

Summary note of the meeting on 14 March 2017

Attendees

Terence Stephenson, Chair
Philip Banfield, British Medical Association
Shane Carmichael, GMC Assistant Director – Strategy and Communication
Kate Chamberlain, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales
Peter Donnelly, Wales Deanery
Chris Jones, Welsh Government
Paul Jones, Swansea University
Charlie Massey, GMC – Chief Executive
Katie Laugharne, GMC – Head of Welsh Affairs
Paul Myres, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Wales
Anthony Omo, GMC Director – Fitness to Practise
Stephen Riley, Cardiff University
Bethan Roberts, British Medical Association
Geoff Ryall-Harvey, Board of Community Health Councils in Wales
Vanessa Young, Welsh NHS Confederation

Others present

Ian Collings, Wales Deanery
Oliver John, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Wales
Lucy Kiely, GMC – Governance Manager
Sarah Sullivan, GMC – Welsh Office Administrator

Welcome and Chair's Introduction

- 1** The Chair welcomed attendees to the eighth meeting of the UK Advisory Forum in Wales.
- 2** Apologies for absence were received from Ilora Finlay - House of Lords, Andrew Goodall - Welsh Government, Andrew Grant - Swansea University and Clare Jenkins and Alyson Thomas from The Board of Community Health Councils in Wales.
- 3** Forum members noted that Mr Steve Burnett, who took up office as GMC Council member representing Wales on 1 January 2017, was unable to attend and extended his apologies.
- 4** Professor Peter Donnelly was congratulated on his appointment as Interim Post Graduate Dean at Cardiff Medical School and welcomed to his first meeting as a Forum member.

Actions and feedback from October 2016 meeting

- 5** At the meeting on 5 October 2016, it was agreed that members would be updated on the circumstances of, and to what extent supporting information for trainees or for revalidation/appraisal would be released.
- 6** The Forum was informed that the Royal Colleges are the data controller for trainee portfolios and the Wales Deanery is the data controller for the Welsh appraisal system (MARS).
- 7** If a request for disclosure of portfolio material is received the portfolio owners/providers should take legal advice, prior to deciding whether to disclose. The GMC does not hold the information.
- 8** Forum members were thanked for feedback relating to the UK Advisory Forums meeting format. Suggestions would be considered for future meetings.

Updates on local priorities/areas of interest or concern from Forum members

- 9** Forum attendees were invited to provide updates on their priorities. During discussion, the Forum noted:
 - a** That the Wales Deanery Education Contract is on track for rolling out to all specialities in August 2017, and the Education Contract Attendance System (ECAS) for doctors in training is working well.
 - b** That the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) Risk summit meetings are scheduled for 23 May 2017 and 17 October 2017, and that HIW appreciated input from the GMC at the 2016 summit meetings.

- c** The Welsh Government's work is ongoing to review the structures of health and social care in Wales (the Parliamentary Review) and to establish Health Education Wales. The Health and Wellbeing of Future Generations Act is being translated into specific strategies and further engagement around Prudent Healthcare is planned.
- d** That Cardiff and Swansea Universities are working collaboratively working to contribute to the retention of workforce and rural placements.
- e** That the Swansea University Physician Associates programme is working well with an increase in funded places, although the number of positions in health boards has not yet increased.
- f** The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges in Wales is exploring how to improve the primary / secondary care interface and potential concerns about the treatment of transgender patients in Wales, and continues to work on the 'Choosing Wisely' campaign.
- g** Difficulties highlighted by the Board of Community Health Care in Wales, in recruitment and the impact on waiting times for conditions such as pain management or joint replacements. The Forum was informed about the feedback drive called 'Dementia: one simple thing' designed to ask how the NHS can better support people with dementia and their families.
- h** That the Welsh NHS Confederation would contribute to the Parliamentary Review and support engagement activities around Prudent Healthcare. There are also opportunities for Chairs and Chief executives to share experiences and best practice to drive improvements in areas such as finance and performance.
- i** That the British Medical Association (BMA) Cymru Wales had concern regarding the Physician Associates role from students (regarding placements) and patients (confusion regarding the role). Also, the medical engagement survey and NHS staff survey showed systemic bullying within the NHS linked to SAS doctors and work. Welsh NHS work is currently being undertaken to try to embed core values and change the culture.
- j** That the GMC letter, in support of exception reporting in England, was welcomed by the Welsh Junior Doctors Committee who would value support to ensure that rota monitoring processes in Wales are effective. The Committee is working with the Wales Deanery and Welsh Government to secure whistleblowing protection for trainees.

