



**Republic of Ireland region
Annual General Meeting 4th March 2022**

Attendance: *Alison Bransfield (AB), *Brendan Byrne (BB), *Karen Heverin (KH), *Jennifer Brady (JB), *Paula O'Shea (POS), Michéal Ryan (MR), Antonio Reche (AR), Olwyn Lannigan (OL), Peadar McGing (PMcG), Natividad Rico Rios (NRR), Edward J Barrett (EB), Graham Lee (GL), Eileen Byrne (EB), Briedgeen Kerr (BK) (*Committee members)

Apologies: Barbara MacNamara (BMacN)

- 1. Apologies:** BMacN
- 2. Approval of 2021 minutes & matters arising:** Minutes for 2021 AGM (Attached – Appendix A) were approved with no matters arising. (Proposed POS, Seconded KH)
- 3. Declaration of conflict of interest:** No conflicts of interest were declared by those present.
- 4. Chairperson/Council representative's report:**
JB read the chairperson/council representative's report (Attached – Appendix B).
(Proposed KH, Seconded PMcG)
- 5. Treasurer's report:**
KH presented an update of the bank account and regional account held with the ACB. (Attached - Appendix C). KH reported a balance of €1607 in BOI bank account, decrease of €983 from last year which is made up of €666 euro (50% of profit from 2021 meeting that was transferred to ACBI), €256 euro (book tokens for speakers and abstract award for the meeting) and €60 euro (bank fees). Bank statement presented. Breakdown P&L of 2021 annual meeting shown. Still pending official closing statement for 2021 from ACB head office but confirmed with Ms Cheryl Taylor Operations Manager ACB on 5/3/22 that the balance reported was correct as of Dec 2021.
(Proposed JB, Seconded PMcG)
- 6. Regional tutor's report:**
JB presented the regional tutor's report prepared by Rachel Cullen (RC) (Attached - Appendix D). The FRCPath tutorial group endeavours to meet approximately once per month and is organised by the ACB/ACBI tutors JR and RC. (Proposed JB, Seconded PMcG)
- 7. Trainee representative's report: N/A**
- 8. Regional Audit Group report:** Presented by BB (Attached - Appendix E)
- 9. Update to regional rules:** JB confirmed that all committee positions on regional rules do not have to be filled.
- 10. Election of officers: N/A.** JB advised that volunteers for positions of Chairperson and Secretary/Treasurer would be sought ahead of next years AGM as both positions must be vacated as per regional rules.
- 11. AOB**

Appendix A. 2021 AGM minutes

Annual General Meeting 29th Jan 2021

Attendance: *Alison Bransfield (AB), *Brendan Byrne (BB), *Karen Heverin (KH), *Janice Reeve (JR), *Jennifer Brady (JB), *Michéal Ryan (MR), Sean Costelloe (SC), Barbara McNamara (BMcN), Antonio Reche (AR), Ciara Cuning (CC), Edward J Barrett (EB), Graham Lee (GL), David Green (DG), Heloise Tarrant (HT), Maria Fitzgibbon (MF), Natividad Rico Rios (NRR), Ophelia Blake (OB), Olwyn Lannigan (OL), Peadar McGing (PMcG), Ruth Cullen (RC), Ruth O'Kelly (RO'K)

*Committee members

12. Apologies: None received.

13. Approval of 2020 minutes & matters arising: Minutes for 2020 AGM (Attached – Appendix A) were approved with no matters arising.

14. Declaration of conflict of interest: No conflicts of interest were declared by those present.

15. Chairperson/Council representative's report:

JB read the chairperson/council representative's report (Attached – Appendix B). Once again, the difference in benefits received by members in ROI compared with UK was raised as JB discussed with Jane Pritchard, no update from ACB. (Proposed PMcG, Seconded OB)

16. Treasurer's report: KH presented an update of the bank account and region account held with the ACB. (Attached - Appendix C). KH thanked AB and SC for assistance in transfer of signatures to KH and JB for respective roles. KH added that significant update to accounts made with online 365 banking access granted. Further collaboration required with ACB offices to reconcile regional BOI bank account and ACB account pending closure of meeting and splitting of profits with ACBI as agreed. (Proposed JB, Seconded SC)

17. Regional tutor's report:

Rachel Cullen prepared the regional tutor's report (Attached - Appendix D). The FRCPATH tutorial group continues to meet approximately once per month and is organised by the ACB ROI tutor JR and ACBI tutors JR and RC. (Proposed KH, Seconded GL)

Trainee representative's report: MR presented the trainee representative's report - see attached (Appendix E). (Proposed JB, Seconded HT)

18. Election of officers: The following positions were elected:

Trainee Representative: MR replaced by BMCN (Proposed KH, Seconded AB)

Change to the role of trainee representative was agreed by ACB ROI committee and ACBI council, both roles held by same trainee.

