

# RECORD OF ADVISORY BOARD (“BOARD”) DISCUSSION

30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 19:00 (MS Teams)

## 1. Update on Advisory Board membership

The departure of Rhona Harkness was confirmed, it was noted that her role as Chair was now vacant.

The membership of Serena Hemmings was confirmed as her replacement on the Board. Serena introduced herself to the Board outlining key elements of her personal skills and experience.

It was agreed that a new Chair would need to be confirmed at this meeting.

## 2. Update on application the Professional Standards Authority

An update was provided to the meeting with an update of the application to the Professional Standards Authority.

He revisited the actions taken since the original Panel in March. The key themes of those actions being (wording from PSA letter of 12<sup>th</sup> April):

- Create a clearer firewall between management and oversight of key regulatory functions such as complaints and registration, and the other services that Athena Herd provides, including its education and training provision. This should include making sure that the governance groups established to oversee these functions have the ability to make final decisions about outcomes of individual registration applications, and complaints.
- Review the format of the Register so there is a clearer distinction between registrants and members to allow the public and others to make an informed choice about which practitioners they choose. It should be easy to identify which practitioners are on the Register, and how this distinguishes them from members in terms of registration requirements.
- Complete recruitment to and provide an update on the work of the Professional Conduct and Review Committee (PCRC) and Register Advisory Board (RAB). This should include an update on recruitment and confirmation of Chairs, examples of agenda, papers and minutes that demonstrate how they work in practice.
- Review the Compliments and Complaints, Malpractice and Maladministration, and Sanctions Policies to ensure these provide a clear and robust process to handle complaints against registrants.
- Provide clearer information to the public about equine therapy. This should include descriptions of the different roles Athena Herd registers to help members of the public and others to make informed choices about how to choose a practitioner from its Register. Potential service users, and applicants should be able to know what to expect from an equine therapy session.

A summary of the actions that had been taken in response which were confirmed to the members by email on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023. He also outlined the actions that had also been taken to cover extending Standards of Education and Training to make clearer the options for membership beyond Athena training.

Continuing with summarising the supplementary questions that had been received on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 and outlined actions that had been taken, including various commitments to take action within the first 3 months of achieving accreditation. The responses to these had been returned to the PSA on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and shared with the Advisory Board by email on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

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An organisational chart showing the different responsibilities and sub-boards that would report to the Board.

### **3. Update from the Professional Conduct Review Committee**

The meeting reviewed the submissions from the PCRC. Noting that their key focus at this time was reviewing the work examples of how real complaints will be handled in the future. Minutes from two meetings 2nd October 2023 and 23rd November 2023 were shared and reviewed.

### **4. Further recruitment to the Advisory Board**

There was discussion about future recruitment to the Board.

The key objective for the group is the engagement of appropriate complementary skills, for example Occupational Therapy or Hippotherapy. Members to give consideration to potential new members.

The drafting of future definition of membership and recruitment processes was agreed for an activity to be undertaken by the Board within 3 months of recognition.

### **5. Assigning a new Chair for the Advisory Board**

Each member of the Board (with the exception of those with recorded conflict) were invited to offer themselves for the position.

After some discussion it was ultimately agreed unanimously that Serena Hemmings would assume the role of Chair.

### **6. Any other business**

Questions were asked about relationships with HETI register. Previous conversations were outlined.

There was also a question about future funding. There was a recognition of the contribution made by Athena to date and its future support, and some further discussion about members fees and the potential of gathering funding to support future operation.

### **7. Date of next meeting**

There was a suggestion about the future use of Google Meet to engage its automatic minute generation service. It will be investigated.

Future dates will be coordinated.