

# FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

## Registrar's Report for 2012 -2013

### Board Meetings

The Board met throughout the Faculty's seventh year on

1. 1 October 2012
2. 28 January 2013
3. 22 April 2013

The Minutes of these meetings are available on the website to give an indication of the discussion that took place. The Minutes are both full and accurate with limited redaction on sensitive issues, particularly those involving named individuals. This reflects the Board's wish to be open and transparent, thereby helping to fulfil its obligation to the public as a registered charity.

### Attendances

FFLM Board attendance:

	01/10/12	28/01/13	22/04/13
Dr George Fernie (chair)	✓	✓	✓
Dr J Victoria Evans	✓	✓	✓
Dr Peter Schutte	✓	✓ (phone)	✓
Dr Michael Devlin	✓	✓	✓
Dr Catherine White	✓	x	x
Dr Andrew Reid	x	N/A	N/A
Dr Nicholas Clements	x	✓ (phone)	x
Prof John Farnan	✓	✓	x
Dr Anthea Martin	x	✓ (phone)	x
Prof Richard Shepherd	✓ (phone)	✓ (phone)	✓ (phone)
Dr Sarah Redvers	✓	x	✓
Dr Will Anderson	x	✓	x
Prof Ian Wall	✓	✓	✓
Dr Michael Robertson	x	x	✓
Mr Phil Willan	✓ (phone)	✓ (phone)	✓
Mr Clive Constable	x	x	x
Dr Patrick Cadigan	x	x	x
Ms Annie Norman	N/A	✓	x
Dr Roy Palmer	N/A	✓	✓

Academic Committee attendance:

	16/07/12	17/09/12	14/01/13	19/03/13
Dr Victoria Evans (chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Shirjeel Tahir	n/a	n/a	✓	✗
Dr Frank Voeten	n/a	n/a	✗	✗
Shade Alu	n/a	n/a	✗	✓
Dr Nick Clements	✗	1	✗	✗
Ms Jo Delaforce	✗	✗	✓	Jennie Smith attended as deputy
Dr Michael Devlin	✗	✓	✓	✗
Dr George Fernie	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Andy Dott	✗	✗	✗	✗
Dr Jason Payne-James	✗	✗	✗	✓
Dr Roy Palmer	n/a	n/a	✓	✗
Dr Bernadette Butler	✓	✗	✗	✗
Dr Peter Schütte	✓	1	✗	✓
Prof Paul Marks	by telephone for research item	by telephone for research item	✗	by telephone for research item
Prof Ian Wall	✓	✓	✗	✓
Dr Will Anderson	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Cath White	✓	✓	✗	✗
Prof Miranda Horvath	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Jenny Holmes	n/a	✓	✓	✗
Mr Tim Miles	n/a	✓	✗	✓
Dr Deborah Hodes	✓	✗	n/a	n/a
Dr Andrew Reid	✓	✗	n/a	n/a

Revalidation Committee attendance (All teleconferences):

	13/06/12	26/10/12	9/04/13
Dr Nick Clements (Chair)	✓	✓	✓
Dr Michael Devlin	✗	✗	✗
Dr Victoria Evans	✓	✓	✓
Dr George Fernie	✗	✗	✓
Dr Sandy Fielding	✗	✗	✗
Dr Matthew Lee	✓	✗	✓
Dr Neil Margerison	✗	✗	✗
Dr Andrew Reid	✓	✗	N/A
Dr Peter Schutte	✓	✓	✓
Prof Richard Shepherd	✗	✓	✓
Dr Cath White	✗	✓	✓

### Fellowship Committee attendance:

	28/11/2012
Dr George Fernie (Chair)	✓
Dr Nick Clements	✓
Dr Julia Neild	✓
Dr Roy Palmer	✓
Dr Andrew Reid	✓
Dr Peter Schutte	✓
Dr Jeremy Smart	✓
Dr Cath White	✗

## **Board Membership**

The President, Dr George Fernie demits office at the AGM.