19. AOB

- GL raised the issue surrounding the scheduling of the FiLM/FOCUS training day having to be rescheduled due to a clash with the FRCPATH exam dates which have been released.
- PMcG highlighted the bursary opportunity provided by the ACBI to attend the FOCUS virtual conference in 2021 would still accept submissions by members.



Republic of Ireland Regional Report for 2021

The ACB Republic of Ireland regional committee met 4 times in 2021 in addition to the AGM. Main topics discussed were updates from Council, audit activity and the organisation of today's scientific meeting. The committee comprises myself as chair, Karen Heverin (secretary/treasurer), Barbara MacNamara (trainee rep), Janice Reeve (tutor, on maternity leave since June 2021), Brendan Byrne (Audit/ordinary member), Alison Bransfield (ordinary member), Paula O'Shea (ACBI rep). I would like to thank the committee members who have continued to give their time generously to the regional committee once again last year. A number of people will see their term end next year and cannot serve a second term in the same role. We will be looking for some fresh faces for the regional committee and will be seeking interested people later in the year.

ACB ROI Regional Scientific Meeting 2021. The 2021 scientific meeting was held on 29th January 2021 as a virtual joint event with the ACBI due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting registration, virtual platform and post meeting CPD certificates were handled by the ACB office. There were over 70 attendees from across the UK and Ireland. The profit from the meeting was divided between ACB and ACBI. The theme of the meeting was 'The new normal' with talks focusing on how laboratories have adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic. A member's paper section received a number of excellent abstracts and the prize was won by Ms Ruth Cullen. Overall the meeting was a great success.

Membership in the region. There are currently 56 members in the region.

Workforce. One member retired in 2021. A principal biochemist was appointed in Cork University Hospital. A Consultant Clinical Biochemist was appointed at the Mater hospital. A senior biochemist was appointed in the national drug treatment centre. A basic grade biochemist was appointed in St Vincent's hospital. Locum basic grade positions were appointed at the Mater and Children's Health Ireland at Temple St. A principal biochemist post was lost at Beaumont hospital.

Establishing a Clinical Biochemistry registration board remains a significant goal for clinical biochemists in Ireland and efforts are being made by the ACBI to expedite this process, however as yet there is no commitment on a timeframe to open a registration board. A National review of the strategic direction of laboratory services in the Republic of Ireland is due to commence in 2022 and clinical biochemists will be represented by ACBI at that forum.

Member activities. Members have continued to contribute to national and international organisations, committees and events including the Association of Clinical Biochemists in

Ireland (ACBI), Irish Endocrine Society, Irish National Accreditation Board, Irish External Quality Assurance Scheme and UK NEQAS.

We have members on various clinical and scientific working groups within the ACB, RCPATH, EFLM (Pre-analytical Phase: Dr Seán Costelloe, Register: Navidad Rico Rios, Distance education and e-learning: Dr Graham Lee) and IFCC (IFCC Committee on Point of Care testing corresponding member: Ruth O'Kelly).

Members have been involved in the following committees and working groups

- Irish National Cancer Control Programme
- HSE guideline development groups, including a national guideline for laboratory testing of BNP/NT-proBNP and updated GTD guidelines
- HIQA review of the national newborn bloodspot screening programme
- National Office of Clinical Audit -feasibility study for a national clinical audit of paediatric type 1 diabetes

Publications. This year members in the region have once again excelled and published in peer reviewed journals including the Annals of Clinical Biochemistry, CCLM, the Journal of Clinical Medicine, The Irish Journal of Medical Science, The Journal of Paediatric Endocrinology and Metabolism, the British Journal of Nutrition, the Journal of Clinical Pathology, Osteoporosis International and Clinical Endocrinology, demonstrating the wide range of research interest and expertise within the profession.

