

Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



The 2nd Annual General Meeting of The Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine

Tuesday, 3rd June 2008, 15:30 – 17:30

The Tudor Park Hotel, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent

1. Apologies for absence

The Registrar reported 13 apologies: Carol Seymour; Denis D’Auria; Sheila Paul; Aine McCoy; Peter Robinson; WFG Dolman; Robert Dickie; Denis Cusack; John Rankin; Roy Beran; Sarah Atkinson; Robert Sunderland; Julian Pedley.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the inaugural Annual General Meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3. Award of diplomas to newly elected Honorary Fellows and Fellows

The President presented a diploma of Honorary Fellowship to Professor Sir Nigel Rodley. Honorary Fellowship can be awarded by the Board, without examination, to persons of eminence who have rendered exceptional services to the science or practice of forensic and legal medicine.

4. Registrar’s Report

The report was received from the Registrar, Dr George Fernie:

Board Meetings

There have again been three formal Board Meetings throughout the second year –

- 1. 4 October 2007*
- 2. 10 January 2008*
- 3. 3 June 2008*

This frequency will probably require to continue in preparation for the Membership Examination which will supersede Foundation Membership and there is a proposal before the AGM from Dr Jason Payne-James to amend Standing Order 2.2.3 to extend the period for Foundation Membership by another six months giving a little more breathing space to the Academic Dean in what, at times, seems an immense task.

It is with sadness that I remind our membership of the death of both Michael Knight MBE and Ivor Doney, both of whom contributed in their own very significant ways to our speciality and were dear friends to many of us present.

There has been one change to the constitution of the Board in the last year due to the decision of Michael Wilks to resign on 8 May 2008 citing the very taxing time for forensic physicians in London and a wish to give his colleagues' interests complete and impartial attention.

The Board fully understands his rationale in wishing to devote more time to the Society of Forensic Physicians and hopes to be able to continue to draw on Michael's knowledge and experience, particularly, in the ethical arena.

As promised last year, it has been possible to appoint two lay members to the Board and Mr Stephen Ward and Mr Pat Conneely were introduced on 10 January 2008.

Progress has been made on a number of the key targets previously identified -

- *Application for specialist status*
- *Identify core competences for Forensic and Legal Medicine*
- *Establish process for doctors to relicense*
- *Develop Faculty CPD system*
- *Develop process of voluntary re- certification*
- *Set curriculum for exam*
- *Develop framework for exam*
- *Appoint examiners*
- *First examination*

- The only one where no significant movement has been possible, despite it being a priority, has been the application of specialist status due to events outwith our control and where strenuous attempts have been made by the President who has taken a personal interest in the subject.

The Board will continue to work assiduously to overcome the current impasse.

Fellowship Committee

This Committee has once more met physically and has had a more recent teleconference meeting.

Current membership at the time of writing is –

<i>Fellows</i>	<i>123</i>
<i>Foundation Members</i>	<i>269</i>
<i>Affiliates</i>	<i>222</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>614</i>

The Board and the RCP have now reaffirmed on a number of separate occasions that it is no longer procedurally possible to have further Foundation Fellows. The number of appeals in this respect and over Foundation Membership applications is now minimal. We are maintaining Minutes of decisions made so that there will be clear precedent that we anticipate should help avoid future confusion. Once more, I would emphasise my willingness to speak to any applicants in order to advise them on pertinent issues and I can be most readily contacted via my email address on the website registrar@fflm.ac.uk

Obviously, our new body encompasses 3 related specialities but the global number is encouraging for the future and this has occurred at an earlier juncture than was anticipated by the Board.

Fellowship and Membership Diplomas

You should all now have received your revised Diploma with a seal which has been signed by the Presidents of the Faculty and the Royal College of Physicians.

Premises

Our premises at 116 Great Portland Street are now fully functional although we did, until recently, have some remaining teething problems with the IT connection to the College. It has been possible to hold virtually all the committee meetings here although we do still decant to the College for full Board Meetings. We continue to aspire to eventually being located on the College 'campus' at a future date.

