

# FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

## President's Report for Annual General Meeting – 11 May 2018

### Introduction

The Faculty is now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year since it was established by the Royal College of Physicians of London as a charity and with objectives for public benefit to promote the advancement of education and knowledge in the field of forensic and legal medicine; to establish a career pathway in forensic and legal medicine and to develop and maintain good practice of forensic and legal medicine by ensuring the highest professional standards of competence and ethical integrity and to act as an authoritative body for consultation of educational or public interest concerning forensic and legal medicine. I hope to show in this report how the Faculty has progressed and achieved on all fronts in the past year.

There have been substantial changes since the last Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM). Nationally with the junior doctor strike, Brexit and pressure of workload in the NHS and private sectors as well as Dame Elish Angiolini's report on deaths in custody and new appointments within the Faculty, to mention but a few.

### Acknowledgements

#### National

The Faculty was delighted to know that an Honorary Fellow of the Faculty, Baroness Brenda Hale, had been appointed as the first female President of the UK Supreme Court to replace Lord Neuberger. Previously Baroness Hale was the UK's first female Law Lord in 2004 and then the first female Justice of the Supreme Court in 2009. She has long been a champion of increasing diversity in the justice system. She was also the Treasurer of Gray's Inn, to which I belong in a very much lesser capacity.

It is timely to congratulate the President-elect of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP), Dr Andrew (Bod) Goddard, on his election on 26 March 2018. He will take over the baton from the current President, Professor Jane Dacre, in September 2018 after the 500<sup>th</sup> year anniversary celebrations of the RCP. I would like to thank Professor Dacre for her leadership role in medicine and her support of the Faculty in her term of office as President and to wish her all the best for the next phase.

#### Faculty

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of many in the Faculty particularly the Senior Officers and the Faculty Office staff. Most particularly, the work of the Academic Dean, the Chief Examiner, the Examinations Manager, Jay Barton-Costa, and the committees which the Academic Dean oversees for their excellent work in increasing the number of training courses, webinars, the standard of examinations and guidelines across a range of important topics in forensic and legal medicine. This also includes updating guidelines regularly and ensuring they are available on the website. Particular thanks go to Dr Helena Thornton for excellent leadership as Chief Examiner. She will demit in April 2018 and we will welcome Dr

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Caroline Jones, the newly appointed Chief Examiner to take the Faculty into the next era. Furthermore to thank and congratulate Dr Margaret Stark in the new role as Lead Facilitator of the Faculty's Course in General Forensic Medicine. With her past role as Academic Dean of the Faculty and teaching experience in Australia, she has already run two successful courses (one of which was induction training for the Metropolitan Police Service) with excellent feedback which was full of plaudits.

Also to thank the Registrar, Dr Michael Wilks, who has provided much appreciated support and expertise to myself in the past year as he has previously to my predecessor, Dr Jason Payne-James. He is to be particularly congratulated as he has valiantly continued all the Registrar functions to support the Faculty despite personal medical adversity and still kept us on the right track. A special thanks will be mentioned appropriately at the AGM and Conference. I would also like to welcome the Registrar-elect, Dr Richard Shepherd, Home Office registered forensic pathologist, who has already been observing the Registrar role and taking the lead in one respect which will be mentioned later. In recognition of the expanding role of the Registrar in administrative, executive and organisational functions, the Senior Officer and Vice President Committee decided to advertise for a post of Assistant Registrar, not only to assist the Registrar in the above functions but also to focus on organisational components of the Registrar post. I am pleased to announce that in September 2017, there were three applicants for the advertised post. Eventually, only one was interviewed and Dr Alex Gorton (an A&E Consultant and General Forensic Medicine doctor), was appointed and has already taken up the reins, particularly leading changes necessary to comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which come into force on 25 May 2018. This is particularly important with the Faculty's increasing role within the UK and internationally.

Also to thank the work of the Treasurer, Dr Daniel Haines, with the able support of the Membership and Finance Manager, Charlene Campbell, in keeping within budget despite the effects of Brexit starting to impinge on investments and with personal medical adversity recently. Charlene Campbell is also thanked for her excellent work in dealing with applications for Membership and Fellowship to the Faculty, an important role between Senior Officers and applicants.

And finally, and not least, to thank Tessa Lewis, the Faculty Office Manager, for her commitment, dedication, expertise and effectiveness in supporting Senior Officers, working parties, committees, training courses in the Faculty and for her quiet good humour and efficiency in answering any problem.

## **The Faculty**

My Predecessor predicted development and expansion of the Faculty which, as a member of the RCP Council and a member of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC), is now recognised as a resource for providing expertise in consultations on forensic and legal issues facing the medical community. We were involved in the RCP's response to a consultation on sanctions in gross negligence manslaughter (GNM) and in the AoMRC addressing the implications of Montgomery on taking consent and the development of a

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working tool for clinicians of all other specialties. The latter with the assistance of the Vice-President for Medico-legal Medicine doctors, Dr John Holden.

