

Academy Council Meeting

Summary of key issues

Welcome and Introductions

The Council welcomed Jackie Taylor, President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, and John Etherington, President of the UK Faculty of Sports and Exercise Medicine to their first Council meeting on taking office.

Workforce

In the light of the publication of the NHS England Long Term Plan and the work of the Workforce Implementation Groups, the Council focussed very much on workforce issues. There has been good College involvement in the process led by Baroness Dido Harding but concerns about how the different aspects of the work will knit together to produce a coherent plan. The Council agreed to draw up a set of principles which we believe should underpin the plan and we can use to judge the success, or otherwise, of what is produced. The Academy is meeting Baroness Harding in March and we will present these principles then.

The Council then concentrated on what the Academy itself and Colleges can do in practical terms on workforce issues. We will obviously use our expertise to provide advice and contribute to debates at national and local level. The Council recognised that Colleges have a great deal of data on the medical workforce, but we don't tend to collate it to provide an overall picture of the state of the medical workforce. It was agreed to collect some key headline figures across specialties now and seek to develop agreement on collecting a common core set of data going forward.

Review of Standards

The Council noted the current review of four areas of clinical standards – mental health, cancer, 18 weeks and A&E 4-hour target – arising out of the Long Term Plan.

The Council recognised that the 4-hour target could be refined but was clear that it remains valuable and should not be abandoned.

Medical Leadership

The Council adopted a statement on the importance of medical leadership and will be writing to Lord Prior, Chair of NHS England, with our views on what needs to be put in place to facilitate medical leadership and showing the professions' engagement with leadership issues.

The state of social care

The Council welcomed an interesting presentation from Simon Bottery, Senior Fellow at the Kings Fund, on social care. The Council endorsed the Academy's role in the new Health for Care Coalition which is bringing together a range of healthcare organisations to make the case for a sustainable financial settlement for social care.



Winter Pressures

The Council noted that ever increasing demand had led to the worst ever A&E performance figures last week despite less severe winter weather and flu. More positively, it appears that the HEE guidance on appropriate deployment of trainees had been followed.

Genomics

The Council was pleased to note the effective working of Academy Genomics Group and endorsed a statement from the group setting out College aspirations and concerns about the development of genomics in the NHS.

Academy/COPMED meeting

Carrie MacEwen, the Academy Chair, reported on the successful College meeting with COPMED held earlier this month. It had been a positive meeting and will be repeated. The focus of discussion was making a reality of "Step-in/Step-out" training.

It was also noted that joint guidance of the development of SAS doctors, endorsed by the Academy, is expected to be published shortly.

Standards in the Private Sector

The Council endorsed a paper from the Royal College of Surgeons of England arising out of the Paterson Inquiry which sets out the standards which should be expected to operate across private and public sector clinical activity particularly in relation to the flow of data and clinical governance. The Council agreed that the principles set out in the paper apply across specialties in relation to private practice.

Charges for Overseas Visitors

The Council agreed to support a paper from the Royal College of Physicians London and Faculty of Public Health which highlighted the evidence of the harm done to individual and population health by the imposition of health charges to overseas visitors. The Council adopted a statement calling for a moratorium of the charges until there has been an independent evaluation of their impact.

New GP contract

Martin Marshall, Vice Chair of the RCGP, reported on the content of the new GP contract. His assessment that it represents a genuine boost and opportunity for general practice and primary care was welcomed.

Medical Examiners

The Council noted Suzy Lishman's oral report on development of Medical Examiner scheme which will come in from April in England to examine all deaths in secondary care.

Work as a Health Outcome

The Council was reminded of the planned Academy/FoM conference on 9 April on work as a health outcome. Details on the website.