

# FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

## of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

### REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC DEAN

#### 10 MAY 2012

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Academic Committee (AC) has met on three occasions over the past year, including a meeting over two days in autumn 2011. As a result the number of meetings has been increased from three to four annually with an additional meeting in July to ensure all of the work of the AC can be dealt with in a timely manner.

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.

1.3 The Academic Dean is also responsible for coordinating 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 and provide feedback.

#### 2. The Membership Examination

2.1 The examination is a priority for the Faculty and therefore for the AC and Chief Examiner's (CE) Committee. Huge thanks are due to Dr Andy Dott, Chief Examiner, ably assisted by his Deputies, the Leads, and the Examiners.

2.2 This was the first examination diet led by Dr Dott who took office in June this year. He has overseen the delivery of a successful Membership Examination as well as the integration of the Diploma of Forensic and Human Identification into the Faculty examination portfolio.

2.3 The Chief Examiner's Committee has met formally on four occasions over the last year, in addition to a number of teleconferences and much email traffic.

2.4 Part I of the Membership examination was held in October at the Park Crescent Conference Centre and Part II in March 2012 at St George's, London. There were 20 candidates for Part I, of whom 14 passed and six failed. There were 13 candidates for part II: six for general forensic medicine (GFM) of whom two passed; six for sexual offences medicine (SOM), four of whom passed; and one medico-legal adviser who passed.

2.5 Of the new examiners selected for training in 2011, including one examiner who had previously deferred for family reasons, all have successfully completed their training and their appointment has been ratified by the Board.

2.6 Applications are to be invited for new candidates to train as examiners.

2.7 Professor Sean Hilton has been involved in overseeing the examination as External Examiner. He is pleased with the progress that had been made, and feels that we have developed a robust examination process. Professor Hilton is retiring this year and has indicated that he would like to step down as External Examiner so a successor will have to be sought.

2.8 The OSCEs and OSPEs have taken a great deal of work and all of the examiners continue to gain experience in writing, trialing, revising and rehearsing these with actors.

2.9 Angela Hall and the team at St George's, including the actors, have as ever been invaluable in ensuring the examinations, in particular the OSCEs and OSPEs, ran without a hitch. Special thanks are due to Ms Hall for her enduring patience in guiding us through the intellectual process, ensuring that the examination content was appropriate and that nothing was forgotten on the day, and, to Keira Anderson, the Assistant Registrar.

2.10 The post for GFM Deputy Chief Examiner was filled by Dr Jeanne Herring this year.

2.11 All examiners have given up a large amount of time and effort to making the examination a success, especially so in the run up to Part II of the examination.

2.12 Sarah Llewellyn has been helpful, efficient and hardworking in supporting the examination and over the OSCE/OSPEs, attending on both days along with Toni Nichols.

2.13 In keeping with suggestions made by the external examiner, Professor Sean Hilton, the Faculty Board has decided that, in future, outstanding candidates in each of GFM, SOM and MLA may be awarded a Merit or Distinction depending on their level of attainment in the Membership examination. However, no merits were awarded in this examination diet.

2.14 The challenge for the new academic year is to continue to build our bank of questions and stations for each part of the examination and to consolidate the skills of examiners for the Membership examination in doing so. We also need to consider how quickly we should change to the new method of global marking for the OSPE/OSCEs and have arranged some extra training before the summer break to accommodate this.

### **3. New examinations**

3.1 The AC has proposed and the Faculty Board has accepted the need to establish a new Diploma in General Forensic Medicine [DGFM] as a demonstration of basic competency for all healthcare professionals in this area and as an equivalent to the Diploma in Forensic and Clinical Aspects of Sexual Assault. Each will underpin the new Licentiate Membership of the Faculty.

3.2 Dr Nigel Callaghan has agreed to Chair a Working Party to set up the DGFM in liaison with the Academic Dean and Chief Examiner.

3.3 A proposal for a new Diploma in Legal Medicine has also been accepted and this work around this will be led by the Medico-legal Advisers. A Chair for a Working Party has yet to be appointed. This Diploma will be open to those from an appropriate background from out with as well as within the Faculty.

