

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

President's Report for the Annual General Meeting 07 May 2021

'Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don't recognise them.'
Ann Landers

It has been a difficult year, a strange year, a different year. There have been many challenges for the FFLM, and for all of us in our personal lives. In some respects, the pandemic has helped the FFLM make difficult decisions. We have embraced the digitalisation of day-to-day working practices (including when I interviewed the new Chair of the Research Sub-committee in Oregon, California!) We had already decided to move to a virtual office the autumn before the pandemic and our staff were already working from home. The cancellation of ALL in person meetings helped us with the finances. The pandemic also made it obvious that we were not going to need an office for some time to come so all furniture and equipment has been sold or disposed of further reducing costs. The lack of face-to-face training and the cancellation of the annual conference has had a financial impact. I think many people have concluded there are definite advantages to working from home though it is essential to meet up for the social interaction and less formal exchange of views. So my role has been very different from previous Presidents. Plenty of meetings but by Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Facetime, and fewer social gatherings, which has been good for my diet but has reduced the more informal networking opportunities that can be very helpful. It was with disappointment that we have had to move the conference to a virtual event this year but with so much uncertainty it was an unanimous decision by the Faculty Board (FB).

We ended the year (2020) in a much better financial position compared to when I took over. The Treasurer, Susan Waterworth, has provided you with all the details in the Trustees' Report. Over the previous two years prior to my Presidency there had been a loss of £130 259 in 2018 and £18 458 in 2017 so to turn this around to a surplus of £18 750 in 2019 and £60 958 in 2020 is a remarkable achievement. I would like to thank the FB, the Treasurer and Charlene Campbell, our Finance and Membership Manager, for the due diligence this has required. The Senior Officers, Vice Presidents, and full FB were unanimously committed, as of July 2019, to reduce expenditure drastically and live within our means – good housekeeping. We have stabilised but a further reduction in members seems likely due to the seismic changes to the overall provision of healthcare in forensic and legal medicine.

The decision of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to give notice of the termination of ALL doctors' contracts in October last year was a shock (conflict of interest declared - I first worked in the MPS in 1989). Although there have been plans since 2009 for a nurse-led model to be implemented there are concerns about the loss of forensic expertise and training opportunities for the future generations of medical staff.


In the arena of the defence organisations there have been changes to reduce the number of doctors providing advice. The reduction in medical staff coming into this field of practice impacts on the examinations and future membership. Without speciality status the future is very uncertain.

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<p>FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE</p> <p>FFLM Strategy for 2020/21</p>  <p>Published July 2020</p>	<p>Strategy 2020/21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ We will support our members recognising that they are our most important asset.➤ We will maintain and further develop our quality standards along with our library of educational resources.➤ We will continue to develop partnerships with other agencies and work with them to promote high quality care.➤ We will continue to act as the leading resource in the field of Forensic & Legal Medicine.
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Last July after the gauntlet was thrown down at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May the first formal FFLM Strategy was published along with the half yearly achievements and performance. The membership were the focus of this strategy and will continue to be the focus of the work that we do. In December/January we again surveyed the members and there was a much-improved response rate - thank you. We have published the results once again. We held another strategy meeting in January 2021 to discuss the findings from the survey and discuss work streams moving forward. The full FB and office staff were invited on this most recent occasion. The FB has been working through the actions from the meeting and a full review of the FFLM strategy will be carried out by the Board in July 2021. The FFLM's equality and diversity policy was also updated. The FB agreed to invite members to observe the Board. We hope to have our first observers at the meeting in July. We are now also running monthly Q&A sessions with Senior Officers and Vice-Presidents. The FFLM structure was published this year which helps everyone I hope in understanding how the FFLM works. There has certainly been changes with growth since we started in 2005.

Membership

In March 2021 we reached just over 700 members the highest level since 2017. However we need to continue to work hard to ensure that our current members receive support and value for money as well as diversifying the membership and constantly reviewing our structure to ensure that we move with the times. The FB discussed in March the appointment of a Vice President for Allied Health Professionals when the numbers in the category increase. This would be an exciting development as we are now all working in multi-professional teams in all aspects of care.

The grandfather period for Foundation Fellowship and Membership for dentolegal practitioners closes on 31 July 2021 so please encourage colleagues to join.