Education

The first class of the new MSc in Clinical and Diagnostic Biochemistry graduated in September 2021. There were 11 graduates. ACB members both within the region and beyond have provided significant lecture and tutorial content and facilitated clinical placements, research projects for this course and were instrumental in its success. 3 of these graduates are currently employed in Irish hospital laboratories in permanent or temporary positions. The remainder have gone to positions outside of the Irish laboratory service (including into academia) due to the failure to provide training posts despite significant lobbying from ACBI for this.

Examinations. In 2021 two members passed part 1 FRCPath. There are currently 10 trainees in the ACBI postgraduate level training programme which includes a completion of a logbook, annual assessment and the tutorial programme which is organised by the ACBI tutor Rachel Cullen and ACB tutor Dr Janice Reeve. Dr Reeve has been on maternity leave since June 2021. Currently 10 trainees are enrolled in this programme (currently 5 preparing for part 1 and 5 preparing for part 2).

ACB/ACBI Audit Group. Dr Brendan Byrne leads the audit group for the region. A survey was prepared on pre-analytical scenarios and will be distributed in early 2022.

Finally, once again despite the continued challenges of the last year, with a criminal cyberattack targeting our health information systems and crippling many laboratories for weeks, in addition to the ongoing Covid pandemic, our members have managed to continue with the many activities outlined above which is a testament to the dedication and professionalism of our members.



ACB Republic of Ireland Region Report from ACB Council for 2021

This report is based on minutes from the 225, 226, 227th meetings of the ACB Council held on 31st March and 7th September and 25th November respectively. I attended all meetings by video conferencing.

Highlights from 2021

Reports from President – highlights

- Dr Bernie Croal succeeded Prof Neil Anderson as ACB president in July 2021.
- Build back with labs initiative: this is Dr Croal's concept to maximise opportunities for laboratories to lead healthcare reforms. The aim is to involve and promote laboratories in the 'rebuilding' of the health service post the pandemic. It will focus on areas such as Long Covid, POCT, demand management (also driven by the shortage of blood tubes), communication, lobbying. This will be facilitated by a section of the ACB website with resources that labs can use eg sharing best practice, business cases to bid for available funding, and engagement with relevant stakeholders eg RCPATH, IBMS.
- The GIRFT Pathology report was published in September and has been widely publicised and discussed.
- Labtestsonline has been bought by a private company. ACB retain intellectual property for the UK site and will work to maintain a version in the UK, the current agreement expires at the end of this year and until then the site is still working
- There is a potential name change of 'chemical pathology' in the medical curriculum although not in the immediate future
- Rebranding of ACB (including a name change) is being considered to make the organisation more inclusive of non-biochemistry disciplines.

Report from chief executive (Jane Pritchard)

- Strategic principles of the organisation include integrated working towards a common vision, reduce duplication, diversify funding sources (membership subscriptions alone will not fully fund our activities), have greater impact, transparency, improve value of membership and invest in growth. These principles were devised and embedded (eg office resources, IT) over the first year of Jane's time at ACB and are now being implemented.
- A regional consultation took place to inform plans to ensure regions operate in a consistent way, share good practices between regions and reflect the ACB strategy.

JB met with JP to discuss our regional needs particularly in terms of scientific meetings. The aim of ACB is to continue to make scientific regional meetings free to members, and that is currently in place for virtual events.

- Industry partnerships was a key strategy for diversifying funding streams. An industry partnership with Abbott has been signed, the recent jointly hosted webinar on Integrated care one of the first examples of this in action. Further industry partnerships are being explored (expect at least one more in 2022), the aim of these are to be mutually beneficial arrangements in terms of fundings, access to ideas etc.
- A more transparent process of identifying the new president elect has been put in place by means of a nominations committee, with the process for the next president elect beginning in Jan 2022.
- Business cases have been submitted for funding for a laboratory medicine learning academy and a whole genome sequencing short course in 2022
- A mentoring programme has been explored by means of a membership survey and will be in place in Q3 2022.
- There are plans to further develop the website content, including an area for trainees
- Other plans for 2022 include new learning platforms, optimisation of website and enhanced social media communications, republication of some ACB books (old stock being sold on Amazon), benchmarking review of education diversity and inclusion, redesign of annual report

ACB finance

- The deficit for 2021 was ~£50k
- The sale of the 4th floor of Tooley St was agreed, due to complete in 2022.
- Membership fees have increased in line with CPI (3% in 2022), and there has been an increase in membership applications, particularly from overseas.
- Membership subscription bands are to be reviewed in 2022 which is to be welcomed
- A review of investment strategy will take place in 2022

Chair of conference and events

UKMedlab a success with >400 delegates and >4000 views.