GMC update

The Forum received updates on key areas of our work as noted in the GMC Update report. These included:

Doctors in training

- 10 Forum members noted the need to ensure that doctors in training have time to train and that trainers also have time to provide training.

Flexible Training Review

- 11 It was noted that the GMC would report its findings of the flexible training review to all four governments by 31 March 2017. Recommendations include those relating to curriculum design; legislative context; a link to Generic Professional Capabilities; and Health Education England's work around less than full time teaching and work/ life balance.

Pressure on the front line

- 12 This gives important context to what we do. There are four themes for us:

- 'Call it': when alerted to problems emerging from data, as incorporated in the *State of Medical Education and Practice* and National Training Survey reports.
- Proportionality: reduce the burden where possible, for instance the recommendations within *Taking Revalidation Forward* and our response to those.
- Accessibility: produce accessible guidance and tools for doctors to use on a day-to-day basis, such as the *My GMP* app. Create decision charts for when difficult decisions need to be made within a short time space.
- Interpret data: consider how we use our data and intelligence in a smarter way to understand when problems may emerge and get ahead of the curve.

Taking revalidation forward

- 13 During 2017 we will look at how revalidation can be made more accessible to patients and the public. This is a priority in our response to *Taking Revalidation Forward*.

Brexit

- 14 The Forum was informed that under the Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive we are unable to test the competencies of doctors that come to the UK from European countries.

- 15 A survey was carried out of European doctors on the medical register and 60% of those who responded said they would consider leaving the UK, with 90% of this cohort stating that it was as a result of Brexit. It was noted that this would have considerable implications for recruitment in Wales, including shortages in some areas.

Regulatory reform

- 16 The Forum was informed that the Department of Health England will 'imminently' publish a consultation to look at regulatory reform; this will be signed off by all four UK governments.
- 17 A key issue for the GMC would be to what extent there could be greater autonomy in handling complaints and investigations. Should regulatory reform not progress, as anticipated, there could still be an opportunity to influence improvement. Preference would be to shift the balance to enable the GMC to invest more resources into Education, Training and Guidance rather than Fitness to Practice.
- 18 The Forum noted Welsh Government's support of regulatory reform.

External agenda item – Welsh NHS Confederation: NHS Leadership Challenges

- 19 The Forum received a presentation from Vanessa Young on behalf of the Welsh NHS Confederation.
- 20 During extensive discussion the Forum considered a range of issues including whether there is a correlation between sickness absence and age profile. It was noted that the Welsh NHS Confederation had carried out extensive work with NHS leadership teams, the BMA and Workforce Directors on core principles, which had led to improved engagement.
- 21 The Forum agreed that in Wales there is a real opportunity to look at quality improvement and sustainability and to contribute to wider work around engagement and culture change.

Securing the licence to practise: Introducing a Medical Licensing Assessment

- 22 The Forum received a presentation from Katie Laugharne, GMC Head of Welsh Affairs on the Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA) consultation.
- 23 The Forum subsequently discussed a range of issues including the timing of the MLA, whether it should be integrated with Final exams and the extent to which core content would be required. Questions were raised in relation to what would happen if students pass one exam and fail the other and whether the MLA would actually improve patient safety, or whether the focus is more on fairness of opportunity for medical students. The Forum agreed that the GMC would need to ensure that the MLA is a valid and reliable test.

- 24** The Forum noted that it is not currently intended to use the MLA results as a ranking tool and that the GMC would need to consider what information it would be obliged to share under the Freedom of Information Act.
- 25** The Forum was reminded that the point of registration question is one for the UK governments, but that the MLA would need to be co-produced with governments to ensure that we are producing the doctors needed for the future.
- 26** The Forum noted work carried out on predicting future behaviour of doctors based on their behaviour at medical school - the Conscientiousness index.
- 27** Both Cardiff and Swansea Universities informed the Forum that they would respond to the MLA consultation and were interested to see how it would work in practice.

Any other business

- 28** The Forum noted that there is currently no devolved country representation on the MLA Expert Reference Group, since Derek Gallen's retirement in December 2016. The GMC agreed this would be addressed.