Importantly, in December 2017, the Faculty moved office to new premises on the fifth floor in 1 Alie Street with more room to accommodate some training courses, most committee meetings and to develop the Faculty as a real and not simply a virtual body. The established Senior Officer and Vice President meetings started in 2016 and have continued to address the work of the Faculty which has enabled the specialist committees and Faculty Board to be more focused.

The AGM will be asked to agree on expansion of the Fellowship Committee to a Membership and Fellowship Committee, meeting four times a year, to consider all applications for Membership including Associateship, Affiliateship, Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship with the objective ensuring consistency of decisions. Already the new Assistant Registrar has sprung into action to revise and simplify the application forms for Membership and Fellowship.

The use of the WebEx system for conferences and committees is working well and ensures a good attendance at committees and meetings. This development has not only streamlined the meetings and increased the attendance but also reduces costs.

My particular thanks go to the Faculty Office staff, Tessa Lewis, Charlene Campbell and Jay Barton-Costa for ensuring compliance with ISO 9001 and with the assistance of the Assistant Registrar, getting ready to comply with GDPR for May 2018 and beyond, and for updating and developing the Faculty website with the assistance of Phew Design Limited.

Readers of the weekly Bulletin will be aware that Sandy McLean and Jo Fearn have been active in assisting with press statements and publicity for the Faculty and regular communication via social media on a weekly basis. There have been four press statements this year.

Importantly, we thank Moorepay for providing initial HR advice to the Faculty. After review of the Faculty's developing needs for HR provision, the Senior Officers and Vice-Presidents agreed to seek service level agreement for provision of HR services from the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), from Liz Laughton, Head Of Human Resources and People Development and David Cooper, Director of Organisational Capabilities and Change at the RCN. This will be on an ad hoc basis; currently assisting with Faculty job descriptions to comply with GDPR. We look forward to working with them in the coming year.

## **Specialist Advisory Committee (SAC) in forensic and legal medicine**

The SAC within the Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board (JRCPTB), as for all other medical specialties, has been hard at work to produce the Part 1 application for specialty status for forensic and legal medicine ably assisted by Felicity Stuart, Zoe Fleet and Vicky Ong of the JRCPTB. It is notable that we have had support from a wide variety of stakeholders such as politicians, educationalists, the College of Policing, Police and Crime

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Commissioners (PCCs), as well as the AoMRC and other Royal Colleges and Faculties for the Part 1 application which has just been submitted to the Department of Health.

Work will now start on the Part 2 application on the forensic and legal medicine curriculum and Capabilities in Practice (CiPs). This will be under the chairmanship of Dr Roger Palmer, Senior Medico-legal Adviser and Team Leader in London at the Medical Protection Society with Zoe and Vicky from JRCPTB and a small group including trainees from general forensic, sexual offences and medico-legal medicine and the expertise of the Academic Dean and Dr Margaret Stark. It is encouraging that CiPs approval has been accorded to the internal medicine curriculum and currently curricula for cardiology and rehabilitation medicine are being considered. It is likely that the template for internal medicine and rehabilitation medicine will be helpful for CiPs in forensic and legal medicine. If the Part 1 application is successful, we hope to submit the Part 2 application at the beginning of 2019.

I would like to thank the Vice-President for Forensic Practitioners, Dr Andrew Wilkinson for his work on an appraisal training course held at the RCP and Dr Nigel Callaghan for acting as the Suitable Person for revalidation in forensic and legal medicine. This is extremely helpful pending appointment of our own Responsible Officer when we become a specialty.

Particular congratulations to Professor Ian Wall, a past President and past Academic Dean of the Faculty, for achieving specialist recognition in general forensic and sexual offences medicine through the Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR) route. This is a complicated application which has been achieved by only two other Members of the Faculty.

## **Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC)**

I represent the Faculty on the AoMRC meetings which occur quarterly and have been elected a Trustee of the AoMRC. On 18 September 2017, I was inducted into a financial training session for Trustees with Noelia Serrano, a partner at Sayer Vincent. This was prior to reviewing the annual Trustee report and accounts for 2016/17 and discussing the management of accounts in the past year and the development strategies for the Academy for the next three to five years.

In September 2017, there was the annual Academy meeting followed by a Policy Day in which specific areas discussed included: what members of the Academy required, what were the Academy's functions and the role of the patient and lay groups. These are issues which are relevant to our Faculty.

The AoMRC, and the RCP, are particularly concerned about the workforce issues and the Faculty will be contributing to consideration of new models of care and what a multi-professional team approach would look like in the future dealing with population health outcomes. The Faculty has set up a small working party with a short half-life to determine new working models in forensic and legal medicine.