The National meetings committee is replaced by the Committee for conferences and events, responsible for the delivery of the national meeting and co-ordinating a calendar of regional events to ensure minimal overlap with dates and topics.

The regions will be surveyed about plans and requirements for meetings to try to optimise the offering in terms of content and timing of events

In person events in 2022 will include UKMedlab22 (London in November), a Freddie Flynn day organised by the clinical biochemistry group in RCPATH, a residential training and management courses

The Scientific and Clinical Practice committee

A review will take place in 2022 into scientific scholarships and awards and how these are funded. 3 out of 10 applications were funded in 2021 to the total £22 635. Scientific scholarships are now called ACB Research & Innovations Grants and are now reviewed blind.

This committee is the point of contact when expertise is often sought for guideline review eg NICE CKD updates.

Activities of this committee in 2021 included:

- Summary CKD guidance for ACB members-being prepared
- Genomics survey
- Partnered with GIRFT, UKNEQAS, and Renal association to produce a survey on AKI practices
- Responded to NICE request on CKD guidance around the 4 Variable risk equation recommendation
- Endorsement of JBDS-IP Hyperosmolar Hyperglycaemia guidance
 - Attend the Novartis Lp(a) taskforce to represent the ACB

Education, Training and Workforce

Feedback on RCPATH examinations has been problematic and Drs Croal and Borthwick are engaging with the college on this as well as improved resourcing and administration of the exams. There is a feeling of last minute changes and poor communication of these to trainees.

Advanced practice being used in some disciplines eg histopathology, and increased training places in microbiology

Issues with HHST training have been raised included trainees not getting sufficient support, There is a cases for thought section on the website.

Other committees

Environmental sustainability being considered in all publications

The audit committee will be implementing a scheduling calendar to ensure members are not inundated with too many surveys in quick succession.

Appendix C

Treasurers report AGM 2022

Bank Summary	€
Opening Balance 01/01/2021	2,590.87
Income Refund	0.01
Expense - Bank Fees	- 60.90
Expense - Reimbursement Speaker Tokens Conference 2021	- 256.75
Expense - 2021 Conference ACBI share	- 666.20
Closing Balance	1,607.03
Increase/(Decrease) in cash	- 983.84

Bank of Ireland 		GLASNEVIN	Tel (01) 8375178 Fax (01) 8378302 Branch code 90-06-23 Bank Identifier Code BOFIE2D	
<p>ASSOC OF CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTS IR REGION KAREN HEVERIN SENIOR BIOCHEMIST DEPT CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTRY CHEMICAL PATHOLOGY BEAUMONT HOSPITAL DUBLIN 9</p>		<p>Your account name ASSOC OF CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTS CURRENT ACCOUNT</p>		
		<p>Account number 13967982</p>		
		<p>IBAN IE44 BOFI 9006 2313 9679 82</p>		
		<p>Statement date 20 Dec 2021</p>	<p>Number 35</p>	
Your Current Account Statement				
Date	Transaction details	Payments - out	Payments - in	Balance
18 Dec 2020	BALANCE FORWARD			2,590.87
31 Dec 2020	NOTIFIED FEES	15.60		2,575.27
26 Mar 2021	NOTIFIED FEES	15.10		2,560.17
13 May 2021	365 Online Karen He	256.75		2,303.42
25 Jun 2021	NOTIFIED FEES	15.10		2,288.32
26 Jul 2021	365 Online ACBI	666.20		1,622.12
24 Sep 2021	NOTIFIED FEES	15.10		1,607.02
13 Dec 2021	SCA DELAY REFUND		0.01	1,607.03
<p>This is an eligible deposit under the Deposit Guarantee Scheme. For more information, please see the 'Deposit Guarantee Scheme - Depositor Information Sheet' which is available from your branch or on our website www.bankofireland.com/dgs</p>				

