As a small organisation with a national remit, NPAG are always looking out for Associates to join our team. I am delighted to report that we have just recruited Peter Smithson, lately the Head of Medical Equipment Management Organisation (MEMO) Clinical Engineering Service at University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

Peter will be starting his work with NPAG by supporting the launch of our brand new IT and Connectivity national group – please see Page 3.

This year will see a further expansion of our national group offerings with the following currently under consideration: Security, Mental Health and Infection, Prevention and Control. If you have an interest in any of these areas please do contact me.

In the meantime many of our existing groups will be commencing new rounds of meetings and you will find details in this edition.

Last but by no means least we are very excited about our first Theatres, Sterile Services and Decontamination Conference which takes place on 16th March 2016. There’s still time to book – just contact Marie.

So, as we take our first steps into spring 2016 there is a great deal going on. If you feel there are any other products or services you would like NPAG to explore please do get in touch.

“This group has provided me with support and advice both during and outside of the group meetings for the past 5 years that I have been a member. More importantly the NPAG network facility has enabled us to share problems and get advice as within the group we have learnt that our problems are unique.”

Sustainability Manager
2gether NHS Foundation Trust
As pressure continues to grow on the nursing and temporary staffing function within trusts across the country, the role of the long-standing NPAG Nursing and Temporary Staffing BVG becomes ever more important. We recognise that cost pressures can make it more difficult for staff to get involved in such groups but as one member so rightly puts it:

“NPAG provides excellent support by creating a space to think and to talk outside of the normal day-to-day highly pressured environment.”

Our group meets four times a year when members can learn from guest speakers, network, discuss current challenges and successes and share best practice in a ‘safe environment’.

“Membership of the BVG has been excellent value for money. The years membership cost my trust something in the order of £500 but I went away from the meetings with time-saving ideas, resources, lessons learnt, information, etc. saving my trust this sum of money many times over. (Not to mention all the network support between meetings). For me it’s a no-brainer!”

Nurse Bank Manager
The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The agenda of the meetings is driven by members needs and requirements and, as a start, will include:

- **Reducing Agency Costs** - with the on-going government drive towards Reducing Agency Costs the group will focus on this important area and examine how trusts can best address this whilst maintaining and expanding their own banks through Recruitment and Retention - including Recruitment from Overseas.

- **Anti-Fraud** issues and how to manage these - association with NHS Protect.

- **Employment Law** - continuing association with NHS Employers and Capsticks Solicitors, providing valuable updates and latest advice. Including topics such as: Case Law, Remuneration, Redundancy, Pensions, Worker Status, Maternity/Paternity Leave, Holiday Pay, Zero Hours Contracts.

- **Quality of Care** - a detailed look at Competencies and Assessments, including Value Based Assessments. Working closely with the Quality Team at the DoH.

- **Benchmarking** and Performance Dashboards are at the heart of this group. Members are able to share and compare a range of KPI’s that will help to guide them in providing a more efficient and effective service within their respective trusts.

Why join? Our Chair says:

“I have found my membership to be an extremely valuable and rewarding experience. The networking opportunities within the group and the members, of whom are themselves a friendly, supportive and engaging group of professionals, continue to provide a valuable support during the challenges faced within working for NHS organisations within the UK. The opportunity to benchmark across Health Boards and Trusts across the UK, as well as sharing best practice and looking at innovative ways of working, especially within the recent challenging times, has proved invaluable.”

The first meeting of the 2016 round will take place on the 14 April in Central Birmingham.

**Interested?** Please contact Gemma for further details:

E: gemma.aitchison@npag.eastamb.nhs.uk
Tel: 01245 544600
Introducing our IT & Connectivity Network Facilitator

At the last NPAG Clinical Engineering BVG conference it became quickly apparent that there is a strong demand for a group that will bring together NHS & community IT professionals, Clinical Engineers, and suppliers to understand and overcome some of the intra-operability, security and connection issues.

NPAG, alongside Peter Smithson BEng, CENG, MIET, MIPEM, FCQI, CQP, have been working towards meeting this need and we are thrilled that May 2016 will see the launch of our IT and Connectivity Network.

Peter is excited at the prospect of a new multi-professional IT group that will help solve real problems across the NHS and social services. He is keen to bring his facilitation skills to this learning environment to support senior managers to better do their job.

‘There is a real need for a forum for IT Managers to share problems and ideas and learn from each other. There is still insufficient sharing across the Trusts’

Until recently Peter was the Head of the Medical Equipment Management Organisation (MEMO) Clinical Engineering Service at University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust. The 62 staff in MEMO Clinical Engineering provide a comprehensive medical equipment management service to clients in both the acute Trust and other healthcare providers in the south west of England. MEMO achieved the equivalent of ISO9001 in 1987 and subsequently ISO13485 for manufacturing of medical devices. The first NHS department to achieve this accreditation.