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The Registrar, Helena Thornton, has made contact with student organisations in an attempt to increase our student membership as well as with the independent sexual violence advisors working in the SARCs. Paul Marks, President-Elect is to write to legally-qualified coroners to see if there is any interest there when he starts in post.

Before you at the AGM there is the proposed change to the standing orders for clinicians working in the secure and detained settings. If approved this would be a natural development for the FFLM to provide support in the field of forensic and legal medicine to those working in those environments.

Training and education

Chairing the Training and Education Sub-committee over the past year has been hugely fulfilling. We arranged a programme of webinars covering a wide range of topics with something for all our members. As of the end of April there have been 37 webinars. Many thanks to all those who have presented and who are due to present over the next few months. Thanks too to all who chaired the webinars. Although it was sad to have to cancel the face-to-face development training and exam revision days, the webinars and virtual exam training days provided access to continuing professional development opportunities for members. We had webinars covering the examinations that were free for all and some webinars that were free for members.

We have received funding from NHSE&I for the expansion of the FFLM/Ulster University e-learning course to include GFM and update the existing modules. We also received funding to co-organise two workshops on the Forensic Aspects of Adult Safeguarding held online in January & February 2021 with 25 participants. The NHS has sponsored the 25 participants for associate membership for a year and we are setting up a forum to support these practitioners as they take on a new role.

The course leading to the Teesside University (TU) *Certificate in Postgraduate Professional Development* (UCPPD) in General Forensic Medicine was held just once in October 2020 using a blended learning approach of face-to-face small group workshops and live and recorded webinars. Six students have achieved the Certificate so far and we congratulate them on this achievement.



It was a great pleasure to announce that Melanie Brown from TU has been awarded Honorary Fellowship. Melanie has supported the FFLM and the course in GFM over many

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years and this award is well deserved. I was also extremely honoured to receive the appointment as Honorary Professor at TU at the end of March 2021.

FFLM Examinations

It has been another successful year for the FFLM examinations (for the full details please see the AD's report). Over a hundred candidates took examinations in October with 90 passing. In March 25 candidates sat the part 2 examinations, with the clinical OSCEs taking place in June 2021. Adapting to life in a pandemic and continuing to run the exams has taken a great deal of hard work and collaboration. Congratulations to the whole team lead by the Academic Dean, Chief Examiner and Jay Costa the Examinations' Manager. Work is ongoing for the new examination for dentolegal practitioners which will start this year. A route for experienced doctors to obtain the LFFLM (Child) via Prescribed/Equivalent Experience has been approved by the FB and we hope that many experienced practitioners will take advantage of this method to show their expertise in clinical forensic medicine.

We are delighted to announce that Scenesafe have agreed to award a prize of £250 to the candidate with the highest pass mark in the October DLM and MFFLM examinations over the next four years.

FFLM publications

The Academic Dean, ably assisted this year by the Assistant Academic Dean Marie-Elle Vooijs, have been keeping on top of the review and revision of the FFLM educational documents as well as overseeing new documents. This year I must make mention of Alex Gorton and Cath White who grasped the prickly beast that is COVID-19 and produced a vast array of documents for police custody and the SARC environment, constantly updating the documents as required. We had some amazing feedback with the documents 'going global!' The surveys of the membership we have conducted mention the importance of the educational documents in particular as these help members in their daily work.

Tessa Lewis, our Learning and Development Manager, has done a wonderful job co-ordinating the review and revision of the documents as well as providing the administrative support to many of the FFLM committees. This year she has overseen the organisation of the webinars and has also been responsible for the publication of the educational documents; taking the publishing in-house has saved us money.

An area of concern is compliance with the Quality Standards issued by the Faculty. In April 2021 we asked members to complete a questionnaire based on the current Quality Standards which are for doctors, nurses and paramedics in General Forensic Medicine, Sexual Offence Medicine and most recently Paediatric Sexual Offence Medicine. We hope that there is a good response to the questionnaire.

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Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine (JFLM)

The FFLM signed a new contract with Elsevier on October 2020. The JFLM continues to improve under the Editor, Professor Tim Thompson, ably assisted by the publishing team from Elsevier led by Alex Smith, and the Associate Editors, Wilma Duijst and Maria Nittis. In an attempt to reduce our carbon footprint, we contacted members asking them to 'opt in' to continue receiving hard copies of the JFLM. A new 'Alcimedea' has been appointed and a special edition is planned for later this year.