The three Vice-Presidents are also coming to the end of their terms of office. Dr Cath White has represented Forensic Practitioners and Dr Nick Clements Medico-Legal Advisers. Dr Andrew Reid (Vice-President Coroners) resigned in early 2013 and Dr Roy Palmer was appointed acting Vice-President (Coroners) pending the outcome of the 2013 Board elections.

Prof John Farnan and Dr Anthea Martin came to the end of their terms as ordinary members of the Board.

Ms Annie Norman, a forensic nurse, was co-opted onto the Board and attended her first meeting on 28/01/2013. Dr Michael Robertson and Mr Phil Willan continue as lay members of the Board.

All have given excellent service to the FFLM.

In the elections, there was one candidate for each vacancy, and so the following posts were filled without a ballot of the membership. They will take office at the AGM.

President:	Dr J Victoria Evans
Vice-President FPs:	Dr Peter Green
Vice –President (MLAs):	Dr George Fernie
Vice-President (Coroners):	Prof Paul Marks

Ordinary Members:	Dr Will Anderson
	Dr Cath White

There was one applicant for the post of Academic Dean being left vacant by Dr J Victoria Evans. The applicant was Prof Ian Wall, and his appointment has been confirmed by the Board.

## **Promotion of forensic and legal medicine**

The FFLM will:

- Continue to work with Government to raise the profile of forensic and legal medicine and to contribute to and develop new policy
- Seek opportunities to promote the specialty to medical undergraduates
- Seek opportunities for sharing educational and good practice work with colleagues overseas
- Seek to publish articles to promote forensic and legal medicine awareness

- Seek to improve communications and press coverage
- Develop marketing and promotional literature

### **Education and training**

- Implement Faculty specialist examinations successfully and continue to refined these
- Maintain good communication links with the GMC and Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AOMRC)
- Maintain Introductory Training Course for Forensic Physicians & Healthcare Professionals
- Maintain Development Training Courses
- Maintain e-learning course with Ulster University for membership examination
- Maintain and review faculty educational documents
- Maintain and support Forensic Science Committee
- Update Forensic Sampling guidance every 6 months
- Maintain a Research sub-committee
- Run an Annual Conference
- Produce new or updated guidance as appropriate

### **Professional development and standards**

- Respond to GMC consultation documents
- Contribute to associated work of other bodies such as the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)
- Maintain Faculty CPD scheme including manual process for accreditation of courses relevant to Faculty members
- Promote guidance for Faculty members on CPD
- Promote participation in Continuing Professional Development
- Encourage members to recognise that CPD participation is becoming mandatory
- Review effectiveness of CPD scheme with feedback from Faculty members
- Maintain appraiser training courses
- Maintain Faculty appraisal service
- Monitor developments in relation to revalidation
- Continue to build on work to develop curriculum
- Participate in GMC credentialing pilot with hope of achieving specialist status through this mechanism - see appended report
- Promote Fellowship nomination procedure
- Continue to revise the Faculty examination
- Maintain Faculty CPD web-based on-line scheme
- Evolve guidance for Faculty members on CPD based on GMC requirements

### **Governance, Resources and Internal Matters**

- Present audited accounts to Board and AGM
- Present budget forecast
- Review standard of service provided by current auditors
- Review standard of service provided by C Hoare & Co
- Review the Standing Orders and Governance Regulations to ensure they are fit for purpose
- Review staffing and resources
- Develop in house policies and procedures
- Review faculty document management system
- Continue development of Faculty website