Staff

The initial staffing problems experienced have now been resolved very satisfactorily with the appointment of Clare Pillinger as Faculty Manager and Sarah Llewellyn as Administrator, both full time. Their support in the last year has been absolutely outstanding and we have been able to develop robust systems that should avoid the administrative hiccups that bedevilled our start up phase. There will obviously still be occasional problems that one finds in any medical membership organisation but they are now approaching a level that I believe is acceptable for our period of gestation.

Website

This is accessible at <http://fflm.ac.uk> and has progressed significantly in the last year under the stewardship of the IT Steering Group comprising Sanjeev Gaya as Editor, the Registrar, our administrative staff and a representative from Lucid Web Design who continue to provide valuable technical support albeit more and more of the day to day work is undertaken in-house. The Journal access online is now fully functional and increasingly used by the membership.

Our policy is to use electronic means of communication whenever possible and, likewise, electronic committee papers will be the preferred medium.

Board Meeting Minutes are now available on the Faculty page of the site in keeping with our intention of transparency so that the whole membership is aware of the issues being discussed.

From 1 July 2008 it should be possible to make payments to the Faculty by credit card and in very early course, hopefully in time for the next membership subscription round, we will have finalised our own arrangements for Direct Debit payments.

These changes have not been straightforward to achieve and have required sustained efforts on behalf of our Manager.

Journal

The Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine goes from strength to strength and payment has been made to the Faculty of the sale proceeds from the Association of Forensic Physicians. The Editor will, as usual, also provide a report and speak to the AGM but the evolution of our flagship publication continues to assist in promoting the Faculty's academic credibility.

David Jenkins Chair in Forensic and Legal Medicine

The inaugural lecture delivered by Lord Justice Auld was a fitting one to mark David's tremendous contribution to Clinical Forensic Medicine and we now have a particularly apt first Professor in Ian Wall to follow on with this prestigious lecture, where there is no doubt that David would have approved of his appointment. You will have noted from the website that Professor Wall's successor has been selected and will be presented at the AGM.

W G Johnston Memorial Fund

The Trustees (Dr A Irvine, Dr R Roberts & Professor A Busuttill) remain in post to administer this Fund and also the Jenkins Trust reporting to the Treasurer. I would be happy to direct any applicants for financial support for research to the appropriate resource so that the speciality continues to thrive from these generous bequests.

It is hoped that publication of the new edition of Clinical Forensic Medicine, once more edited by Dr David McLay will bolster the W G Johnston Trust.

Representation on Other Bodies

The Faculty continues with constructive contribution to a wide range of consultation documents and by having a supervising Board Member for each document and by inviting comment through the website, believe that we can properly reflect the membership's views on these matters.

The Board is mindful of the need for representation of the various crafts and, in particular, forensic physicians where the Faculty has disengaged from this role previously performed by the AFP as it would be incompatible with our charitable status. However, it continues to actively liaise with the British Medical Association. There will be a BMA fringe meeting on the Thursday morning of the annual conference where any attendees will be welcome to attend.

Conclusion

Another hectic year has been completed where we have moved further forward in our strategic plan. Much remains to be done and there are extraneous factors, some of which we did not anticipate, impinging on our speciality but we do appear to be on track to having a Faculty fit to face the challenges emerging. The Board will endeavour to meet the targets set and do this in as open and inclusive a way as possible.

The Registrar answered two questions from the floor:

1. Does the RCP have a view on the recognition of specialist status for forensic and legal medicine? If so, what is it; and are they doing anything about it?

FFLM has had tremendous support from the RCP in this process; the difficulties in gaining specialist recognition have originated at the Department of Health, where the consultation guidelines were not met. The President noted that this is top of his agenda and he has been chasing weekly. The President will be writing to the ministers to raise concerns and to inform that the lack of response from the DH has been totally unacceptable.

2. Who are PMETB?

PMETB is the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board. It is the independent regulatory body responsible for postgraduate medical education and training.

