

## President's report for the FFLM AGM 15 May 2020

### Covid-19 Challenges

As I write my report for the AGM we are still in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic and need to: Stay Home – Protect the NHS – Save Lives. Many of you will have been working harder than ever and in challenging circumstances. It saddens me that we can't meet for our yearly conference for a variety of reasons: I set the conference sub-committee the challenge of having the Annual Conference Programme prepared in time to be published with the FFLM Christmas card and this was achieved; meeting each other is important – the social interaction, peer support, and exchange of ideas. Now we will have to wait till next year and Birmingham. We will ensure that the conference programme for 2021 takes the best from this year and also moves with the times. I am so grateful to all the speakers who offered their services and hope we can work with them in the not too distant future. In relation to the David Jenkins Professorial Lecture, Professor Philip Lumb has kindly agreed to give his oration in 2021. One piece of good news for me personally is that I don't have to write an after-dinner speech!

The current pandemic has shown how individuals can work together resulting in remarkable achievements. In a small way the FFLM team too has done this. Alex Gorton and Cath White OBE, have exceeded all expectations with the production and constant review and revision of the FFLM Covid-19 resources. There has also been an increase in liaison with external agencies ensuring that they are aware of the role of FFLM members and the independent responsibility of the FFLM to promote Quality Standards in all aspects of our work.



### General Update

As outlined in the Registrar's and Treasurer's reports FFLM work practices needed to change to survive. The Faculty Board discussed the situation in detail last July and made the difficult decisions. We have kept the RCP informed and the President, Professor Andrew Goddard, and Registrar, Professor Donal O'Donoghue, have been supportive in our endeavours. We had moved to a virtual office, last autumn (2019) with virtual meetings before the Covid-19 lockdown. The cost of remaining a member of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges was unsustainable. Looking to the future we carried out a survey of members and held a Strategy day in January and work streams from these endeavours have progressed.

### FFLM Examinations

The most exciting news this year has been the success of the FFLM examinations. Over the year we have had a record number of successful candidates. I hope

applications will continue as we need a well-trained knowledgeable workforce to care for our vulnerable patients and advise doctors and dentists. We have just finished a review of the Regulations and Syllabus for each examination following feedback from candidates and examiners. These updated documents will be published imminently. The Academic Dean (AD) is working with colleagues to prepare the Membership Examination for Dento-legal Advisors due in 2021/22. There are plans now to hold the DLM examination abroad and this is excellent news. We have an International membership so we ask all of you who have contacts abroad to promote the FFLM and the exams.

### **International Aspects**



Unfortunately Covid-19 has taken its toll on International activities too. In particular the 22<sup>nd</sup> Triennial Meeting of the International Academy of Forensic Sciences (IAFS) to be held in Sydney in September has now been postponed to 17-21 May 2021. Professor Jason Payne-James and I, along with Professor David Ransom (from the Victorian institute of Forensic Medicine in Melbourne (VIFM)), have been involved assisting Professor John Gall, current President of the International Association of Clinical Forensic Medicine (IACFM) (formerly World Police Medical Officers), as part of the organising committee for the Clinical Forensic Medicine & Forensic Nursing discipline (CFM). Just before lockdown the IAFS had received a record number of abstracts to review and two CFM workshops had been approved. The proposed programme looks very exciting. It is hoped that most people will be able to attend in May next year.



Our colleagues in Australia, members the Faculty of Clinical Forensic Medicine of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, also had their Pathology Update 2020 conference cancelled in March. Dr Angela Williams has taken over as Chair of the Faculty. I have known Angela for many years, she works at the VIFM, and has vast experience in the discipline.

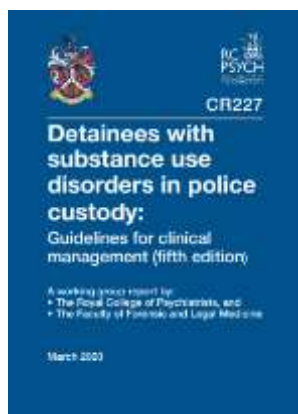
### **FFLM publications**

The FFLM is well respected for the wide range of educational resources produced and the AD has outlined in his report how this has continued over the past year. In July 2019 there was a launch at the RCP for the '*Quality standards for healthcare professionals working with victims of torture in detention*'. This has been a huge piece of work led by Juliet Cohen and Peter Green.



