

To consider

Outcome of Consultation on the Review of the Future Regulation of Medical Education and Training

Issue

1. The final report of the review of the future regulation of medical education and training.

Recommendation

2. To receive and consider the final report of the review of the future regulation of medical education and training (paragraphs 11-14 and Annexes A and B).

Further information

3. If you require further information about this paper, please contact us by email: gmc@gmc-uk.org or tel. 0161 923 6602

Background

4. Strategic Aim Three in the Business Plan 2010 is to provide an integrated approach to the regulation of medical education and training through all stages of a doctor's career. This includes establishing work programmes to consider the recommendations of the review of the future regulation of medical education and training, led by Lord Patel.
5. In 2007, in the final report of his independent inquiry into Modernising Medical Careers, Sir John Tooke recommended that 'PMETB should be assimilated in a regulatory structure with the GMC that oversees the continuum of undergraduate and postgraduate medical education and training, continuing professional development, quality assurance and enhancement'.
6. Work to bring about the merger of PMETB with the GMC is now complete and the GMC will take on its new statutory functions from PMETB with effect from 1 April 2010.
7. Although the merger will transfer regulatory responsibility for the whole of medical education and training to the GMC, this consolidation of functions will not, in itself, achieve the full benefits envisaged by Sir John Tooke's report.
8. To help realise these benefits, the GMC, with support from PMETB, invited Lord Naren Patel to lead a review of the current arrangements for the regulation of medical education and training, and make recommendations that would inform future policy developments by the GMC. Lord Patel has been supported in carrying out the review by an advisory group which includes members of the GMC's Education and Training Reference Group and members of PMETB.
9. The preliminary conclusions of the review were set out in a draft report which was published for consultation on 12 January 2010. As part of the consultation exercise we wrote to 300 organisations. They included groups representing patients and the public, the profession, the NHS and other healthcare providers, medical schools and medical Royal Colleges and all those who had participated in the earlier stages of the review. We also held a seminar for current and recent Foundation Programme Trainees in order better to understand their experience and gather their views.
10. Those wishing to respond to the consultation were able to do so by email or online using our e-consultation facility. The consultation closed on 9 March 2010.

Discussion

11. We received 100 responses to the consultation. An analysis of the responses is at Annex A. Overall, they show broad support for the recommendations of the review. There were, inevitably, a range of views expressed about many of the recommendations. The review group has considered these carefully and has made a number of adjustments to its final report in the light of the comments and suggestions received. Many of the responses provide a richness of detail which, although not resulting in changes to recommendations in the final report, will prove enormously helpful in the further developmental work to follow. Some of the main issues to arise were:

- a. The importance of building on the work of PMETB to strengthen the GMC's relationships with trainees, commissioners and providers of training, the medical Royal Colleges and the system regulators.
- b. The need for further work on issues associated with the transitions between different stages of education and training.
- c. The need to enhance the GMC's engagement with, and foster a culture of professionalism among, medical students.
- d. The relationship between the award of the Certificate of Completion of Training and eligibility for inclusion in the specialist register or GP register.
- e. The need to review the arrangements for awarding Certificates of Eligibility for Specialist Registration and Certificates of Eligibility for General Practice Registration.
- f. The need to consider the regulatory framework for education and training in relation to the position of doctors in career posts and how this will be affected by developments such as revalidation and credentialing.

12. The final report of the review is at Annex B.

Next steps

13. As the report acknowledges, it will be for the GMC to decide how it wishes to take forward the recommendations of the report and its order of priorities.

14. The report also recognises that many of the issues to be tackled are not matters for the GMC alone, but need to be considered in partnership with others and in the light of other developments. For example, the parallel reviews of the Foundation Programme taking place in England and Scotland, and the Review of the Impact of the European Working Time Directive on the Quality of Postgraduate Training will both have implications for the future regulation of medical education and training. These reviews are expected to report in June 2010. It would therefore be helpful to be able to reflect on these and other developments as we consider Lord Patel's recommendations and begin to plan our work programme for the future.

In the meantime, the Council is invited to receive and consider the final report of the review.

Recommendation: To receive and consider the final report of the review of the future regulation of medical education and training.

Resource implications

15. None at this stage. However, consideration of the resource implications will be crucial, both for us and our partners, in informing our future work programme and developing the policy detail beneath the high level recommendations of the report. For example, the report specifically identifies the need for us to review the funding model for our quality assurance activities following the merger.

Equality

16. The report touches on a number of areas where issues of equality and diversity are likely to be prominent. They include, for example, the need for a regulatory framework for the education and training of doctors in career posts (a disproportionate number of whom are women or from minority groups), the need to examine the processes leading to the award of Certificates of Eligibility for Specialist Registration, and the arrangements for the inclusion of EEA doctors in the specialist register or GP register. In each of these areas further detailed policy work will be required to establish the way forward, and this will need to be informed by equality impact assessments.