#### **4. The Diploma in Forensic Human Identification [DipFHID]**

4.1 Professor Peter Vanezis has worked with the Chief Examiner as Deputy Chief Examiner for this examination to ensure this examination is run in accordance with Faculty guidelines.

4.2. All examiners for this examination have now completed diversity and equality training.

4.3 The first examination diet under the umbrella of the Faculty was in October 2011. There were nine candidates of whom 7 passed the exam.

4.4. The examiners have also been asked to look at the format of the examination and consider how it might be updated in line with the other Faculty examinations.

4.5 The next examination will be held in October 2012.

#### **5. Curriculum Subcommittee**

5.1 The Board have approved a new Subcommittee to develop a Curriculum for MLAs and FPs. This is a challenging task. Expressions of interest have been received following an invitation to the membership but this work has not yet commenced.

5.3 The Subcommittee will be chaired by the Academic Dean.

5.2 This important work is to be commenced shortly.

#### **6. Work Place Based Assessment [WPBA]**

6.1 The Board approved the appointment of Dr Jenny Holmes as the Work Place Based Assessment (WPBA) Lead.

6.2 A huge amount of work led by Professor Ian Wall and Dr Jenny Holmes has gone into the development of WPBA and this has informed the Credentialing Pilot led by Professor Ian Wall. The work is urgent on the Pilot has now been completed and a Report has been sent to the GMC. A response is awaited.

#### **7. Conference Subcommittee**

7.1 Dr Michael Devlin demitted office as Chair of the conference subcommittee in May 2011 and has been ably succeeded by Dr Will Anderson. The subcommittee have met regularly by teleconference over the last year. They are to be congratulated along with Clare Pillinger for their organisation of a successful conference in Edinburgh this year.

7.2 The venue and dates for next year's Annual Conference in May 2013 are still under review but it will be held in London.

7.3 If you have any topics for Faculty Conference please do let the Academic Dean or Chair of the Conference Sub-Committee know.

## **8. Training and Education Subcommittee**

8.1 The joint initial training course with the NPIA has been held on two occasions over the past academic year and a further courses are planned for 2012/13. There have been some concerns raised as to the future cost of this when the university fee structure changes in autumn this year, but the latest information is that this will remain an affordable option. It is also hoped to run an initial training course in the next academic year in Scotland with the emphasis on the requirements of Scottish law. If successful it is hoped that this will become a regular event.

8.2 Two very successful development training courses (DTCs) have been held in London in the last academic year ably organized by Dr Will Anderson, Dr Julia Shefras and Dr Caroline Fryar.

8.3 A proposal to set up development training for medico-legal advisers has been accepted by the Faculty Board and Dr Caroline Fryar has been appointed to run this.

8.3 Dr Peter Green has taken the lead in organising a further training course to contribute to the portfolio for Level 3 Safeguarding in September 2012. Such training has now become a requirement for forensic physicians and it is hoped that this will be repeated on a regular basis.

8.4. In response to a decision taken at AC, the Academic Dean and Dr Will Anderson are arranging a series of regular training courses addressing training needs to underpin basic competencies in clinical forensic medicine, particularly general forensic medicine, and open to all healthcare professionals working in the forensic setting, with a course each month except in August. It is anticipated that the first of these will be in September 2012.

8.5 Some Masterclasses are planned to complement the development training courses.

8.6 Dr Meng Aw-Yong has developed an Intermediate Life Support Course to address issues arising in a forensic setting. This course has now run successfully on several occasions and it is anticipated that this will continue in the next academic year.

8.7 The committee continues to review and revise Faculty documents as required and welcomes feedback. All documents - guidelines, recommendations, pro formas, fact sheets, and, policy statements are available on the website with a few that can be accessed in the members' only area (open to Fellows, Members and Affiliates).