## GMC Specialist Register

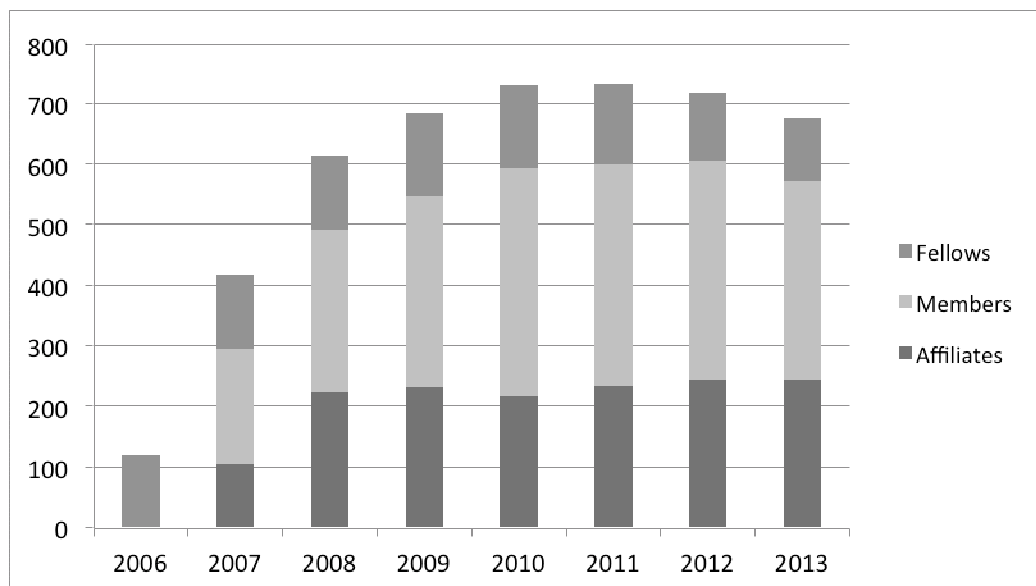
Dr Peter Green and Dr Jason Payne-James are to be congratulated on being the first UK forensic physicians to gain entry *as forensic physicians* on the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council. This is a landmark achievement for them personally, and for the FFLM.

### Membership trends

The membership numbers have declined slowly in the last couple of years, following the closure of the Foundation Membership route in 2009. The greatest fall has been in Members. The number of Affiliates has remained stable.

The following table gives the numbers for Affiliates, Members and Fellows since the inception of the FFLM. The figures exclude retired and honorary membership.

Year	Affiliates	Members	Fellows	Total
2006	0	0	120	<b>120</b>
2007	105	190	122	<b>417</b>
2008	222	269	123	<b>614</b>
2009	231	315	138	<b>684</b>
2010	217	375	138	<b>730</b>
2011	234	366	133	<b>733</b>
2012	245	360	112	<b>717</b>
2013	243	329	104	<b>676</b>

