluctance and only with the assured support of members of the Forum. He had recently spent a lot of time writing difficult letters concerning what was happening within the CNHC. In retrospect this work was really the remit of the Bowen PSB. The job should be less onerous now the role of the BPF is clearer. There was a suggestion that the position of Chair could be on a rotational basis. However, it would be easier for the PSB if there were one point of contact. MG agreed to continue at this time.

NA agreed to contact Esau to clarify the minimal legal structure required to use existing funds. She will feedback to MG. MG agreed to contact Maureen if needed further clarification.

### **b) Constitution and Terms of Reference **ToR****

Due to the revised nature of BPF it was felt a Constitution is not required and that a Terms of Reference document should be drawn up. Members spent the remaining time discussing the ToR contents. MG to draft these and circulate. DH offered to help if needed.

Some remaining items on the agenda were not discussed as no longer relevant due to the clarification of the BPF and its functions.

The meeting finished at 6pm when the room had to be vacated!