Liaison with External Agencies

Over the years we have forged close links with organisations where joint reports and educational documents have been published – the BMA, RCPCH, RCEM and RCPsych, for example. These connections have remained with close collaboration over the past year.



Improving the profile of the FFLM with other organisations was seen as an important goal in the surveys and strategy. This year we have made closer links with the forensic science community. In particular, with the Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) Dr Gillian Tully, who demitted office in February 2021 and has been a great ally of the FFLM, and with the Forensic Capability Network. Work has been ongoing to provide more standardised forensic kits which will assist all practitioners. I have continued to chair the Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSSC) which produces incredibly useful documents for the members and the discussions at the committee are always of great interest.

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Several letters have gone to the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) on a variety of topics, including COVID-19, and we wrote with the RCGP with regard to the gap in adult safeguarding service provision. Contact has been made with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and further meetings are planned after the elections on 06 May 2021. We continue to collaborate with UKAFNP and their President Jennie Smith and I wrote an open letter about the importance of all healthcare professionals providing 'an opinion' on examination findings.



Attending the RCP Council is a privilege and extremely worthwhile as I always learn a great deal to pass onto our membership. The RCP established the Inequalities in Health Alliance at the end of 2020 and the FFLM became one of the many members (160 at the beginning of 2021). I called on RCP Council members to assist the FFLM at the RCP Council meeting in January with an impassioned presentation entitled '*What's the point of the FFLM?*' I received positive feedback and offers of support and we will need this as we endeavour to obtain speciality status.

Social Media



I am on Twitter and over the past year have also discovered TikTok! However, I am extremely grateful once again to our social media experts Jay Costa and Alex Gorton who cover our entries on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. The use of social media increases our profile.

FFLM website

So, what do you think of the new website? I hope you agree it is a definite improvement for you as members, and for all users of the site. There are also backroom amendments that make the work our staff have to do on the site easier. Huge thanks to Alex Gorton and the office team who have spent hundreds of hours improving the site.

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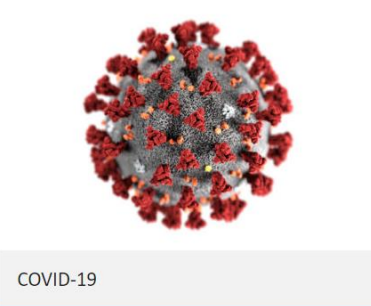
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Publications



COVID-19



Archived Publications



Journal of Forensic & Legal Medicine



E-Learning



RCP Library

Gratitude in abundance

Once again, I am overwhelmed by the amount of work our volunteers provide to our small charity. The examiners, and the examinations manager Jay Costa, deserve a special mention from me as they adapted the exam to the difficult situation we found ourselves in and the examinations in October and March went ahead as usual. I know the Academic Dean will have covered this in his report in more detail. I also want to thank Dr Caroline Jones who has worked extremely hard to ensure that the examinations are of the highest standards. She has been involved in reviewing exam documents, presenting and chairing webinars, and training new examiners. She needs a good rest now after her three years of dedication to the most important aspect of the FFLM. No examination, no Members. Well done indeed to Caroline. I wish George Wright success as he takes over as Chief Examiner.

Furthermore, the members who represent the FFLM on external committees, 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.

Thanks to Professor Fiona Wilcox who chaired the Membership and Fellowship Committee till she resigned due to pressure of work at the end of last year. In March we appointed Professor Andrew Harris to take over this role. Dr Mike Devlin has continued with his responsibility for the areas of revalidation, appraisal, CPD approvals, and liaison with the GMC Suitable Person. Dr Shiraz Qamaruddin took on the role vacated by Professor John Farnan but I have been chairing the training and education sub-committee over the year till Shiraz gets to grips with his new role. He will take over this month and I wish him the best of luck.

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Dr Nigel Callaghan the GMC appointed Suitable Person for FFLM members prepares a yearly report for the FB. This year the Board were extremely impressed at the amount of support he has provided to those connected to him throughout the pandemic. Thanks to Nigel for this.

In conclusion

The office staff, Jay Costa, Charlene Campbell, Tessa Lewis, have gone above and beyond over the past 12 months. Over the two years I have worked with them in my role as President I have been impressed by their hard work and initiative. We are, as an organisation most fortunate to have the three of them.