The Fifth Edition of the 'Blue Guidelines' *Detainees with substance use disorders in police custody: Guidelines for clinical management* was finally published in March 2020. Many thanks to all the members of the working group led by the Chair, Professor Eilish Gilvarry, who persevered with the development of updated Guidelines.

The Journal of Forensic & Legal Medicine has gone from strength to strength under the new Editor, Professor Tim Thompson, ably assisted by the publishing team from Elsevier led by Alex Smith. The Journal cover has changed and the content has become more relevant to our members. There has been a marked increase in submission of articles which now means that JFLM has the second highest submission rate in the Elsevier family of forensic journals after Forensic Science International (FSI)! However I encourage you to submit papers in all formats for consideration of inclusion in the Journal. The editorial team are entirely dependent on submissions, as I learnt in my year as Associate Editor (2019). I have stepped down now and Maria Nittis from Sydney, Australia, has joined Wilma Duijst from Maastricht University in the Netherlands, in assisting Tim.



## Liaison with External Agencies

As President it falls to me to attend many meetings and social occasions. It is of course an honour to represent the FFLM on these occasions. The Council meetings of the RCP are essential and extremely informative. This year a direct line to Professor Maggie Rae, President of the Faculty of Public Health, has been particularly useful in recent weeks for obvious reasons. Professor Tim Higenbottam introduced me to Microsoft Teams for which of course now I am extremely grateful as well as offered his Faculty premises in London at charitable rates for the FFLM meetings when we

were still having them. Actions from the successful meetings with other agencies particularly the CQC and the RCEM have not progressed as fast because of the current pandemic.

The FFLM was also asked to provide evidence to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). This Inquiry chaired by Professor Alexis Jay was set up because of serious concerns that some organisations had failed and were continuing to fail to protect children from sexual abuse. This is a statutory inquiry with a huge remit. The FFLM was asked for information spanning the last five decades. I am very grateful to many who helped with the preparation of the statement but in particular Dr Cath White OBE.

### **Social Media**



Over the past year Jay Barton-Costa and Alex Gorton have worked together on our social media strategy using Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. People often like our posts, comment on them, and share them with their friends and colleagues, which is helping to grow awareness of our Faculty to a wider audience. The FFLM website is currently undergoing a complete revamp and we look forward to seeing the new site by the autumn. This is overdue but will hopefully make many things more accessible to members.

### **Training & Education**

You will have seen from the AD's report that the programme of development training days continued last year. Particular thanks to all the chairs and organisers of these events. Formal feedback is always very good/excellent. The eLearning course in conjunction with Ulster University has been a great success. Many thanks to Professor Sarah Hull who has worked tirelessly on this project and continues to update current topics and expand the list.



The newly rebadged and revised course leading to the Teesside *University Certificate in Postgraduate Professional Development (UCPPD)* in General Forensic Medicine was held in October 2019. You may remember we were involved with Teesside University (TU) previously in running this course with the College of Policing but when the College dropped out of such training projects the FFLM had to re-apply to TU to reinstate the University accreditation.

The FFLM has also been involved in the TU School of Health & Life Sciences' application to run the Postgraduate Certificate Advanced Forensic Practitioner

(Custody) and/or (Sexual Offence). TU, along with the FFLM, participated in the Health & Justice Trailblazer Group to develop a Higher Apprenticeship for healthcare professionals who are either a registered Doctor, Nurse or Paramedic working in forensic practice in a police custodial or sexual offence setting. This is an exciting development for both TU and the FFLM.

The Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSSC) meets twice a year and I have had the privilege to chair this subcommittee over the past 5 years. I wanted to make special mention of the sub-committee (noting my bias at the start) to thank all the members past and present for their contribution to the FFLM. I have attended many committees over the years but I really feel this this subcommittee contributes a huge amount to the practical work of our members.

### **Gratitude in abundance**

The FFLM cannot function without volunteers - members who represent the FFLM on external committees, the examiners, the chairs of committees and the committee members, the Senior Officers and Vice Presidents. The FFLM are hugely grateful to you all and hope that you will continue in this work. A list of these wonderful people is in Appendix A of my report.

