

## Academy policy day

### Summary of key issues

September / 2020

#### Introduction

The Academy holds an annual Policy Day when the Council looks in detail at a small number of key current issues and importantly, determines policy priorities for the coming year. We hold a seminar with an outside speaker on the evening before the Policy Day have an informal dinner for Council members.

For obvious reasons the format was different this year. No dinner, although there was a short Zoom social after the seminar! Also, the main policy discussions were restricted to half a day as experience has shown that it is hard to maintain focus at a virtual meeting for a full day.

#### Seminar: Health Improvement. Professor Chris Whitty

The Council was delighted that Professor Chris Whitty, CMO for England, had previously agreed to be our speaker at the seminar and grateful that with all his other current pressures he was still able to attend. It had been agreed that the session would explicitly not be on COVID-19 and we fortuitously were able to look at health improvement and the future of public health functions in the light of the abolition of PHE.

Chris gave an excellent introduction on future health trends and challenges and urged taking a step back to look more widely at health improvement and particularly how the NHS could embrace and include health improvement in all its activities. There was a high quality debate with views on where and for who health improvement activity should be focussed. The Academy produced a [summary of the discussion](#) which was endorsed by the Council the following morning and has been subsequently submitted to DHSC and the Advisory Group looking at the future of public health functions.

#### Rethinking medicine in a COVID tinged world

Helen Stokes-Lampard, the Academy Chair, opened the Policy Day itself with a session setting out her vision. This expanded on what she had [previously set out](#) for Council and stakeholders. In particular this was for Colleges and the Academy to take a lead in 'Rethinking Medicine' in a way which can bring together the various initiatives around shared decision making — over-diagnosis, EBI, Choosing Wisely, Realistic Medicine — in a new approach to healthcare with the citizen at its heart.

Members were very supportive of the vision and approach. But it was recognised this was a huge agenda and it was essential for the Academy to focus on issues and areas where it could actually make an impact and are within its sphere of influence. Work will now start on developing a detailed programme to take this forward.

#### Colleges as membership bodies

Martin Marshall, Academy Officer and RCGP Chair, led a session on the issues and challenges facing Colleges as membership bodies. This is not simply because of COVID-19 but because of changing expectations of individuals about membership bodies in general. This is not an issue



which the Academy can resolve but it was recognised that there were common challenges across Colleges. We will look at collating information on these and possibly facilitating cross College discussions on specific issues.

## College Invited Reviews

Jeanette Dickson, Vice-Chair and RCR President led a discussion on the value and challenges of College Invited reviews. It was noted that the Academy is reviewing the framework for invited reviews at present. The key messages were over managing conflicting pressures and the need for transparency.

## EU Exit Transition

Alan Boyd, Independent Clinical Trustee and Academy Brexit Lead gave a briefing on current issues. Without an agreement, there will be potentially be real difficulties for the NHS. These are particularly around drugs and devices, recognition of qualifications and reciprocal healthcare arrangements. It was recognised that, regrettably, the Academy or Colleges, were unlikely to have much leverage on these issues.

## The Green agenda

Helen Stokes-Lampard led the discussion on the green agenda. This is an issue that all members support but the question is how much the Academy should focus on this issue. Members considered that the focus had to remain on the green agenda in healthcare, rather than more widely, but that the Academy should use all opportunities to highlight the issues and collaborate with others where it can, even though it probably will not be leading specific work in this area.

## How is the Academy doing?

Jo Martin, Vice-Chair and RC Path President, led a session seeking feedback on what the Academy is doing and sought views on what we should do more or less of. Members were supportive of our work but emphasised the need to focus on issues where we can have an impact. Members particularly valued the more frequent contact, albeit virtual, over the recent months in Academy, CMO and NHSE meetings rather than simply meeting every quarter for Council.

## Policy Priorities 2020-21

The final session looked at the Academy's policy priorities for the coming year. Officers proposed some changes to the priorities which have been stable for a while. What was proposed and agreed by Council were:

- **Workforce** — Seeking to ensure we have the appropriate workforce, in the right numbers, properly supported and valued
- **Education and Training** — Supporting colleges in maintaining excellence in medical education and training to ensure the highest quality delivery of care
- **System improvement (i.e. Today's NHS)** — Seeking to improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the NHS for the benefit of patients and staff
- **Rethinking Medicine and ensuring a sustainable future NHS (i.e. Tomorrow's NHS)** — Seeking to help reshape the future delivery of health and care to provide person-centred equitable services in the future for the whole population.

A detailed work programme will now be developed.

## Academy Members Meeting

Charles Winstanley, Chair of the Academy Board of Trustees, reported on the Board's activities over the past year and presented the annual Trustees report and accounts which have been approved by the external auditors. There were no questions on the accounts or Trustee's report.

The Academy also launched its [2020 Annual Review](#) at the members meeting.