

# FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

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May 2020

## Academic Dean's Report 2019 – 2020

### Introduction

This is my first report as Academic Dean, (AD), having taken over from my predecessor at last year's AGM in Cardiff. How the world has changed since then. I must start by especially thanking Dr Butler for all the help in starting me off in the deanery and indeed throughout the year.

Coming as virtually an outsider to the Faculty I have been most impressed by the hard work and devotion shown by many of its members. I have attended many meetings during the year, not all necessary for me, but to help me get to grips with the Faculty, and at all of those, the enthusiasm shown by the participants has been exhilarating.

Last year, members were all asked if they felt they could contribute to the Faculty, any additional guidances, updates, or clarifications. Please consider if you can contribute or if you can help in any way.

You will know that changes have been made within the Faculty and more recently the COVID rules and advice have led to other changes.

Last year the office in Alie Street was closed and we continued working from a virtual office. This meant working from home on a daily basis, with face to face meetings at booked offices in London. That worked very well until March this year when physical meetings had to be cancelled. We are now working with facilities such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype and the like. Not easy but we are getting used to the new ways. When Alie Street closed, we also altered the frequency of many meetings from 4 a year down to 3. This also helped our new way of working although it meant many agenda were lengthy.

I must take this opportunity also to welcome our new Assistant Academic Dean (AAD) Marie-Elle Vooijs whose knowledge of the Forensic side will assist us especially with the Guidances and Advices that are continuously being updated. The AAD and I will meet regularly during the year (by video at present).

### 1. The Academic Committee (AC)

- 1.1 The AC has met four times in the last year (it will meet three times in the coming year under the new schedule).

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Two of the meetings were at longer intervals and these produced longer agendas.

The meetings included reports and discussions on the subcommittees that report to AC:

- The Chief Examiner's Committee (CEC)
- The Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSCC)
- The Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC)
- The Training and Education Subcommittee (TED)

1.2 The committee also receives reports from representatives of the FFLM on other outside committees. I thank all those involved for attending, and reporting to us relevant information. These include:

- Dr Cath White, Lead for Sexual Offence Medicine (SOM), National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Working Group on Rape & Adult Sexual Offences, National SARC Advisory Board, Medical Forensics Specialist Group, Central Elimination Database Project (SARCs), NHSE SARC Strategic Clinical Forum
- Prof Keith Rix, Lead for Mental Health and Intellectual Disability
- Dr Linda Teebay, Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health Standing (RCPCH) Committee on Child Protection
- Dr Nitin Raje-Ghatge, Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Secure Environments Group Committee
- Dr Helena Thornton, Inter-Collegiate & Agency National DVA
- Prof Ian Wall, BMA Forensic and Secure Environments Committee, NHS E&I SARC Medicines Management Task and Finish Group
- Dr Yvonne Hindle, NSPCC Health Liaison Committee (until February 2020)
- Dr Alex Gorton, NPCC Taser, NHSE Health and Justice CRG, GMC Intercollegiate Ethics Forum

1.3 I would also like to thank those representatives of other bodies who attend the AC and add much to our deliberations. They are representing the following organisations:

- RCPCH: Dr Fiona Straw
- United Kingdom Association of Forensic Nurses and Paramedics (UKAFN): Ms Jennie Smith
- College of Paramedics: Ms Jaqualine Lindridge

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## 2. The Chief Examiner's Committee (CEC) and FFLM examinations