Annual Meeting Profit and Loss Account	
Fee Income	£ 1,205.00
Sponsorship	£ 908.28
Total Income	£ 2,113.28
Admin Support	-£ 750.00
Speaker Tokens	-£ 220.97
Bank Charges	-£ 2.54
Total Expenses	-£ 973.51
Net Profit	£ 1,139.77
ACB ROI share	£ 569.89
ACBI share	£ 569.89
ACBI share € (Fx rate 0.86)	€ 666.20

Prepared by Karen Heverin, ACB Republic of Ireland Regional Treasurer 05/03/2022.

Appendix D

ACB Republic of Ireland Regional Tutor's report AGM 2022

2021 report summary

Currently, there are 10 Clinical Biochemists attending the formal ACBI FRCPath tutorials. As of February 2022 there are 5 Clinical Biochemists preparing for part 1 and 5 preparing for part 2.

Two Clinical Biochemist who sat part 1 in Autumn 2021 passed the exams.

One Clinical Biochemist who sat part 1 of part 2 in Spring 2021 passed the exam.

One Clinical Biochemist had registered to sit part 2 of part 2 in August 2021 however there was ambiguity over whether it would be online/in person. Notification of in person exam came too late for the person to attend so had to reschedule.

One Clinical Biochemist has registered for the Spring 2022 exam part 1.

There were several disruptions for 2021 tutorial schedule, The ongoing Covid pandemic of Covid and a cyber-attack on the HSE in May and June impacted the schedule and availability of participants to attend the tutorials. Tutorials were held online by zoom

Meetings and tutorials

Meetings:

January –	ACB/ACBI joint scientific meeting
June –	ACB UKMEDLAB 21 training day covering paediatrics and FRCPath 2
November	ACBI trainee day covering evidence based medicine/critical appraisal
November	ACBI conference – IQC workshop hosted by volunteers from the study group

Tutorials:

February	Renal and DM facilitated by Dr Peadar McGing
March	TDM and TDX facilitated by Rachel Cullen Consultant Clinical Biochemist and Dr Duncan Stephen Clinical Toxicologist
April	Duty Biochemist Scenarios by Dr Paula OShea
May	Calcium/bone and Vitamin D facilitated by Martin Healy. Had to be deferred due to HSE cyber attack to sept
September	ACBI Assessments
October	Paediatrics facilitated by Dr Jennifer Brady
December	None as no feedback from group

Formal ACBI assessments took place online in September 2021. Appraisers were Dr Graham Lee, and Rachel Cullen. There was a new external assessor - Dr Jenny Hamilton, Belfast Trust Hospital. Dr Gráinne Connolly stepped down as the external assessor in 2021 after 4 years. Assessments included a brief review of their last year, an overview of the mandatory log book and a discussion on their plans and requirements.

Dr Janice Reeve commenced Maternity leave in June 2021

Prepared by Rachel Cullen (in lieu of Dr Janice Reeve), ACBI Republic of Ireland Regional Tutor 05/03/2022.

Appendix E

Regional Audit Group Report AGM 2022

Although we had great plans for a regional audit during 2021, the HSE hacking incident, sandwiched between the various waves of COVID infections, prevented us from completing an audit during the year. However, the group has managed to put together an extensive survey of analytical conundrums which is almost ready for distribution. The Analytical Conundrums Survey will have short sections covering several topics including, Dealing with Pseudohyponatraemia, HIL indices, Ammonia analysis, Macroprolactin and other Macroproteins, and sample contamination issues. Although the individual sections are relatively short, taken together as a whole, it will require a significant amount of time to complete the entire survey. This is one of the reasons we are asking for just one completed survey from each hospital, and we are currently looking at ways that different individuals from the same hospital might be able to complete different sections. We expect to launch the survey through SurveyMonkey in the next few weeks and we ask that all members please try ensure we get a response from as many hospitals as possible.

Thanks to all those involved in putting the survey together and I look forward to reporting the findings later this year.

Prepared by Dr. Brendan Byrne, ACB (RoI) Region Lead Auditor 05/03/2022.