The President noted that the Board had discussed the Metropolitan Police contract negotiations currently underway. Though a representative view in terms of remuneration etc cannot be expressed, the Faculty does take a very strong view on the proposed changes in that they appear likely to adversely affect standards. The President will be writing to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and other relevant bodies drawing attention to the Faculty's concerns.

The President thanked the Registrar on behalf of the membership for all of his hard work.

5. Treasurer's Report

The report was received from the Treasurer, Dr Peter Schutte:

Apologies were given for the lack of published accounts prior to the meeting due to unavoidable delays with the accountants and auditors, and the new, strict requirements of the Charity Commission for the format of accounts. These will be available on the website – members were invited to send any queries to the Treasurer.

“The Faculty has seen some major changes in its accounting practices during the last year. The Faculty accounts from 2005 are an integral part of the College accounts up until 10 June 2007. The Faculty's separate charitable status was confirmed by the Charity Commission on 11 June 2007. The Faculty's accounts for its first independent financial year will be this one, commencing on 11 June 2007.

The changes bring with them significant tax advantages.

The Faculty's first annual accounts end on 31st December 2007, because the Faculty's financial year now runs concurrent with the calendar year.

I am pleased to report that as of 31st December 2007, the Faculty had funds of £251,414.

2007 expenditure exceeded income by about £13,000. This was due to continuing start-up costs and capital expenditure. Non-recurring costs in 2007 amounted to:

<i>Website development</i>	<i>£5,454.00</i>
<i>President's regalia</i>	<i>£5,883.00</i>
<i>IT</i>	<i>£3,443.00</i>
<i>Data Cabinet</i>	<i>£1,552.00</i>
<i>Diploma inscriptions</i>	<i>£1,841.00</i>
<i>Torquay Conference</i>	<i>£11,475.00</i>

Most of these items represented an essential investment. On the other hand, we had problems with the original diplomas which have had to be re-done. The unexpected loss incurred by the Annual Conference in Torquay was a significant amount. Great care is being taken with the Annual Conference in Maidstone, so that another loss is avoided.

Looking at some of the major expenses: rent, I'm advised, is good value for money in that part of London.

Telephones and hire of room costs are reasonable.

Clare Pillinger has successfully taken steps to reduce the travel expenses for Board members by booking travel in advance.

Staff salaries were the biggest single item of expenditure. This was incurred by two full-time employees which is the minimum necessary at a crucial time for the Faculty. Setting up the accreditation process, revalidation and the membership examinations placed additional

demands upon their time and it was necessary to increase capacity on a temporary basis for a short time.

The costs of the Journal of Forensic & Legal Medicine are one of the biggest items of expenditure.

The RCP administration charge is currently under discussion, and a breakdown of what we pay for, by way of a Service Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding, is being awaited from Clive Constable.

Printing of academic documents for forensic physicians was over £4,000 and this represents a good investment.

IT costs have been high and the Faculty is still awaiting a fully-functional system. Investment in sophisticated software for the Faculty's membership database will pay good dividends not only in terms of making the maintenance of the database less labour-intensive, but also ensure the accurate monitoring of our subscription income and ensuring that we avoid the problems this created during 2006 and 2007.

In conclusion, it has taken a few years to establish an infrastructure for the Faculty, but it now has a well-founded one, with all the essential ingredients for a successful academic body. Most important of all, we have excellent staff. I have enormous confidence that we are well placed financially to meet the future and in particular the immediate challenge of setting up the new Membership examinations."

The Treasurer also noted that the Faculty's position has improved since these accounts (which are to 31 December 2007). Further savings have been made on items such as travel expenses; membership recruitment in 2008 has improved significantly on 2007 and a one off payment of £78,000 was received from the AFP to boost our capital reserves. As at 18th May 2008, FFLM assets were:

Current Account: **£31,816.00**

Deposit Account: **£331,507.00**, of which £66,041.00 belongs to the Memorial Funds.

Although the position is satisfactory, the Faculty cannot rest on its laurels. There is some big expenditure ahead, particularly in setting up the MFFLM examinations.