- 2.1 The CEC has met several times both as a full committee and various groups of examiners. A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes to make the examinations work. In advance the exams are planned carefully with each question or station considered on not only its last use in the exam but also as to whether its relevance has changed. Where multiple types of registrants will be taking the exam, this is also considered carefully.
- 2.2 I must especially thank Caroline Jones, our Chief Examiner, for all her hard work. She is active in planning and running the exams but also on making sure that our examiners are fully trained and instructed for each exam. She has a band of helpers including the examiners who give many hours to the Faculty. If any Members or Fellows would be interested in being examiners then please contact us. We would especially ask MLAs if they would be interested.
- 2.3 There is a small group of DLA examiners preparing for 2022 when the Dentolegal exams will commence. Currently, they and I are preparing the syllabus and will go on to the exam itself after this. There is under consideration a change to the format for the DLA Part 2 away from OSCEs to a paper based examination involving written papers and COVEs. It is not proposed at present to change the MLA Part 2 exam.
- 2.4 I was one of the invigilators for the DLM / Part 1 exams in 2019 at the RCP rooms. It was a well-run day and I thank all of those who gave their time to be there and help. Especial thanks to Jay Barton-Costa, our examinations manager who organised everything despite recovering from a scooter accident at the time. The results were good (see later). One unfortunate candidate related afterwards that they had taken the wrong exam. A careful check was made and she had made the mistake on her application. Furthermore the exams are clearly labelled.
- 2.5 In respect of the DLM, the Faculty Board has given approval for it to be run in other countries. This we can do with the help of agencies such as the British Council who have facilities around the world. Again, I thank Jay for his involvement in this and I hope that soon this will be taking place. This will not add to our costs. Although candidates will pay some additional fee, they will not have the expense of coming to the UK.
- 2.6 I have been preparing a campaign to encourage more DLM entrants both registrants and others in the medicolegal field. The current COVID situation has delayed the rollout.
- 2.7 I also want to especially thank Angela Hall, Educational Advisor, who organises the OSCEs. I was present this year at the rehearsal for the first time. I did get mistaken

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for the actor playing an abused old man at one stage. I can tell you that Angela hand picks the actors for the roles they play. Many are now regulars and they could probably pass their parts of the exam.

2.8 At the Part 2 exams at St Thomas' Angela again organized superbly and I also commend all of her team, the actors, the examiners, and the amazing make up lady. She aged actors, put on cigarette burns, and even transgendered one actor. I was an examiner for the MLA exam. Again, the amount of work Angoffing questions to make them fair was very reassuring. If any candidate were to question their result, there would be an audit trail to show them.

2.9 Work has been continuing on updating the syllabi and the regulations and this is now nearly complete. Some regulations were out of date and also there were unnecessary variations between different exams.

2.10 A thank you to anyone involved but not mentioned.

2.11 Exam Results:

## October 2019

### ***Diploma of Legal Medicine (DLM)***

31 candidates entered; 17 passed, including 09 distinctions, (the equivalent of obtaining the part 1 MFFLM, if eligible). 12 failed and 2 did not attend. All successful candidates can automatically use the post nominal DLM after their name.

### ***Licentiate examinations, LFFLM***

LFFLM (GFM): 30 candidates entered; (1 withdrew their application prior to the day of the examination); 26 passed. 2 failed and 1 did not attend.

LFFLM (SOM): 11 candidates entered. All passed.

### ***Membership examinations, MFFLM***

28 candidates entered; (1 withdrew their application prior to the day of the examination); 10 passed and 17 failed.

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## March 2020

### ***MFFLM:***

GFM: 2 candidates. 1 passed both components (written and clinical exams) and 1 passed the written but failed the clinical exam. 1 withdrew their application prior to the day of the examination. The candidate who passed both components is now eligible to become a Member of the Faculty.

MLA: 1 candidate. Passed both the written and the practical components. That candidate is now eligible to become a Member of the Faculty.

SOM: 5 candidates. 5 passed. 1 withdrew their application prior to the day of the examination. The five successful candidates are now eligible to become a Member of the Faculty.

### ***LFFLM:***

GFM: 4 candidates. All passed (none is yet eligible to become a Licentiate as at least 1 of the 2 compulsory written projects has not been submitted yet).

SOM: 3 candidates. 2 passed and 1 failed (none is yet eligible to become a Licentiate as at least one of the 2 compulsory written projects has not been submitted yet).

## **3. The Conference Subcommittee**

This subcommittee no longer reports to the AC but directly to the Board. I am on the subcommittee which is chaired by Dr Alex Gorton the Assistant Registrar. It is unfortunate that this year's conference cannot be held.

