

ACADEMY COUNCIL MEETING – 28 MARCH 2012

Summary of key issues

NHS and Social Care Act

The Council noted that despite concerns raised by many organisations the Health and Social Care Bill had now received Royal Assent. The Council agreed that it was important that Colleges continue to share intelligence about the implementation of the Act and its consequences and this would be kept under review by the Council.

Education and training aspects of the Government reforms

It was recognised that there had been considerable changes and improvements to the proposals on education and training. Specifically these related to the relationship between HEE and LETBs, the position of post-graduate Deans and the operation of LETBs.

It was, however, agreed to seek written confirmation of the position of Postgraduate Medical Deans on LETB governing structures.

Clinical commissioning

The Council received a report of a productive meeting held on 27 March for College Commissioning Leads and Presidents with Dr Kathy McLean from the NHS Commissioning Board about College input to the NHS NCB at all levels.

The Council also endorsed in principle the proposals set out in an Academy paper on how Colleges should be engaging with and inputting to the commissioning process and NHS NCB. It was recognised that this offered significant opportunities for Colleges whilst acknowledging potential risks. Members were clear the provision of clinical advice and leadership from Colleges had to be undertaken on a professional and properly resourced basis and could not just be reliant on goodwill.

The Council agreed the need for an Academy wide co-ordinating/facilitating function which would catalyse activity but not cut across or impede individual College input. Detailed proposals of how this could work will be developed by the group of College Commissioning Leads in an Academy Group to be jointly chaired by Academy Vice-Chairman Terence Stephenson and Steve Mowle, RCGP Vice-Chairman.

Obesity project

The Council noted that the project on identifying recommended approaches to tackling obesity was underway and a first successful meeting of the Steering Group chaired by Terence Stephenson had taken place. The intention was to seek submissions of written evidence from a range of organisations. It is hoped that a preliminary report will be available by September.

Consensus statement on Higher Specialist Scientist Training

The Council noted the publication of a consensus statement agreed by all members recognising the importance of Higher Specialist Scientific Training (HSST) in ensuring appropriate career development and progression for a highly skilled healthcare scientific workforce. Medical Royal Colleges now intend to support the development of curricula for top-level scientists working in areas relevant to each college's field of interest, as part of the Modernising Scientific Careers (MSC) programme. These curricula will be developed by both scientists, currently working at an appropriate level in the relevant field, and medically trained colleagues from Colleges. The statement is available on the Academy website.

Shape of Training Group

The Council noted details of the Shape of Training Steering Group chaired by Professor David Greenway. The Council recognised that this review was going to be hugely important for Colleges and it would be essential that Colleges were closely involved throughout the process.

Improving care and training at trainee changeover dates

The Council noted the proposals, initiated by the Academy, agreed by the Medical Education UK Scrutiny Group. It was understood that further work is to be undertaken on staggered changeover but in the meantime Colleges and Faculties agreed to promote the proposals and actions to members and fellows.

Medical Training Initiative

The Council noted with pleasure that following last years' Home Office consultation on changes to immigration rules the Government had agreed that the length of stay for those doctors coming to the UK under the Medical Training Initiative would remain at two years and not be reduced to 12 months as had been feared. The work undertaken by Colleges was recognised as having been extremely effective.

Academy Business Plan 2012-15

The Council noted the Academy strategy and business plan for 2012-15 which had been agreed by the Board of Trustees following consultation with members and stakeholders.

Governance issues arising from recent Council meetings

The Council noted that the Board of Trustees had established a group which will include College Presidents and Chief Executives to examine some specific governance issues arising out of recent meetings of the Council. The group will specifically look at issues around Council decision making and collective responsibility.

Meeting with Dame Sally Davies, CMO (England)

Following the formal meeting the Council met with Dame Sally Davies, Chief Medical Officer for England. Issues discussed included Academic Health Science Networks and LETBs, promotion of research by CCGs, the role of Colleges following the Bill, release for activity for the benefit of the wider NHS, regulation of tele-medicine delivered by practitioners based overseas, the new Government alcohol strategy, CEAs and the renegotiation of the New Deal for junior doctors.