The Faculty has not had an increase in subscriptions yet, and in order to break even for the next financial year, the Treasurer proposed an increase of annual subscriptions:

Fellows & Members: £325

Affiliates: £175

Also proposed was a 50% reduction in subscription rates for Fellows, Members and Affiliates outside the UK and Eire. This will bring the Faculty into line with the College and other

Faculties, and is in recognition that the overseas membership enjoys fewer benefits of membership.

The Treasurer responded to 4 questions from the floor:

1. What is the present membership figure?

Fellows	123
Foundation Members	269
Affiliates	222
Total	614

2. Anyone has access to same facilities on website. What is the proposed reduction for overseas members?

A lot of the Faculty's work on behalf of the membership is related to revalidation and obtaining specialist recognition; it's this type of benefit that those outside the UK will not have.

3. Is there a requirement for the AGM to approve the accounts?

There is no requirement for approval by the AGM, but there is an expectation that the accounts are presented at the AGM.

4. There are some people listed within the membership who are not medically qualified; is this going to be an issue in terms of becoming a Member (capital M)?

Non-medical members (nurses, paramedics) are all Affiliates. In accordance with the Standing Orders, one must be a registered medical practitioner to be a Member or a Fellow (excluding Honorary Fellows).

The Treasurer's proposals were put to the vote:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Subscription increased with treasurer's recommendation | CARRIED |
| 2. 50% reduction for overseas members | CARRIED |

The President thanked the Treasurer for his hard work.

6. Report from the Academic Dean

The report was received from the Academic Dean, Dr Margaret Stark:

1. Introduction

1.1 The Academic Committee (AC) has met on three occasions over the past year.

1.2 The composition of the committee is given in Appendix A and my thanks go to the members for their work over the past year. Dr Debbi Rogers has joined the committee as Chair of the Forensic Science Committee.

1.3 The Academic Dean is also responsible for co-ordinating Faculty representation on external committees (see Appendix B) and I am very grateful to all those members who give their time and service on the various committees.

2. Membership exam and examiners

2.1 The Membership exam will be in two parts: Part I testing core knowledge common to the medico-legal advisors and forensic physicians, to include general forensic medicine and sexual offence medicine. Part II will consist of a range of modules relevant to each speciality and test the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the applicant. The part I exam will be an MCQ and part II a written paper and OCSE. Applicants will have to show that they have worked in the field for three years.

2.2 An advert for examiners was circulated in January and a number of applicants have been shortlisted for training. The appointment of examiners is made by the Faculty Board after completion of satisfactory training.

3. Annual Conference

3.1 Andy Dott, the conference secretary, and Cath White (organiser of the sexual offence medicine session) are to be congratulated for an excellent programme for the conference this year. We would welcome feedback on this year's conference.

The Conference was discussed at the Board meeting today; the Academic Committee's view is that numbers were disappointing and had been diminishing in recent years. A change in conference format was therefore proposed: AGM and W G Jenkins Memorial Lecture followed by a reception dinner, then a one-day academic programme the following day consisting of key speakers in the morning and workshops in the afternoon. This was unanimously agreed by the Board and will be happening in 2009.

4. Educational Programme

4.1 Initial training courses: The Faculty continues to run an initial training course for forensic physicians with the NPIA. Ian Wall is the lead for this and will soon be advertising for tutors to assist with the delivery of this course. The next course is in September.

*4.2 Development training courses: The last jointly organised development training course for forensic practitioners was held with the Metropolitan Police Service in April. These courses have been very successful. We are now planning to continue this training four times a year with the first Faculty course to be held at the RCP on Saturday **September 13th**.*

*4.3 There is a Joint Conference with the RCP entitled "**Multiple Medico-Legal Jeopardy**" on **Thursday November 27th**. Mike Devlin has been the lead for the Faculty for this course.*

5. Educational documents

5.1 The Committee welcomes feedback on the documentation produced. All documents except the forensic sampling document are available on the website. The sampling document can be access in the Members' only area (open to Fellows, Members and Affiliates).