The Vice-Presidents have officially taken on specific roles this year with Professor Fiona Wilcox chairing the Membership and Fellowship Committee, where there is now a streamlined process for all applications; Dr Mike Devlin has responsibility for the area of revalidation, appraisal, and liaison with the GMC Suitable Person; and Professor John Farnan chairs the Training & Education Sub-committee.

I would like to give my personal thanks to all the wonderful office staff Jay Barton-Costa, Charlene Campbell, Tessa Lewis, and Janine Wise, for their help and support over the past year.

I end with particular thanks to the Registrar, Professor Richard Shepherd, who I have known since 1992. We met at the scene of a sudden unexpected death on Wimbledon Common. I could provide you with the date and time! Over the years I have learnt a great deal from him and so it has been great fun to work with him as part of the Senior Officers' team. He is an eminent forensic pathologist and I have often asked for advice and received words of wisdom.

'See' you all soon. Take care and stay safe.

MMS

**Appendix A -**

Will Anderson  
Meng Aw-Yong  
Martin Barrett  
Hardeep Bhupal  
David Black  
Richard Brittain  
Tony Busuttil  
Bernadette Butler  
Sandra Calver  
Michelle Carroll  
Silvia Casale  
Mark Cathcart  
Vasudeva Murthy  
Challakere Ramaswamy  
Caroline Chapman  
Ray Chapman  
James Cladingboel  
Tanya Claxton  
Juliet Cohen  
Cathy Cooke  
Tracey Cormack  
Laura Dean  
Carl Denton  
Mike Devlin  
Bill Dolman  
Emma Donoghue  
Andrea Edwards  
John Farnan  
Catherine Ferguson  
George Fernie  
Sue Fewkes  
Sandy Fielding  
Bob Forrest  
Matthew Foster  
Jane Fowler  
Neil Frazer  
Alex Gorton  
Peter Green  
Christine Greenshaw  
Elaine Grieve  
Daniel Haines  
Amy Hamm  
Charlotte Hargreaves  
Kris Harris  
Andrew Harris  
Jean Herbison  
Yvonne Hindle

**2019 Volunteers**

Sandip Hindocha  
Kranti Hiremath  
John Holden  
Jenny Holmes  
Bryony Hooper  
Sarah Hull  
Alistair Irvine  
Priya Iyer  
Suffian Jabbar  
Caroline Jones  
Richard Jones  
Cornelius Katona  
Rachel Knottley  
Peter Kopelman  
Hassan Kurimbokus  
Kathryn Leask  
Jaqui Lindridge  
Lucy Love  
Carolyn Lovell  
Philip Lumb  
Winnie Maguire  
Paul Marks  
Rudo Masanzu  
Gordon McDavid  
Jeanette McGorrigan  
Helen Mills  
Rachel Morgan  
Katharine Morrison  
Ed Nandasoma  
Myooran Nathan  
Julia Neild  
Joanne Nelson  
Mary Newton  
Tom O'Gorman  
Donal O'Donoghue  
Tania Osborne  
Caroline Osborne-White  
Caroline Oxley  
Roy Palmer  
Roger Palmer  
Sheila Paul  
Jason Payne-James  
Priyanjit Perera  
Concetta Perot  
Fiona Perry  
Kristy Potter  
Michael Powers

Shiraz Qamaruddin  
Amrin Rahuf  
Sivapalaratnam  
Rammanohar  
Raj Rattan  
Keith Rix  
Mike Robertson  
Keeley Roe  
Carol Rogers  
David Rowen  
Theresa Schleicher  
Alice Schofield  
Carol Seymour  
Kate Shardlow  
Dick Shepherd  
Priya Singh  
Jennie Smith  
Margaret Stark  
Fiona Straw  
Hannah Summers  
Rudi Swart  
Nick Swift  
Ben Sylvester  
Hiang BoonTan  
Jo Taylor  
Linda Teebay  
Helena Thornton  
Sarah Townley  
Gill Tully  
Alain Vella  
Muriel Volpellier  
Marie-Elle Vooijs  
Ian Wall  
Susan Waterworth  
Rebecca West  
Brian Westbury  
Cath White  
Fiona Wilcox  
Anna Wiles  
Andrew Wilkinson  
Stuart Wiseman  
Farah Yusuf  
Philip Zack