8.8 Over the past year many documents have been reviewed and revised as appropriate and published on the website. Of particular note is the updated Recommendations for the Safe and Secure Administration of Medication in Police Custody and the new Recommendations: Management of Diabetes Mellitus in Custody and the Interim Quality Standards in Forensic Medicine for Healthcare Professionals (other than doctors).

8.9 The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Substance Misuse Detainees in Police Custody: Guidelines for Clinical Management has also now been published. The AC would like to extend their thanks to those who contributed on behalf of the AC, especially Professor Margaret Stark.

## **9. Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSSC)**

9.1 The Subcommittee has met on two occasions in the last year.

9.2 Dr Bernadette Butler as Chair has ably steered the Subcommittee through an ever increasing workload.

9.3 In July 2011 and January 2012 the updated Guidelines for the collection of specimens from complainants and suspects were published on the website and these will be reviewed again at the next meeting of the FSSC this month.

9.4 At the request of the AC, the FSSC has contributed hugely to a rewrite of the ACPO Crime at Sea Manual, although this has not yet been republished.

## **10. Research Subcommittee**

10.1 The committee has met once in the last academic year with Professor Paul Marks as the Chair.

10.2 It is hoped that further research workshops modeled on the successful one run at Conference in 2011 will be run in the future.

## **11. Sexual Offences Forum**

11.1 This is led by Dr Sandy Fielding and continues to attract lively debate and an opportunity for information sharing between clinical directors and lead forensic physicians mostly by e-mail.

11.2 The Forum has met face to face on two occasions in the last academic year.

11.3 It is anticipated that the Forum will shortly have its own secure area on the Faculty website.

**Dr J Victoria Evans**  
**Academic Dean**

## APPENDIX A

### The Academic Committee as of April 2012 is composed of:

Dr George Fernie (President)  
 Dr Catherine White (VP FP)  
 Dr Nicholas Clements (VP MLA)  
 Dr Andrew Reid (VP Coroners)  
 Dr Peter Schutte (Registrar)  
 Professor Ian Wall (Credentialling Lead)  
 Dr Michael Devlin (Treasurer)  
 Dr Bernadette Butler (Chair Forensic Science Subcommittee)  
 Mr Jerry Randle (Custody Paramedic)  
 Dr William Anderson (Chair Conference Subcommittee)  
 Dr Margaret Stark, David Jenkins Professor in Clinical Forensic Medicine  
 Dr Jason Payne-James (Editor Journal)  
 Dr Andy Dott (Chief Examiner)  
 Professor Paul Marks (Chair Research Subcommittee)  
 Ms Jo Delaforce (representative UKAFN)  
 Dr Deborah Hodes (representative RCPCH)  
 Dr Victoria Evans (Academic Dean and Chair)

## APPENDIX B

### April 2012 - Membership of Committees:

Dr George Fernie	Medical Examiners
Dr Christine Bassindale	Doctors in Secure Environments, RCGP
Dr Ujjal Sarkar	NSPIS Working Group
Dr Sheila Paul	RCPCH Standing Committee on Child Protection
Dr Jenny Holmes	RCPsych Liaison Committee
Dr Jason Payne-James	ECLM
Professor Ian Wall	Independent Advisory Panel Preventing Deaths in Custody
Dr Jonathan Wyatt	Head Injury Project
Dr Cath White / Dr Vicky Evans	DFCASA Management Board
Dr Felicity Nicholson	Blood borne virus Strategy Group
Dr Sandy Fielding	FFLM Sexual Offence Examiner Forum
Dr Alyson Jones	Domestic Violence expert group
Dr Mary Pillai	RCPCH CSA book Project Board / Steering Group
Professor Bob Peckitt / Dr Sheila Paul	Child Trafficking Advisory Group
Dr Vicky Evans	Staffordshire Early Adopters Stakeholder Meeting
	National s12 Advisory Group
Dr Michael Wilks	HMIC/HMIP Custody Stakeholder Group
	The Medical Council on Alcoholism
Dr Cath White	ACPO Working Group on Rape and Adult Sexual Offences
	National SARC Advisory Board
	Violence Against Women and Children
	Sexual Violence Forum