5.2 Over the past year further documents have been reviewed and revised as appropriate:

Guidelines for doctors asked to perform intimate body searches. Guidance from the BMA and FFLM (2007)

Medical Care of Persons Detained under the Terrorism Act 2000 – Recommendations (2007)

Paediatric forensic examinations – Pro forma (2007)

Operational procedures and equipment for medical rooms in police stations and victim examination suites –Recommendations (2007)

Fitness for detention and interview - Pro forma (2007)

Mental Health Act Assessment - Pro forma (2007)

Section 4 RTA Assessment Form - Pro forma (2007)

Head Injury Warning Card – Recommendations (2007)

Custody officer training outline – Recommendations (2007)

Nicotine dependent detainees in police custody – Faculty view (2008)

Consent from patients who may have been seriously assaulted – Recommendations (2008)

Consent from children and young people in custody in England and Wales Recommendations (2008)

Managing blood borne virus exposures in custody – Recommendations (2008)

***The Physical Signs of Child Sexual Abuse** has been published by the RCPCCH – a great deal of work and co-ordination has been required for the production of this document which involved many members of the FFLM.*

6. Research

6.1 Near Misses in Police Custody – IPCC/Faculty/MPS report has been published March 2008.

7. Faculty consultations

7.1 The Faculty has consulted on a number of issues most recently on the computerised record system NSPIS and the management of acute behavioural disturbance in police custody.

8. Standing Committee for HCPs

8.1 A standing committee with representatives from professional groups representing HCPs working within the police custody environment – nurses and paramedics - has been set up and had their first meeting to determine terms of reference. This committee is chaired by Jason Payne-James.

9. Medical Students

9.1 The Faculty office now has a database of individuals who are prepared to assist with medical student attachments.

9.2 Faculty representatives attended the RSM careers fair for medical students in November 2007.

10. Website

10.1 Dr Sanjeev Gaya has been appointed to oversee and edit the website.

10.2 Details of conferences and training courses can be found on the website.

11. Other matter of interest

11.1 The Academic Committee has reviewed "The Safer Detention and Handling of Persons in Police Custody" and sent comments to the Home Office.

11.2 The AC also commented on the draft "Clinical Guidelines on Drug Misuse and Dependence" Update. The final guidance document was published in December 2007.

The Academic Dean responded to 2 questions from the floor:

1. Apropos the potential use of custody nurses; has faculty had any intercourse with RCN?

The Forensic Vice President has been in discussions with the RCN and the Paramedic Association as part of the multi-professional standing committee on police custodial healthcare. The terms of reference for this committee have been agreed.

The President noted how important it was for the Faculty to take the lead and set the agenda on matters such as this. He reported that the Home Office is also setting up a similar forum though the President has advised that this is more appropriately a task for professionals rather than government.

2. Has any consideration been given to civil forensic training or exercises?

Yes, from the point of view of the exam; as part of medical law, and in terms of forensic examiners and medico-legal advisers involved in civil matters.

The President thanked Dr Stark and the Academic Committee for all their work this year.

7. Editor's Report JCFLM

The report was received from the Journal editor, Dr Jason Payne-James.

Some highlights were noted:

This year we are expecting to receive 200 submissions to the Journal; 42% of which will be rejected (after peer review) on current projections. Numbers are improving to ensure the quality of papers is improving.

The backlog of submissions is being reduced. There is a challenge for the editorial team to balance predicting submissions and accepting the right number of papers; and publishing papers expeditiously.

Over the last year submissions have been pleasing in their broad geographical range; the Journal can certainly be considered 'international'.

542 editorial pages were published in last year; this number should be maintained or increase this year. Currently there are 1055 subscribers, many of which are institutions which pay a higher rate.

There were about 10,000 article downloads in first 3 months of 2008. It is hoped that this will increase from 55,000 last year to 80,000 this year. These represent income generation for both Elsevier and the Faculty, and increased downloads will help to improve the profile of the Faculty, of forensic medicine and related specialties.

In reviewing the most downloaded articles for the last year, we see a range of subject matter: forensic medicine, paediatrics, forensic science, forensic pathology, forensic anthropology and sexual offences. There is a broad spectrum of readership looking to the Journal and thus the Faculty for relevant scientific and educational material.