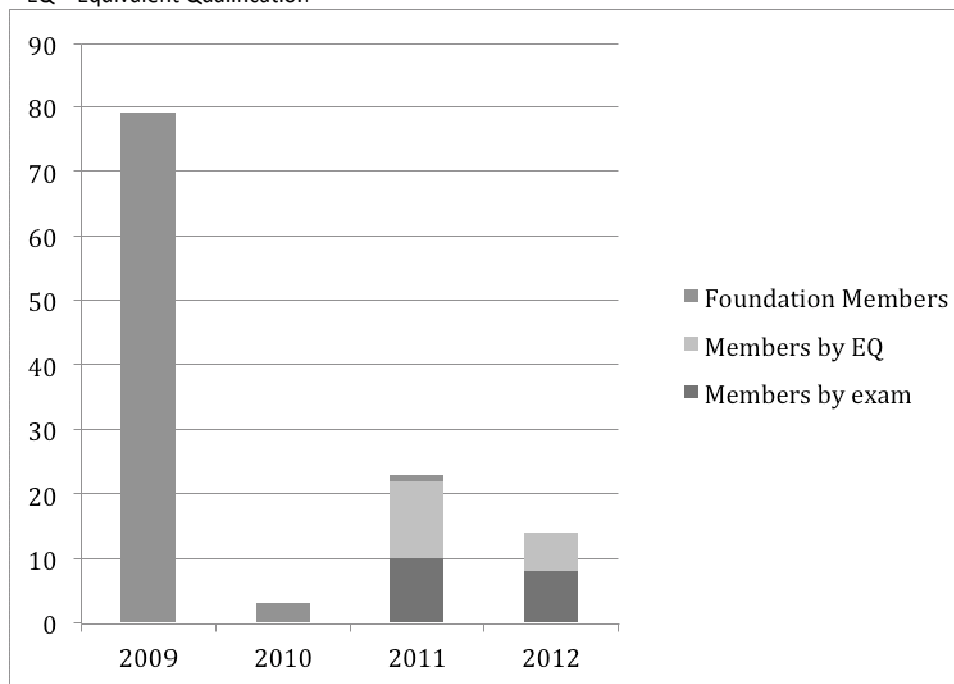


Looking at the route by which Members (i.e. MFFLMs) joined, there are similar numbers of those who take and pass the MFFLM exam (i.e. Forensic Physicians and MLAs), and those who gain entry via the *Equivalent Qualification* clauses 2.3.2, 2.3.3 and 2.3.4 in the Standing Orders (i.e. Forensic Pathologists, Coroners and Forensic Psychiatrists)

New MFFLMs 2009 - 2012 by route:

	Members by exam	Members by EQ*	Foundation Members	Total
2009	0	0	79	79
2010	0	0	3	3
2011	10	12	1	23
2012	8	6	0	14

\* EQ = Equivalent Qualification



As seen in previous years, Forensic Physicians (a category which includes Sexual Offence Examiners) make up the bulk of the membership.

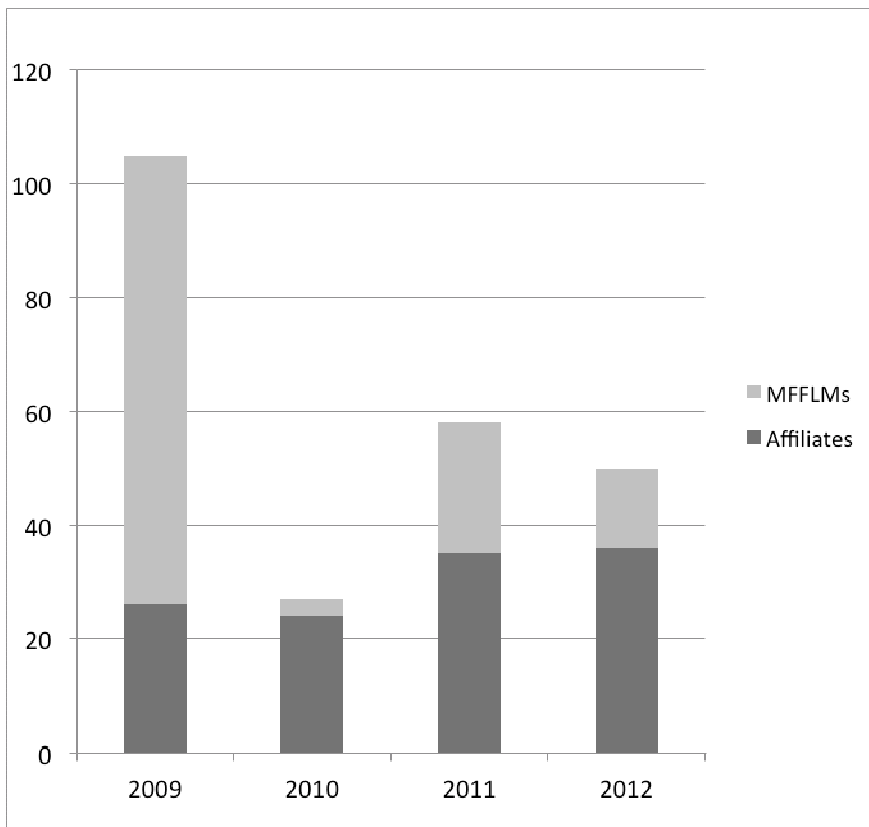
Forensic Pathologists are the second most numerous group, followed by MLAs.