Taking over as AD after last year's conference, one of my first tasks was to deal with some discrepancies in CPD requested. The hours requested by three attendees did not match their recorded hours. The GMC and GDC rely on organisers of events to only issue correct details of registrants CPD. After correspondence with the three individuals, it was decided that these were also accidental mistaken applications. The certificates were amended. At future events, attendance registers will be upgraded and attendees advised to ensure correct applications. My thanks to our office staff for their vigilance in this matter. Any incorrect CPD from the Faculty would reflect very badly on us.

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## 4. Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSSC)

Dr Margaret Stark, our President, chairs this committee with two meetings annually in June and November. The committee has many external members as well as Faculty members and deals with many queries and ongoing discussions about various topics. Much of the work goes on behind the scenes and a large amount of this is dealt with swiftly and efficiently by the President.

The FSSC continually updates and looks at documents and a list of those produced or revised is below.

July 2019	Recommendations for the Collection of Forensic Specimens from Complainants and Suspects
July 2019	Recommendations for the Collection of Forensic Specimens from Complainants and Suspects - the evidence
November 2019	Operational procedures and equipment for clinical facilities in Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)
November 2019	Operational procedures and equipment for clinical rooms in police stations
January 2019	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects
January 2019	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects - the evidence
January 2020	FSSC newsletter
January 2020	Pro forma: Forensic Medical Examination Forms
February 2020	Guidance on Paternity Testing

## 5. The Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC)

This is chaired by the Immediate Past President, Prof Carol Seymour and has met twice since the last AGM. The process is a slow one but we do continue to make that progress. To assist in this process, other areas of the Faculty ensure that they are in line with what is expected. Thus, no change to the Part 2 exams will take place until Specialty Status is achieved.

Prof Seymour, attended a meeting with United Kingdom Medical Education Reference Group (UKMERG) on 11 December 2019 to discuss the application for speciality status. During the meeting, UKMERG queried why credentialing was not an appropriate route for forensic and legal medicine. At the close of the meeting, UKMERG advised that they would consider the part 1 application and write with an

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outcome, however, no response has been received and Prof Seymour has written seeking a response.

The next SAC will be in June 2020

## 6. The Training and Education Subcommittee (TED)

- 6.1 The subcommittee has a full complement of members currently under the chairmanship of Prof John Farnan. This position will come under the aegis of the next Vice President and we thank John for all of his work with the committee during his term of office.
- 6.2 The current COVID situation has of course affected the courses for this year. Webinars and on-line courses will continue where possible but actual meetings are in abeyance.
- 6.3 The existing webinars are being reviewed and will either be revised or replaced where necessary. Recent new webinars have been very well received. I recommend the very latest webinar to be added to our growing list.
- 6.4 Courses since the last AGM:
  - Mental Health Care and Learning Disability Day for HCPs/clinicians working in GFM and SOM – 08 June
  - General Forensic Medicine: Best Practice Day – 06 July
  - MFFLM Part 1 and DLM Examination Revision Day – 20 July
  - MFFLM Part 1 and DLM Examination Revision Day – 07 September
  - SARC Best Practice Day – 14 September
  - Course in General Forensic Medicine – 30 September to 04 October
  - Level 3 Child Safeguarding Day – 12 October
  - Forensic Sampling: Innovations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – 23 November
  - MFFLM and LFFLM Part 2 Examination Revision Day (SOM) – 30 November

I would like to thank John Farnan for chairing this committee. I am sure he will continue to assist his successor and myself from the side-lines.

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## 7. FFLM documents

- 7.1 I continue with the task of reviewing and renewing our large resource of documents. Marie-Elle will help extensively in this area. The target of all being reviewed on a three year cycle has been maintained and will continue to be curated by the AAD.
- 7.2 My thanks again to all of those who assist with this complicated task. Our staff have been excellent in support. Tessa, Janine, Charlene, and Jay.
- 7.3 List of revised /reviewed publications since May 2019 (not mentioned elsewhere):