Peter graduated in Electronics Engineering from the University of Sheffield and is a HCPC-registered consultant clinical scientist. He has worked for 32 years in the NHS and previously with Philips Medical Systems where he developed software-controlled radiotherapy machines. Peter has served on a number of committees including IPEM/IET Institutes and the BSI Technical Committee for Medical Device labelling.

Peter, and his team at MEMO, worked very closely with the Trust IM&T department supporting interfacing of medical equipment, Clinical Information Systems and tele-medicine systems. He was chairman of the Trust anti-malware Working Group which has been meeting for a number of years to develop policies and processes to combat the threat of malware in medical equipment. As a regional centre and a teaching Trust, the specialist hospitals in the group use many thousands of medical devices and a number of complex clinical information systems.

Peter will bring a real wealth of experience to the table in his role as IT and Connectivity Network Facilitator and we warmly welcome him to the NPAG team!

If you would like more information about our new IT and Connectivity Network then please contact Victoria Combes:

E: victoria.combes@npag.eastamb.nhs.uk
Tel: 01245 544600
At NPAG we are thrilled to receive enquiries about our groups. One question we often get asked is ‘what cost savings can I expect as a result of group membership?’ One of our groups has recently taken the step of officially documenting member savings based on information they have obtained as direct result of group membership. Take a look at some of the cost-savings our Clinical Engineering Group members made across 2015-16.....

- Changing Tympanic Thermometers from Welch Allyn to Covidien - potential for £65K saving
- Changing supplier of Bladder Scanners to Bard - based on catheters deal. £32K 'theoretical' saving based on reduced infection cost @ £2k/patient
- Review of Temperature Management devices along with Blowers & Warmers and also Irrigation Units. Potential savings @ £80K/annum.
- Ripple Mattresses Servicing & Cleaning taken in-house with £165K/annum saving and Capital Building costs as £70K.

**There’s more!** Our Clinical Engineering Group members also benefit from attending our increasingly popular annual Clinical Engineering Conference which last year included a 20 organisation strong exhibition and 8 hot topic presentations.

If you’d like more information about our Clinical Engineering groups, our 2016 Clinical Engineering Conference or any of our National Networking Groups please contact the NPAG team via info@npag.eastamb.nhs.uk

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**National Networking Group Meetings**

**March**
- National District Nurses Network
- NHS Sustainability Leads Network
- Estates Services South
- Clinical Engineering North
- Clinical Engineering South
- Telecoms
- NHS Car Parking and Travel Planning Network
- Health, Safety and Risk Management

**April**
- Facilities North
- NHS Transport and Logistics
- Estates Services North
- Nursing and Temporary Staffing

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**Workshops & Events**

**Book your place now.....**

**Clinical Professional Development for Occupational Health Nurses. Training modules - Both National and Onsite training available**

**Putting the Patient First Onsite Training Workshops**

**Theatres, Sterile Services and Decontamination Conference: 16th March 2016, Drayton Manor Theme Park**
For more information please contact
Marie: marie.cherry@npag.eastamb.nhs.uk

**Annual Clinical Engineering Conference: 13th September 2016, Holiday Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon**
For more information please contact
Gemma: gemma.aitchison@npag.eastamb.nhs.uk
We think it’s important to listen to the needs of our members and we are very pleased to now be able to offer online membership registration via our website. We understand that returning hard copy or scanned paperwork can be irritating and unnecessarily time consuming so we really hope that this new option proves useful. To make use of this tool visit www.npag.org.uk. Select the ‘Our Services’ tab and open up the Best Value Groups page. From there simply click on the group you wish to register for. The online form should appear on the group’s information page. If you have any questions when completing an online form please call the NPAG office on 01245 544600 or email one of the team via info@npag.eastamb.nhs.uk

The NPAG Network is a managed question and answer forum. Users are quickly and effectively able to share information, documents and examples of best practice with each other without having to step away from their desks. Questions and information requests are easily submitted via email or an online form where, on receipt, they are processed and disseminated amongst our wider network by one of our experienced NPAG team members.

Previously exclusively available to our National Networking Group and Associate Members last December NPAG decided to open up the service to a wider audience offering a new ‘NPAG Network subscription’ (costing just £200 for a 12 month subscription).

If you or a colleague would like to learn more about our NPAG Network subscription option please contact Victoria:

E: victoria.combes@npag.eastamb.nhs.uk