Most of our membership is in the UK, with Australia second and the Republic of Ireland third.

As predicted in my report last year, the balance between joining Affiliates and joining Members (i.e. MFFLMs) is strongly in favour of Affiliates.

Joining Membership 2009 – 2012:

	Affiliates	MFFLMs
2009	26	79
2010	24	3
2011	35	23
2012	36	14



The low number of people passing Part II of the MFFLM examination remains a matter of serious concern. Indeed, in 2013, only 4 out of 17 candidates were successful.

The Board decided in 2012 to introduce the **LFFLM**, and the necessary amendments to the Standing Orders are placed before the 2013 AGM for a vote.

A **Diploma in Legal Medicine**, which does not require an amendment to the Standing Orders, will also be introduced. I will leave it to the Academic Dean to provide further details. All qualifications with the exception of the MFFLM will be open to non-doctors. An announcement of the new diploma is attached.

## Amendment to Standing Orders

The proposed amendments to the Standing Orders together with the explanatory note below have been on the FFLM website for the last 3 months.

Those of you who attended the AGM in Edinburgh last year will have heard me describe the dramatic demographic changes taking place in the FFLM and in the wider provision of forensic medical services. It is vital that the FFLM adapts to enable it to continue to grow as a vibrant and successful organisation.

I attach draft amendments to the Standing Orders which have been recommended by the Board. Members of the Academic Committee and Fellowship Committee have also had an opportunity to comment on the proposed changes.

A large number of changes are proposed, and the most important ones explained below.

(1) New categories of membership.

**Licentiates** will be those who pass the LFFLM exams. They will be entitled to the **LFFLM** post nominal and they will have full FFLM voting rights.

The number of candidates passing the MFFLM examinations is not sufficient to replace the number of Members and Fellows retiring from the FFLM. It would be wrong to lower the standard of MFFLM so that it has a lower status than MRCP, for example. However, a large number of FMEs practice part-time, some doing only two sessions per week in forensic medicine, and understandably they do not have the time or resources to justify the amount of study required for MFFLM. The LFFLM will be more affordable. It will also be more accessible in that it will be open to doctors, nurses and paramedics. The LFFLM qualification will be pitched at the minimum acceptable standard for the provision of forensic clinical services by an unsupervised practitioner.

The admission to Membership via equivalent qualification is extended (from coroners, forensic pathologists and forensic psychiatrists) to forensic odontologists. Forensic odontologists already have an entitlement to join as Affiliates.

Admission of Dento-legal Advisers to MFFLM via equivalent qualification and by examination is again under discussion, but no firm proposals are being put forward at this stage.

There is a new category of **Associate**. This would be a category to hold in reserve as the FFLM develops. For example, we may in time choose to have Diplomates as Associates (i.e. those with DFCASA, DipFHID, DGFM or DLM, but working outside the usual jobs required by the Standing Orders for Affiliate membership), or alternatively those who are currently Affiliates but who do not wish to receive the Journal. It does not matter at this stage what the criteria for admission of Associates might be, but having this category would enable us to have the FFLM on-line application software re-written now, and avoid the need for yet another expensive upgrade if and when we do need a new category of membership. It would be a category for the Board to determine as the operational needs of the FFLM dictate.

The category **Student Affiliate Member** I hope speaks for itself. This new category would enable us to set a lower subscription level for students.

We propose two further new categories called **Nurse Affiliate Member** and **Paramedic Affiliate Member**. We would need these two categories distinct from the existing category of Affiliates so we could offer nurses & paramedics a lower and fairer subscription rate to reflect their lower earning power.

I suspect scientific officers, managers, orthodontists and lawyers can afford the existing Affiliate subscription rate, and that in turn means we should probably not have a separate "Medical Affiliate" member category, but instead retain the existing overarching category of plain "Affiliate".

(2) Voting rights

The amendments provide for all Nurse & Paramedic Licentiates to have the right to vote one Nurse or Paramedic Licentiate onto the Board.

