

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians, London



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Niall Dickson
Chief Executive
General Medical Council
350 Euston Road
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NW1 3JN

18 February 2010

Dear Mr Dickson

Re: Consultation on a review of the Future Regulation of Medical Education and Training

I refer to your letter of 12 January 2010 where the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine welcomes the opportunity to respond to the above consultation paper. The faculty was established in 2006 by the Royal College of Physicians of London and has been founded to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote for the public benefit the advancement of education and knowledge in the field of forensic and legal medicine.
- To develop and maintain for the public benefit the good practice of forensic and legal medicine by ensuring the highest professional standards of competence and ethical integrity.

The faculty includes three different professional groups:

- Forensic physicians
- Medically qualified coroners
- Medico-legal advisers to the medical defence organisations

We would comment as follows –

Although this is a comprehensive document it misses several areas of practice especially for those of us in Clinical Forensic Medicine.

1. It should be up to the GMC to designate areas of medical work as specialties recognised nationally and through the EU.
2. Para 101 mentions that only trained doctors in GP can work in that area either NHS or privately save for trainees. Some of police work is general practice and this has to be reconciled with those entering police work from hospital specialties. This should be dealt with by forensic physician training programmes.
3. The environment of training is crucial and such posts are recognised for the mainline

hospital & GP training but not for forensic physician training. When the NHS started peripheral hospitals were approved for training by the Royal Colleges. Although there may have been variation of standards for a number of years they have now improved. As in many other EU countries, Universities should have a higher profile in training. They have posts in which doctors work academically and clinically which the Royal Colleges do not. The GMC should explore a move towards the Universities in addition to the postgraduate Deanery structure.

4. The undergraduate course still lacks an understanding of legal medicine and the GMC must remedy this.
5. Most important of all Clinical Forensic Medicine must be designated as a specialty.

I hope these observations are of assistance but if anything here is unclear then I would be happy to try and clarify that comment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. George M Fernie'. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

DR C George M Fernie
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