

Joint Memorandum between the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and the Department of Health

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC) and the Department of Health (DoH) have agreed a 'Joint Memorandum of Understanding', the principle objective of which is to improve the availability of high quality care for patients. This will be done by increasing the number of trained doctors, providing modernised, high quality, training programmes, ensuring the maintenance of standards in training and supporting and promoting clinical academic medicine. This collaboration will benefit patients, trainees, and NHS management and improve the working lives and career opportunities for doctors. Activity will be across a broad range but will focus on the following areas:

- The establishment of a properly resourced Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB) and its successful operation in working towards the objectives of the published Statement of Policy. Legislation will set out how the Medical Royal Colleges will be fully represented on the Board and its committees and play a leading role in the supervision and implementation of education and training matters.
- Collaboration with the PMETB and other stakeholders to develop curricula and to create and improve training opportunities within the NHS so that an increasing number of trained doctors can be produced to meet the public and professional expectation of an expansion of consultant and general practitioner delivered care. This will include work to review the current CCST programmes, the National Training Number scheme, the criteria for admission to the Specialist Register, and reformation of the current Staff and Associate Specialist Grades. Competency based training and assessment will steadily evolve as the criteria for progression to unsupervised practice within the structure of clinical teams.
- Working through the PMETB to review the quality assurance of postgraduate medical education. Aspects of this are to rationalise and harmonise the Royal Colleges' processes for visiting NHS Trusts to assess and ensure the quality of medical education and training, against national standards, whilst maintaining the continuity and quality of patient care.
- Reviewing the way in which Colleges and Trusts provide their input into the appointment of medical staff to ensure the quality and competence of those appointed whilst at the same time making sure that appointments are made as quickly and smoothly as possible.
- Responding to the implications of the extension of the European Working Time Directive to doctors in training as described in HSC 2003/001¹.
- Supporting and advising doctors and employers on the continued training and professional development of all career grade medical staff.

¹ Available at www.doh.gov.uk/publications/coinh.html