Giving Nurse & Paramedic Licentiates one reserved seat on the Board will give nurses & paramedics with Licentiateship two votes: one to vote a Nurse or Paramedic Licentiate onto the Board, and one to vote (medically qualified) Members and Fellows onto the Board. It is not a perfect solution. It will give nurses and paramedics a minor degree of preferential treatment, but without a vote for a reserved seat on the Board, they may feel marginalised as distinct groups. The alternative is to permanently co-opt someone



onto the Board, but I have little doubt nurses & paramedics would find a co-opted representative unsatisfactory in the long term.

(3) Fellowship Committee & Senior Officers

There are other proposed amendments such as the chairing of the Fellowship Committee - and changing the name "Executive Committee" to "the Senior Officers" to reflect the reality of how the FFLM is run. I hope these proposals speak for themselves.

(4) Electronic ballot forms

An amendment allows the FFLM to send out ballot papers electronically, to save FFLM costs, although the proposal is that voters will have to print them off and post them to the FFLM office by ordinary mail.

(5) Election of Vice-Presidents

The amendment allows for each individual member to vote for one Vice-President only, even if the nature of their work is such that they properly belong to more than one class (i.e. either [i] forensic practitioners, [ii] medico-legal advisers or [iii] medically qualified coroners).

(6) Appointment of lay members of the Board

A new paragraph 4.7.1 clarifies the mechanism by which lay members are appointed to the Board.

## Staff

Clare Pillinger as Faculty Manager, Sarah Llewellyn as Information and Learning Coordinator, Anna Dare as locum Accounts and Subscriptions Administrator (covering for Toni Nichols on maternity leave), and Patricia Gilbert provided an excellent service in challenging circumstances.

## Website

This continues to be accessible at <http://fflm.ac.uk> and has further evolved under the supervision of the IT Steering Group. The committee consists of:

Dr George Fernie (President)  
Dr Peter Schütte (Registrar)  
Ms Clare Pillinger (Faculty Manager)  
Ms Sarah Llewellyn (I & L Coordinator)  
Mr Mark Eagling (Webmaster)

I remind members that electronic committee papers are the preferred medium. Members will continue to be aware of the use of electronic 'mail shots' from the Faculty on a variety of subjects of interest to them.

## Journal

The Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine goes from strength to strength as our flagship publication and there are an increasing number of articles relating to legal issues, reflecting the breadth of our membership. The Editor will provide additional detail in his report.

## **David Jenkins Chair in Forensic and Legal Medicine**

Prof Miranda Horvath, an eminent academic and forensic psychologist at Middlesex University, is this year's incumbent.

His Honour Judge Peter Thornton QC, the Chief Coroner, has graciously accepted the Chair for 2013 – 2014.

## **W G Johnston & David Jenkins Memorial Funds**

Dr A Irvine & Professor A Busuttill continue to administer these Funds reporting to the Treasurer. Dr Raine Roberts has retired after many years of sterling service and a replacement is being sought.

## **Faculty Consultations 2012-2013**

- Implementing the coroner reforms in Part 1 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009  
Publication Date: 12 April 2013
- Department of Health: Responsible officers in the new health architecture  
Publication Date: 4 January 2013
- Department for Transport: Enforcement Procedures against Drink Drivers and Other Offenders  
Publication Date: 1 January 2013
- Legislative Changes to Enable Registered Healthcare Professionals to Assess Suspected Drug Drivers  
Publication Date: 6 November 2012
- GMC: A new model for evaluating equivalence  
Publication date: 19 June 2012
- Good Medical Practice: A Draft for Consultation  
Publication date: 19 June 2012

## **Conclusion**

It has been another successful year for the FFLM. We have made excellent progress in a number of areas. Big changes will be required to ensure our continuing success. I remain supremely confident in the future of the FFLM.

Dr Peter Schütte FRCP FFLM  
Registrar

1 May 2013