2026 British Sociological Association Medical Sociology Group Conference Annual Group Meeting Minutes

Host: Rose Watson (acting co-convenor).

Chair: Dr Jen Remnant.

Committee Attendees: Raquel Boso Perez, George Burrows, Emma Craddock, Chris Elsesy, Marie Larsson, Hazel Marzetti, Chloe Phillips, Amelia Talbot.

1. Structure of the BSA MedSoc Commitee

The BSA MedSoc committee promotes scholarship and communication in the field of the sociology of health and illness in the UK. Their primary responsibility is the annual medical sociology conference. They also manage the mentoring programme.

Committee is made up of 3 co-convenors, 3 early career/postgraduate representatives, and 8 ordinary members (2 of which are on parental leave).

We are supported administratively by the BSA office.

We have two ex-officio committee members.

See here for the full committee: https://www.britsoc.co.uk/groups/medical-sociology-groups/medical-sociology-medsoc-study-group/committee/

The group also hosts several regional and special interest groups: https://www.britsoc.co.uk/groups/medical-sociology-groups/medical-sociology-medsoc-study-group/medsoc-groups/

NEW LinkedIn Social Media page - calls for abstracts, BSA events, and medical sociology news. https://www.linkedin.com/company/bsa-medical-sociology-group?trk=public_post_feed-actor-name

2. Constitution Amendment

A new version of the BSA MedSoc constitution is available on our website: https://www.britsoc.co.uk/groups/medical-sociology-groups/medical-sociology-medsoc-study-group/about/.

Delegates have requested a track changes version be uploaded – action for committee.

There will be an online vote in the next 6 months to ratify it (BSA members only).

Delegate queried that teaching of medical sociology/ sociology of health and illness is not reflected in the constitution despite this being a large part of our community and contents of conference presentations.

Committee suggested that teaching might have been taken out as the constitution is merely reflective of how the committee governs itself – committee to discuss at next meeting.

Response from delegate is that the section "Who are we as a community" could be edited to include teachers and lecturers.

3. Proposed amendment to the Phil Strong Prize

Motion to amend the Phil Strong Prize – committee has noticed that a lot of applicants apply for conference and/or course funding. There is no guarantee that successful applicants will be accepted onto these conferences/courses.

Motion is to add a contingency planning section into the Phil Strong application. Successful applicants will also be able to send a revised application should their plans change, which will be reviewed by the BSA MedSoc Committee.

Funds will be sent back to the committee should the revised application be rejected or the funds are not used within one year. Should funds be returned, the next round of the prize will award two applicants, where appropriate.

Motion is approved by a unanimous vote of attendees at the AGM.

4. Updates from the Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness

The Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness (FSHI) grants £1,000 to a book making the most significant contribution to medical sociology each year. 3 books were shortlisted for the prize, which were then judged by Professor Alison Pilnick.

Winner: Mara Mills, Harris Kornstein, Faye Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp for their book, How to be Disabled in a Pandemic (New York University Press, 2025).

NEW FSHI Poster Prize (£50) named after the late Professor Mike Bury.

Winner: Sne Zondo, Stigma, race and help-Seeking: Mental health experiences of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Scotland.

FSHI funding highlights this year:

- 12 conference travel grants,
- 4 Mildred Blaxter Postdoctoral Fellowship.

- 14 BSA Medical Sociology Conference Places.

5. BSA Annual Conference – Health and Illness Stream 2026

Chaired by Dr Catherine Coveney and Dr Hilary Collins. 142 abstract submissions. Presentation of 52 oral, 8 posters, and 1 special event.

6. Abstract Submissions to BSA Medical Sociology Conference 2026.

328 abstracts submitted. 219 accepted. 178 presented.

27 posters submitted, 16 accepted, 7 presented.

232 delegates, 176 delegates for the full conference. 16 free conference places awarded by BSA MedSoc.

66 withdraws from the conference – committee will investigate the reasons for high number of withdraws.

The abstract committee reserved 10-15% of applicants to be invited to the conference in the event of a withdraw, but there was low uptake. Plan to have a larger reserve next year of abstracts that were only a few points below being accepted. We also plan to communicate to applicants that they might be invited should there be a withdraw.

7. Highlights of BSA Medical Sociology Conference 2026

Making the most out of the MedSoc online event prior to the conference with Dr. Jen Remnant (second year)—the success of the event has meant it has been co-opted by the International Sociological Association.

Early career/postgraduate welcome lunch on first day of conference.

Poster and drinks reception on first day of conference.

Two plenary speakers Prof Anne Kerr and Dr Dharmi Kapadia

Five special events, including 30 years of *Health* journal, Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness celebrations, and *Whose Knowledge Counts?*

RETURN Formal conference dinner after negative feedback on 2025 trial of street food.

Phil Strong Memorial Prize awards £1,200 to a postgraduate working within medical sociology. 16 applicants, 5 were shortlisted.

Winner: Saga Hamdan

8. Finances

Our finances are recovering well after low conference attendance in 2024. We are in a £7,300 surplus in 2026.

Surplus attributed to Northumbria and catering being much cheaper than Warwick in 2024. Though this year we spent more on catering due to negative feedback on the trial of street food in 2025.

This means we may be able to award more free places in 2027.

9. Committee Changes

Chloe Phillips has completed her tenure as an Early-Career/Postgraduate Researcher representative (ECR/PGR). We thank Chloe for her contributions to the committee.

Victoria Cluley has completed her tenure as co-convenor and is completing one more year as an ordinary member.

Rose Watson has completed her tenure as an (ECR/PGR) and is joining Jaime Garcia Iglesias and Julia Swallow as co-convenor for 2027, after previously being an ordinary member.

Therefore, we were seeking two new ECR/PGRs.

There were 6 nominations:

- Aishwarya Viswamitra
- Em Brenner
- Hayley Redman
- Lauren Bridgstock
- Melody Bishop
- Vickery Stamp

BSA members who attended the AGM elected Em Brenner and Melody Bishop as the new ECR/PGR representatives for 2027-2028.

We thank Kirsten Boucher from the BSA for her continued support with the MedSoc committee and Anne-Marie [last name] for supporting the operation of the conference.

10.2027 Conference

The conference will be held at University Park Campus, University of Nottingham, 8-10th September 2027.

Committee will be exploring other venues for 2028 with delegates preference for dates asked in the 2026 conference feedback survey.

The aim is to increase the number of paying delegates for 2027.