Increase in review can be partly attributed to the inclusion of the Journal in MedLine. It is hoped that the Journal will in future be included in the Oxford Scientific Database, which will allow the development of an impact factor and therefore make a big difference to how the Journal is utilised around the world.

The Editor gave thanks to the reviewers, referees, editorial board and advisers, and in particular to the Elsevier team: Wim Meester, Minke Havelaar and Paul Crabtree.

The Editor responded to 3 questions from the floor:

1. Given the 42% rejection rate by the journal, how many of these go on to be accepted by other journals?

This cannot be tracked; however, the Editor has seen case reports published elsewhere. Articles tend to be resubmitted until it is accepted; the peer review process allows for refinement.

2. Regarding the reported reduction in articles submitted by UK authors – is it because there is a total reduction of submissions?

The reduction is due to the increase in submissions from outside the UK, particularly Asia.

3. Are submissions reviewed for clarity of English?

Any errors of this nature can be attributed to human error during the editing and publishing process. The Editor is happy to have anything of this nature brought to his attention so it can be corrected, and accepts responsibility for any errors.

Some problems may arise from the fact that many authors have English as second language. It does, however, go through a language screening process before it reaches the Editor.

The President extended thanks to the Editor for his work and for enhancing reputation of the Journal.

8. Proposal to amend Standing Orders

The Board has received a proposal from Dr Jason Payne-James to amend Standing Order 2.2.3 which states:

“No Foundation Members will be elected beyond three years after the date the Faculty was set up by the adoption of these Standing Orders (“the Adoption Date”).

to

“No Foundation Members will be elected beyond three years and six months* after the date the Faculty was set up by the adoption of these Standing Orders (“the Adoption Date”).

** Footnote: until 13 October 2009*

Dr Payne-James explained the rationale of this proposal. Taking into consideration examination times and course lengths of a number of programmes relevant to FFLM membership, a Foundation Membership election closing date in April 2009 means that a significant number of people will miss out on being grandfathered, purely because of these timings. This is estimated to be between 20 and 40 doctors that could be grandfathered into membership should the proposal be accepted.

Dr Payne-James considered the proposal to be fair in terms of inclusivity and recognition of the efforts being made by those wishing to become members of the Faculty.

The President noted that this was discussed by the Board; its recommendation was unanimous that the proposed changes to the Standing Orders should be passed.

Questions/comments:

Do the Faculty's interested bodies, e.g. Department of Health, Royal College of Physicians, support the proposal? E.g. if there is an RCP rule that may be upset by granting this extension?

This is the start of the process; any proposed changes to Standing Orders must first be agreed by the AGM, and subsequently presented to the Council of the Royal College of Physicians for approval in July. The Faculty has reassurance that there should be no issue in the proposal receiving formal ratification by the RCP Council.

When will the Faculty exam begin?

Dr Stark: This can fit in with AGM's wishes today, in light of this proposal.

Dr Payne-James noted that the proposal was made purely on the consideration of the timings of programmes and not due to any outside influence. It would be appropriate for the end of Foundation Members admission to correspond to the launch of the MFFLM examinations.

Thanks were extended to the Faculty by Professor Peter Vanezis for including the Diploma in Medical Sciences as a relevant qualification for Foundation Members.

What will happen to those taking this exam (DMS) next July who fail, and consequently must re-sit the exam after the grandfathering end date?

Those passing the exam AFTER 13 October 2009 will not be eligible for Foundation Membership.

This proposal was carried unanimously. It will be presented to the RCP Council in July.

9. David Jenkins Chair

The President announced that the second David Jenkins Chair is Dr Jason Payne-James.

Dr Payne-James accepted the award, and paid tribute to Dr Jenkins. He thanked the Faculty, W G Johnson, Lucette Jenkins and Dr Jenkins.

10. Any other business

None

11. Date and time of next meeting

The President explained that there was no confirmed date of the next meeting at that time; this was subject to arrangements of the annual conference.

The President formally declared the meeting closed.