I must thank the home supporters – Mick the partner, Amelia the daughter, Teddy the chocolate brown British Shorthair and Max the salt and pepper Standard Schnauzer for all the support they have provided to me over the past 2 years (and longer!).

I look forward to seeing you all soon at FFLM events and have everything crossed that the annual conference planned for May 2022 will go ahead in person. I will leave you with one of my favourite quotes:

'Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around doing nothing; it's a day you've had everything to do and you've done it.'

Margaret Thatcher

So, it is with a sense of pride but also relief that I demit office knowing that I really have done everything I could over the past two years!

Professor Margaret Stark

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Appendix A

FFLM Volunteers 2020

Alex	Gorton	Keith	Rix
Alice	Schofield	Kranti	Hiremath
Alistair	Irvine	Kris	Harris
Amrin	Rahuf	Kristy	Potter
Amy	Hamm	Laura	Dean
Andrea	Edwards	Liliane	Fielding
Angela	Harkins	Linda	Tebbay
Anna	Wiles	Lucy	Love
Ben	Sylvester	Margaret	Stark
Bernadette	Butler	Marie-Elle	Vooijs
Brian	Westbury	Mark	Cathcart
Carl	Denton	Martin	Barrett
Carmen	Chan	Michael	Bannon
Carol	Rogers	Matthew	Foster
Carol	Seymour	Meng	Aw-Yong
Caroline	Chapman	Michael	Powers
Caroline	Jones	Michael	Robertson
Caroline	Osborne-White	Michelle	Carroll
Caroline	Oxley	Mike	Devlin
Carolyn	Lovell	Muriel	Volpellier
Cath	White	Myooran	Nathan
Catherine	Ferguson	Neil	Frazer
Cathy	Cooke	Nick	Swift
Charlotte	Hargreaves	Nigel	Callaghan
Chris	Bath	Nitin	Raje-Ghatge
Christine	Greenshaw	Paul	Marks
Concetta	Perôt	Peter	Green
Cornelius	Katona	Peter	Mackenzie
Daniel	Haines	Peter	Rees
David	Carson	Peter	Kopelman
David	Rowen	Philip	Lumb
David	Walker	Philip	Zack
David	Black	Priya	Iyer
Deryn	Evans	Priya	Singh
Donal	O'Donoghue	Priyanjit	Perera
Douglas	Sheasby	Rachel	Knottley
Elaine	Grieve	Rachel	Morgan
Emma	Donoghue	Raj	Rattan
Emma	Vaux	Ray	Chapman
Emmeline	Brew-Graves	Richard	Brittain
Farah	Yusuf	Richard	Jones

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Fiona	Perry	Richard	Shepherd
Fiona	Wilcox	Roger	Palmer
Fiona	Straw	Roy	Palmer
George	Fernie	Rudi	Swart
Gill	Tully	Rudo	Masanzu
Gordon	McDavid	Sally	Pickard
Grev	Wallington	Salma	Ali
Hannah	Summers	Sandip	Hindocha
Hardeep	Bhupal	Sandra	Calver
Hassan	Kurimbokus	Sandy	Fielding
Helen	Mills	Sarah	Hull
Helena	Thornton	Sean	Carruthers
Hiang Boon	Tan	Sheila	Paul
Iain	McKinnon	Shiraz	Qamaruddin
Ian	Wall	Silvia	Casale
Jaqui	Lindridge	Sivapalaratnam	Rammanohar
Jake	Hard	Stacey	Shelley
James	Cladingboel	Stephen	Stanley
Jane	Fowler	Stuart	Wiseman
Jason	Payne-James	Sue	Fewkes
Jean	Herbison	Suffian	Jabbar
Jeanette	McGorrigan	Suma	Surendranth
Jennie	Smith	Susan	Bayley
Jo	Taylor	Susan	Waterworth
Joanne	Gifford	Syed	Hussain
Joanne	Nelson	Tania	Osborne
John	Farnan	Tanya	Claxton
Julia	Neild	Theresa	Schleicher
Juliet	Cohen	Tom	O'Gorman
Karina	Marshall-Tate	Tony	Bussutil
Kate	Shardlow	Tracey	Cormack
Katharine	Morrison	Vasudeva Murthy	Challakere Ramaswamy
Kathryn	Leask	Vincent	Davidson
Keeley	Roe		