June 2019	LFFLM Experience – Sexual Offence Medicine
June 2019	Recommendations – Peer Review in Sexual Offences including Child Sexual Abuse cases and the implications for the disclosure of Unused Material in criminal investigations and prosecutions
July 2019	Quality Standards for healthcare professionals working with victims of torture in detention
August 2019	Assessments (alcohol & drugs) under the RTA
December 2019	Recommendations – Safe and Secure Administration of Medication in Police Custody
December 2019	Head Injury Advice Leaflet for custody officers, gaolers & detention officers
February 2020	PICS Working Group Guidelines on Photography
February 2020	Forensic Records – Frequently Asked Questions for all Healthcare Professionals
March 2020	Detainees with substance use disorders in police custody: Guidelines for clinical management (5th edition)
March 2020	Non-fatal strangulation in physical and sexual assault
March 2020	Child Sexual Abuse Forensic Medical Examinations: Interim Guidance regarding number of examinations and maintenance of competence
April 2020	Recommendations – Management of Diabetes Mellitus in Custody

- 7.4 List of publications being reviewed, finalised or developed:

- Quality Standards for nurses in Sexual Offence Medicine (SOM)
- Child Safeguarding information sharing guidance for HCPs working in police custody
- Pro forma for paediatric forensic examination



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- Role of the Forensic Pathologist
- Safe and Secure Handling and Supply of Medicines in Sexual Assault Services for Adults and Children
- Guidance for best practice for the management of intimate images that may become evidence in court
- Quality Standards for Doctors undertaking paediatric sexual offence medicine
- Pro forma for Child Safeguarding Summary Referral
- Pro forma for Fitness for detention and interview
- Pro forma for Mental Health Act Assessment
- Pro forma adult female/male forensic sexual assault examination
- SARC Storage of Forensic Samples & the Human Tissue Act: FAQs
- Recommendations for Collecting Nail Clippings for Toxicology
- Recommendations for Collecting Hair Samples for Toxicology
- Blood Samples in Hospital for Unconscious/Incapacitated Patients
- Intimate Searches in Police Custody Flow Chart
- Taking Blood Specimens from Incapacitated Drivers
- Healthcare professionals asked to perform intimate body searches

7.5 A number of documents have been produced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- COVID-19 Pandemic & SARCS: A guide for the Police
- Template for Step by Step Guidance for Face to Face FMEs of COVID-19 positive/suspected SARC Clients
- Template for Step by Step Guidance for SARC FMEs via telephone or videoconferencing during COVID-19 pandemic
- SARC Requests for Forensic Medical Examination during COVID-19 Pandemic
- Position Statement on the Management of suspected COVID-19 cases in police custody
- SARC COVID-19 Screening and Triage Tool
- COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on FME Case Management covering letter
- Patient leaflet – collection of a self-taken anal swab
- Patient leaflet – collection of a self-taken vaginal swab

These are regularly being reviewed and updated. My thanks go to Dr Alex Gorton and Dr Cath White for leading on these.

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## 8. Other Work

There have been several other areas of activity including the following:

- Beginning work on expanding the Ulster E-learning course to include General Forensic Medicine.
- Developing an accredited course for HCPs on the assessment of individuals exposed to conducted energy devices (CED).
- Submitting a written statement to the Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse.
- Ongoing work with the RCPCH to develop a competencies framework for the examination of children in relation to CSA.
- Forming a working group to develop Quality Standards on Mental Healthcare in SARCs (with representation from RCPCH, UKAFN and the RCPsych).
- Responding to GMC Remote consultation and prescribing and BASHH Guideline on the Management of Sexually Transmitted Infections and Related Conditions in Children and Young People consultations.
- Assisting Teesside University with the application for Course Approval of the Post Graduate Certificate Advanced Forensic Practitioner (Custody or Sexual Offence) Higher Apprenticeship.

## 9. Conclusion

I have to say that I had some trepidation in becoming Academic Dean but this year has been an amazing year. I have already mentioned the staff but I also appreciate all the help and support from all of the Senior Officers. I look forward to the second year with an actual understanding of what the Faculty stands for and what it does for its members.

I am happy to receive questions or comments not only on this report but throughout the year [academicdean@fflm.ac.uk](mailto:academicdean@fflm.ac.uk).

**Brian Westbury**  
**FFFLM, LLM, BA, BDS, LDSRCS, MGDSRCS**  
**May 2020**