In this year, the AoMRC has considered the changing face of medicine, the future role of doctors, Choosing Widely and considering the principles which underpin restriction or delay

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in medical care. Other areas range from new workforce strategies and the wider implications of some high profile cases, such as GNM and the role of reflective statements. It has already been noted in the Bulletin, that the AoMRC has produced helpful documents on reflections. The Williams Review chaired by Professor Sir Norman Williams, Past-President of the Royal College of Surgeons, will review GNM in healthcare taking information from a wide range of stakeholders including the RCP and the Faculty as well as the Medical Defence Organisations (MDOs) and the BMA. Consideration is likely to be given, possibly on a statutory basis, to protection for individuals and their comments engaging in investigations such as for GNM and to prevent disclosure being passed to third parties including the regulators (for example the GMC), employers or the police.

## **Royal College of Physicians (RCP)**

I also represent the Faculty at the RCP London Council. Their Council has strategic themes in its agenda covering improving care for patients, developing doctors throughout their careers, leading and supporting RCP members, shaping the future of health and healthcare and building the future heritage. The Shape of Training document produced by the GMC has been considered by the JRCPTB and every SAC. Importantly the Faculty has supported the RCP in junior doctor training and issues which were not resolved by their strike. It is notable that the Academy of Physicians Colleges UK (APCUK) was to be the business arm of the current Federation of Royal Medical Colleges and would be launched in January 2018.

The RCP is continuing with its preparation for the 2018 celebrations for the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the College. The Faculty has supported the College in recent concerns about workforce and work pressures. It may be of interest to Faculty Members and Fellows that the RCP Registrar (now the President-elect) is looking at the fine details and revisions to new Membership categories open to NHS Consultants in the UK who did not have the MRCP (UK) but were in a substantive post. They were also considering the role of Specialty and Associate Specialist (SAS) doctors.

## **Meetings with other Faculties and Individuals**

Importantly to progress the Faculty's specialty status and role in being consulted, I, together with the Academic Dean, the Registrar, the Registrar-elect and Vice Presidents, have met with a number of Presidents of other Colleges and Faculties, the Chief Coroner, NHS England and Health Education England in order to promote the Faculty and for them to be aware of the Faculty as a resource of expertise in forensic and legal medicine.

Importantly, there have been meetings with Dr Gillian Tully, the Forensic Science Regulator to work jointly on a letter in relation to quality control in relation to forensic sampling by general forensic medicine practitioners, a point which she also makes in her annual report. Jointly, the Faculty has reiterated that for PCCs and providers of forensic medical services the importance of maintaining appropriate standards and quality of service that all complainants/victims and suspects have a right to expect. Dr Tully's excellent annual report further emphasises the standard and quality of forensic work. We appreciate that many doctors, nurses and paramedics working in SARCs and police custodial settings do offer an

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excellent high standard service to their patients and ensuring that their practice is in line with all relevant guidance on good practice.

Joint initiatives are also to be undertaken with the Royal College of Pathologists in relation to Medical Examiners and an education programme for Medical Coroners which the Chief Coroner intends should also be open to Medical Examiners when they are appointed. Our Vice-President for Medical Coroners, Professor Robert Forrest is one of the tutors for training of coroners.

## **International Association of Legal Medicine (IALM)**

Some of you including the previous President, Dr Jason Payne-James, are members of this association. My thanks are due to our Registrar-elect, Dr Shepherd and to Dr Payne-James for seizing the nettle at short notice together with the Glasgow Convention Bureau to prepare a detailed bid to host the 25<sup>th</sup> Triennial Congress of the IALM in 2021 in Glasgow. Dr Shepherd has achieved the impossible to have the bid booklet ready with multiple letters of support from appropriate stakeholders. He and Dr Payne-James will present the bid on behalf of the Faculty at the meeting in Japan in June 2018.

In conclusion, the Faculty has developed its focus through the work of its Senior Officers and Vice-Presidents, its Committees and Subcommittees and extended its role outside the Faculty in order to promote the specialty of forensic and legal medicine. At a recent dinner meeting for Presidents of Royal Colleges and Faculties, we were able to introduce Jeremy Hunt, the Minister for Health to the importance of forensic and legal medicine, and new models of working. We will continue to push for high quality safer custody care and for commissioning of such care through the NHS in future to promote the safety of vulnerable individuals.

Finally as previously noted, I would like to thank all the Senior Officers, Vice-Presidents and Faculty Office staff, and all Faculty Members and Fellows who chair or are involved in Committee and Subcommittee meetings which are essential to the work of the Faculty. Importantly to thank Professor Keith Rix, who has been the Interim Mental Health and Intellectual Disability Lead for the Faculty over quite a period of time although initially taking it on only in the short term. The Faculty is very fortunate to have had the benefit of his particular expertise.

On a personal note, it is an exceptional privilege to work with so many experienced, motivated and talented colleagues. The Faculty wishes you all the best in the next year.

**Professor Carol. A Seymour**  
**President of the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine**