

## MEETING OF COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 July 2023

#### Members attending:

Dr Fiona Donald, President	Professor Andrew Smith
Dr Russell Perkins, Vice President	Dr Sunil Kumar
Dr Helgi Johannsson, Vice President	Dr Chris Taylor
Dr Chris Carey	Dr Catherine Bernard
Dr Claire Mallinson	Dr Lorraine De Gray
Dr Felicitymaat	Dr Daniele Bryden
Dr Sarah Ramsay	Dr Matthew Davies
Dr Mike Swart	Professor Dave Lambert
Dr Sri Gummaraju	Dr Matthew Tuck
Professor Jonathan Thompson	Mrs Pauline Elliott
Dr Ashwini Keshkamat	Dr Giovanna Kossakowska
Dr Ros Bacon	Dr Dave Selwyn
Dr Ramai Santhirapala	Dr Daphne Varveris
Dr Toni Brunning	Dr Simon Ford
Dr Elisa Bertoja	Dr Roger Sharpe
Dr Satya Francis	Dr Sandeep Lakhani
Dr Sarah Thornton	

**In attendance:** Ms Sharon Drake, Mr Mark Blaney, Mr Graham Blair, Mr Russell Ampofo, Ms Judith Tidnam, Mr Jonathan Whale, and Dr David Bogod for the item on Assisted Dying.

#### Apologies for absence:

Mr Jonathan Brūūn, Dr Claire Shannon, Professor Mike Grocott, Dr Marie Nixon, Colonel James Ralph, Dr William Donaldson, Dr Simon Maguire, Dr Rashmi Rebello.

#### Presentations to Council

##### **Digitally Enabled Comprehensive Connected Care; Changing Paradigms of Health Care Delivery**

Professor Ravi Mahajan provided an overview of a model of digital care in India, via the Apollo network. Non-communicable disease in India continues to increase, causing huge financial burden. There is also a shortage of experts and lack of access to critical care in remote regions of the country. Professor Mahajan described a service which provides a network of various facilities that are connected with a single digital infrastructure to provide care to patients, in various facilities, both locally and remotely. It is co-ordinated by a command centre, to provide support and expertise directly to the patient, with hub and spoke units streamlining the data to give key advice and care to patients as needed. In the ICU setting, patient monitoring, and alerts, are linked to various devices, which are transmitted to the command centre, 24 hours a day. Launched in May 2023, 5G ambulances within several hospitals allow instant connection to an emergency dashboard to support and provide immediate care during long distance journeys.

Much of the work is funded by the Indian government who have a keen interest in upgrading the command centre and developing future support in providing critical care at home. The work continues to ensure patient centred care, with increased efficiency, and aims to improve quality.

Council was inspired and supportive of the Digitally Enabled Comprehensive Connected Care and thanked Professor Mahajan for his presentation.

The College aims to advance and carry on study and research into anaesthesia and related subjects, and to disseminate the useful results of any such research. Professor Iain Moppett provided an overview on the current research agenda, challenges faced and highlighted some of the results from research undertaken during the last couple of years, including:

- ACCC-Track – a project which reviewed the impact of Covid on hospital departments.
- National Audit Programme activity survey (NAP7) – providing data that reveals increasing age, rates of obesity, and complexity of surgical patients requiring anaesthesia in the UK
- CASAP – Children's Acute Surgical Abdomen Programme, to provide determinants of outcomes for children having urgent and emergency abdominal surgery including appendicectomy.
- Perioperative Quality Improvement Programme (PQIP) and the DrEaMing CQIN.
- SuperSnap 1, a survey of elective and emergency activity during Covid to form part of NHSE planning.
- National Emergency Laparotomy Audit (NELA), commissioned work, which is multi professional, UK wide and brings people together to improve care and promote diversity.

Funding from the College provides financial support to various projects and staff time with financial support also provided from Health Quality Improvement Partnerships (HQIP), the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), various charities and from various NHS and private trusts for fellows. Overall research funding to date includes 5m to support anaesthesia research.

The Health Services Research Centre (HSRC) and the UK Perioperative Medicine Clinical Trials Network will shortly merge to create a more streamlined Centre for Research and Improvement (CR&I). The centre will support research delivery and further engagement across the UK. The CRI will aim to build on strengths and provide opportunities for all to be involved, with a vision to improve patient care, health and outcomes through research and improvement in anaesthesia and perioperative care, and to ensure that every anaesthetist can drive improvement.

It was noted that there will be opportunities to integrate and map the results of research projects across the College in areas such as Education and Training and the Safe Anaesthesia Liaison Group (SALG). There will also be opportunities to review funding available to collaborate with external organisations, particularly in partnership with patient safety research and in reviewing quality improvement.

Professor Moppett thanked RCoA Council, the College Trustees, College staff, Fellows, Anaesthetists, PatientsVoices and Professor Ramani Moonesinghe for their contribution to the College work on research to date. Council thanked Professor Moppett for his presentation and noted that this was a positive step forward for the College.

## **1. Council Minutes**

**The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April were circulated:**

**MOTION Agreed:** Council approved the minutes of the 19 April as a true and accurate record. All actions from the previous meeting have been completed.

## **2. President's Update**

The following deaths were reported: Dr Maithrie Mahmimennatha, Professor Ronald Bradley, Dr Derek Appleton, Dr John Searle, Dr John Hurdley, Dr Sean White, Dr Rosalind Ward, Dr Hugh Davies Jones, Council held a minute's silence.

A letter of condolence was also sent to Dr O'Malley and Dr Kumar, parents of Grace O'Malley Kumar.

The President encouraged elected and co-opted Council members to have an annual review by contacting Jonathan Whale to organise a meeting.

## **3. CEO Update**

**Timetable for the Election of President and Vice Presidents 2023**

Council reviewed a paper to set out the key dates, processes and canvassing guidelines for the next Council elections and the key timetable.

**Motion Approved:** Council endorsed the recommended approach to the Council elections.

## **Hospital Visits for College Staff**

The College has previously organised hospital visits for College staff to observe anaesthetists at work. The visits proved popular and informative for staff and gave them a unique understanding of what our

members do in practice. Council was asked to approve the reinstatement of the hospital visits going forward.

**Motion Approved:** Council approved the reinstatement of hospitals visits for staff.

#### **National Honours Committee, New Members**

Following the review and agreement of the RCoA National Honours committee terms of reference in April 2023, the committee agreed to seek new nominations from wider membership and core groups, to ensure equality, diversity, and inclusivity (EDI) going forward and this also applied in further widening participation in the membership of the committee. The committee proposed two names to put forward as new members of the committee, Professor Ramani Moonesinghe and Dr Nuala Lucas for Council's consideration.

**Motion Approved:** Council approved Professor Moonesinghe and Dr Lucas as new members of the National Honours committee.

#### **4. Update from the Faculties**

Dr Bryden, Dean of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FICM), provided a verbal update to note that:

- The March exams recorded a high pass rate of 74%.
- Work continues on reviewing information on recruitment, to try and resolve issues around badged posts and dual recruitment, and to support doctors in training from an international medical graduate background. A project is being undertaken on reverse mentoring to be led by a Board trainee representative.
- The Faculty have agreed not to take part in the RCoA Assisted Dying survey and have no plans to survey their own membership at present.

Dr De Gray, Dean of the Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM), provided a verbal update to note that:

- The GMC has requested a meeting to discuss the FFPMRCA examination and their request not to have an examination as part of the credentialing process, which falls in line with their request to remove examinations as an assessment tool and to relieve the financial burden for candidates taking examinations. FPM have already submitted their response to outline that they do not favour having a credential without an examination as part of the assessment process.

#### **5. Other Updates**

##### **Assisted Dying**

Following previous discussion in April, on assisted dying, Council had agreed that a non-binding, advisory survey should be undertaken, and that a short-term Working Party be set up to consider what questions should be included, chaired by David Bogod, Chair of the Ethics Committee. The Working Party reconvened to consider the proposed member survey, intended to provide advisory data to Council in relation to the College's current 'no stance' position on assisted dying. The list of questions has been revised and reduced to focus solely on what members think the College's stance should be.

The RCS have recently published their own results on assisted dying incorporating member views, 20% were in favour of a neutral position, 52% were supportive of legalisation and they have now moved from a position of opposition to neutrality.

Dr Bogod emphasised that the College's position needs to be clear, as the College is likely to be consulted, particularly as and when assisted dying becomes legalised.

Council reviewed version two of the survey questions, with a recommendation that they approve the final survey and agree funding for an external agency to manage the survey and produce an external report estimated to be in the region of £10K. It is proposed and recommended that a College Ethics & Law fund could be used to support this work.

The following points were also agreed:

- That the survey would be advisory and that this should be made clear when it is circulated.
- To decide College position the survey should only go to College members and no wider groups, therefore it was agreed to exclude the Association of Anaesthetists (AoA).
- Council were in favour of including those who have progressed into medical training, to include medical students and foundation doctors.
- There was agreement to hold release of the survey until October or November 2023, whilst the College deals with other, more pressing matters.

- Council was happy to ask respondents to specify what their current grade is.

**Motion Approved:** Council approved the survey with the recommendations outlined above.

### **The National Clinical Impact Awards (NCIA) update**

Professor Jonathan Thompson provided an update to note that for the previous 2023 round of the NCIA awards, National Nominating Organisations and Colleges were not required to provide citations or ranking lists but instead were only required to provide support in an advisory capacity and to help with the application process, providing resource and support information where necessary.

For the 2023 round the College only received two applications from candidates requiring informal advice. Following a request, Dr Stuart Dollow, Chair of the NCIA, declined to provide numbers, statistics, or further information on the 2023 NCIA round until completion of the scoring process in 2024. Therefore, Dr Thompson agreed to hold a meeting with the Association to discuss and determine the process going forward for the future of the NCIA next year and beyond.

### **Anaesthesia Associates (AAs)**

On Monday 26 June, the RCoA released a position statement, in response to queries and questions about the College's position regarding AAs. Following this a 'Let's Talk' event took place on Wednesday 28 June which generated much discussion amongst the membership, both at the event and on various social media platforms, relating to how the membership feels about the College's position on AAs. Much of this was not in support of the College's position. Further negative comment followed the publication of NHSE's Long Term Workforce Plan and the College's response to it.

From the postings on social media it seems that some of the membership may seek to request an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

Council noted that the membership can take the decision to call an EGM, they would need to follow the procedure laid down in the ordinances and have the support of 0.75% of the membership. Council had a wide-ranging discussion on the current situation.

- A suggestion from the MMD Board, who have been dealing with the emergent issues, to call an EGM ourselves as this would allow the College to be proactive, responsive and in a position to formulate motions. It would also align with the membership response and be measured and more controlled.
- To take this as an opportunity to address opinion amongst doctors on training pathways which are regarded as convoluted and inflexible.
- To focus on providing more support and be more mindful of training needs going forward. To engage more to find out what issues AiTs would like us to address and, in the event of an EGM, what fundamental proposals they would like to become motions.
- The trainee representatives provided some accounts of various trainees who emailed their specific concerns. These included the need for training progression and quality of training for AiTs to be protected, the fear of scope creep for AAs, lack of transparency from the College and the need for a training capacity assessment to be included as part of ACSA requirements.
- There is also a call to review the position of AAs and their supervision arrangements.
- To hold a forum prior to the EGM with trainees with a view to providing a revised position statement, time permitting, prior to an EGM, which could form the fundamentals of the EGM.
- To make it clear that the College position is that anaesthesia will always be a medically led profession.
- To review the consequence of running an EGM and to ensure consideration of the depth of feelings amongst AiTs and support to other parts of the membership.
- In view of the call to withdraw support for the expansion of AA numbers and the AA programme, to emphasise the importance of the College having control over the role of the AA in the future and being aware that there are risks of Higher Education Institutes gaining control should we not take a lead on this.
- To review communications going forward and to have a stronger position statement, rather than a neutral one, and begin preparation for a response and consequences.
- To continue to ensure the quality of standards for our patients by providing a high-quality workforce.
- To review training capacity and include this within the guidance document for departments considering taking on AAs.

- To be mindful when interacting with people on social media, to ensure informed conversation and represent and advocate for all our members.
- Two motions were suggested: on Scope of Practice and Training Capacity and one on Training Protection, to ensure some governance and assurance around training capacity assessment. This would support trainees and provide them with an accountable way in which they can raise concerns.

It was noted that if the membership call an EGM and they put forward motions for consideration by the membership– the results (excluding a vote of no confidence, which is binding) are advisory.

The President informed Council that these conversations must remain confidential at present.

## 6. Report from the Association

- Formal congratulations were given to Dr Tim Meek who is President elect from September, taking over from Dr Matthew Davies in 2024.

**ACTION:** The President to write a congratulatory letter to Dr Tim Meek.

## 7. Boards and Reports

### Education, Training and Examinations Board (ETE)

The Chair's summary and minutes of a meeting held on 19 April were circulated, Dr Chris Carey provided an update to note that:

- The Lifelong Learning Platform (LLP) remains an area of concern, in particular the instability of the platform and the logbook functionality which is felt to be sub-optimal. Further discussions are required to check how the platform is developed and what changes need to be made to ensure a reliable and sustainable functionality with appropriate in-house expertise.
- The Equivalence Committee remain significantly challenged by the volume of applications being received which is likely to increase further. Additional scorers will be sought at the College Tutors meeting in Sheffield. Work continues in engaging with the GMC regarding more streamlined ways of entry to the specialist register. The Board noted the importance of engaging closely with local Certificate of Equivalence of Specialist Registration (CESR) programmes to support this work in the UK.
- The recent successful College Tutors meeting held on 8 & 9 June, in Sheffield, was attended by over 300 people. Dr Carey thanked Karen Morris and the training team for their support and organisation. Conversations continue about the eligibility and role of the College Tutor and the possibility of extending the role to the SAS doctor and reviewing the criteria of having FRCA.
- For the recent round of ST4 recruitment there were over 600 applicants, with 400 offers being made overall, which is an improvement. Work continues engaging with schools into looking into how to potentially adopt a more flexible approach in appointing people into the relevant programmes.
- The Board agreed not to pursue the research proposal to better understand the stress and performance in the FRCA Examinations. There was however a suggestion that this group offers an alternative proposal on stress and performance that is not associated with the examinations.
- ETE reviewed the last three years of ARCP outcomes data on the GMC website survey tool, which shows that in core training ACCS and Higher training, the number of unsuccessful ARCP outcomes has decreased over 50% in the last three years.

### Examinations update

Dr Roger Sharpe provided an update to note that:

- At the end of the academic year, 2349 candidates went through both aspects of the primary examination and 1651 candidates went through the final examination, with pass rates varying between 62% to 79% in various components of the examination.
- Discussions continue on capacity and how to manage it in the future. A prioritisation process was invoked for the May Primary examinations to support this.
- 22 new examiners have been appointed for the next academic year and the planned move from Multiple Choice (MCQ) to Single Best Answers (SBA) will go ahead as planned in September 2023.
- The quarter two review was recently submitted to the GMC, to outline a recruitment drive to provide more support to the examinations team. Several senior examiners have been appointed in a consultancy role, to advise on the oral and written examinations, with some Education Fellows appointed to support.

- A Continuing Professional Development (CPD) day is scheduled in October to support examiners.
- Further discussion is taking place on associate examiners roles to support question writing and there is the possibility of running a question writing competition in the future, open to members of the College, to generate increased material for the new format examination.

The President thanked the training team and examination teams for all their support and work in these areas.

### **Clinical Quality & Research Board**

Council reviewed the Chair's summary and minutes of a meeting held on 10 May. There were no matters needing a decision by Council.

### **Membership, Media and Development (MMD) Board**

The Chair's summary and minutes of a meeting held on 22 June were circulated. Dr Ramai Santhirapla provided a supplementary update:

- MMD as a directorate is now approximately 14 months old and continues to consolidate strategic direction and the Bulletin's move to digital only in October 2023 was noted.
- The responses to the recent position statement regarding anaesthesia associates and the Let's Talk event are currently a significant focus for the leadership team within MMD.

### **Nominations Committee**

Council reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May and approved the following motions:

- The revised Terms of Reference (ToR) as presented.
- To award Professor William Harrop-Griffiths the College Medal.
- To award Dr Simon Edgar a prize for his work with the AaE Faculty and that it be upgraded from President's Commendation to the Dudley Buxton prize.
- To award Dr Rana Hafiz Ur Rehman the President's Commendation for his significant contribution to the development of the Medical Training Initiative (MTI) in Anaesthesia, Intensive Care Medicine (ICM) and Pain Medicine.
- To award Dr Alister Seaton and Dr Susie Thoms the President's Commendation for their work with the Anaesthetists in Training Committee and the Anaesthetists in Training Representative Group (ATRG).
- To award Dr Sarah Harries a prize and to upgrade it from the President's Commendation to the College Medal.
- To award Dr Alistair McNarry a prize and to upgrade it from the President's Commendation to the College Medal.
- To award the Humphry Davy award to the Human Factors Guideline Group.
- That Dr Bill Kirkup be awarded the John Snow Oration.
- To award John Iain Glen the Gold Medal.
- To award Dr Gnanashree Bangalore Krishna Murthy the Fellowship ad Eundem.
- To award the FPM Gold Medal to Dr John Hughes
- To award the College Medal to Dr Liam Brennan

### **Devolved Nations**

#### **Scottish Board**

The Chair's summary and minutes of a meeting held on 6 June were circulated, Dr Daphne Varveris provided an update to note that:

- Sarah Ramsay recently engaged with Sir Gregor Smith, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for Scotland in a meeting to address workforce issues, relating to treating elective and urgent care.
- A further meeting was attended recently with Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for NHSE, Recovery Health and Social Care, to discuss workforce shortages, digital staff passports and 9:1 contracts. The discussion also highlighted opportunities for senior and new consultant leadership, with a focus on pay and value of doctors, the benefits of prehabilitation and funding in Scotland.
- The CMO recently published the annual report, 'Realistic Medicine, Doing the Right Thing', which highlights the topics, Shared Decision Making, Value Based Health and Care, Health Inequalities and Climate and Health Sustainability. He agreed to hold regular meetings going forward, which Michael Matheson will attend.
- Gillian MacKay, Member of the Scottish Parliament recently put through the proposed, Safe Access Zones around healthcare, Scotland bill, which will take 30 days before it becomes legislation.

- There continue to be discussions and concerns raised about Anaesthetic Assistants and the proposal by the Scottish government to call them Anaesthetic Practitioners, a term which is felt unsuitable.

### **Welsh Board**

The Chair's summary and minutes of a meeting held on 29 March were circulated, Dr Simon Ford provided an update to note that:

- There is now endorsement for the removal of Desflurane from Welsh Hospitals and to halt the renewal of its licence in January 2024.
- The Board recently endorsed the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) workforce challenge process for the Welsh government.
- Dr Ford will meet with the Welsh CMO, Dr Frank Atherton in October prior to the Welsh Board meeting.

### **Northern Irish Board**

Council reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2023.

### **Centre for Perioperative Care (CPOC) Board**

The Chair's summary and minutes of a meeting held on 20 April were circulated, Dr Dave Selwyn provided an update noting that:

- CPOC has signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA), to share resources, educational content, and ideas. CPOC is meeting with ANZCA later in July to discuss next steps.
- CPOC is collaborating with Macmillan on the Special Interest Group (SIG) for prehabilitation on the Health Foundations Q platform. Dr Selwyn encouraged Council members to sign up to the [SIG](#)
- CPOC has successfully recruited a new CPOC Fellow, Dr Samantha Moore, who will commence in the role on 2 August 2023. CPOC formally thanked Dr Greg Warren, current fellow, for his dedication and hard work over the last 12 months.

### **BJA & RCoA Liaison Group meeting**

Professor Dave Lambert provided a verbal update to note that:

- Work continues on the four workstreams as highlighted in the previous Council minutes.
- Discussions are taking place with the Chair of CPOC on mechanisms through which to channel some of the BJA funds to support future perioperative research.

### **Clinical Leaders in Anaesthesia Network (CLAN)**

Dr Lakhani provided an update to note that:

- A webinar was held in June and was well attended. Dr Lakhani thanked Dr Ramai Santhirapala and Dr Chris Carey for their support with this.
- The Association of Anaesthesia Clinical Directors in the USA recently approached Dr Lakhani to discuss collaborative working and cooperation in the future. Dr Lakhani agreed to discuss the opportunities further with the CQRB.
- To support the 'Better Data Collection' a survey will shortly be sent to all CDs to gain more information and details. A questionnaire is currently being finalised.

### **PatientsVoices@RCoA Update to Council**

Mrs Pauline Elliott notified Council that this was her last Council meeting and Mrs Jenny Westaway will take over as Chair of PatientsVoices@RCoA in September.

The President thanked Mrs Elliott for her support and work as Chair during the last three years.

### **SAS Update**

Dr Ashwini Keshkamat provided an updated to note that:

- The SAS committee took place in late April, attended by Dr Elisa Bertoja and Dr Sarah Thornton who presented the differential attainment report. Between 2017 to 2021 the locally employed doctors and employed SAS doctors, across all specialities have risen to around 40% and in 2021, 50% of the workforce were International Medical Doctors (IMGs). Discussions continue around the College's work to support these doctors and their specific needs, in relation to differential area gaps and demography.
- SAS as Educators, published by the AoMRC, was recently discussed and highlighted steps on how to support and promote SAS doctors to take up non-clinical roles.

- Further work focuses on examinations and recruitment to build resources for SAS membership, to build portfolios, support examiner applications and in various educational roles.
- The SAS committee now has SAS representation on both the CQR Board and AA Founding Board. There is also representation from Scotland and the CLAN. Currently the Northern Ireland and Welsh posts remain vacant.
- A member from the trainee committee is now co-opted on the SAS committee. Discussions continue whether to collaborate with the 'New to NHS' meeting in order to be inclusive and ensure collaboration of SAS and locally employed doctors going forward.
- Dr Keshkamat recently attend the SAS committee meetings at both the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC) and the Association of Anaesthetists.
- Work continues on incorporating and translating the work on supporting SAS doctors in their careers and work as outlined in domain Five of the Medical Workforce Race Equality Standard (MWRES) report.
- The SAS week will take place in October in collaboration with the NHS Employers (NHSE).

### **Anaesthetists in Training (AiT) update**

Dr Kossakowska provided an update of the last meeting to note that:

- The last meeting took place on 20 February 2023 and was Dr Sarah Muldoon's final AiT Committee meeting, Dr Kossakowska will now take the role of co-Chair along with Dr Rashmi Rebello. The next meeting will be in September 2023.
- Both the internal and external examination reviews and their recommendations were discussed, with committee members raising points regarding the cost of examinations and the perceptions of the FRCA being an overly difficult and esoteric exam.
- Dr Tuck provided an update regarding the CT3 survey, it is recognised that the final version of the survey will need to be published promptly.
- Changes to self-assessment for recruitment were discussed.
- AiTs have been closely linked with the investigation into the errors in the Feb 2023 CT1 recruitment and hope to present the AiT Committee with findings in due course.

### **8. Other business**

#### **New Associate Fellows, Members and Associate Members**

Council received a list of new members to Council for June 2023.

#### **CCTs CESR(CP)s for Council**

A list of recommendations of members made to the GMC for approval was circulated. This noted that CCTs/CESR (CP)s have been awarded to those who have satisfactorily completed the full period of higher specialist training in Anaesthesia, or Anaesthesia with Intensive Care Medicine or Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine in April and May 2023.

#### **Current College Consultations**

Council reviewed the list of current consultations.

#### **Regional Advisers Anaesthesia**

The following changes were noted:

- **West Midlands, Birmingham**  
Dr Cindy Persad as Regional Adviser for West Midlands, Birmingham
- **West Midlands, Stoke**  
Dr Shashank Agarwal as Regional Adviser for West Midlands, Stoke
- **North of Scotland**  
Dr Anoop Kumar as Regional Adviser for North of Scotland
- **South East Scotland**  
Dr Linzi Peacock as Regional Adviser for South East Scotland

**END OF MEETING**