



**Forensic Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee**

A meeting was held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 19 April 2023 at 2:00pm  
hosted by the Royal College of Pathologists

**Dr Lance Sandle  
Registrar**

**Present:** Dr Nigel Cooper, Chair  
Dr Jeff Adams, Home Office  
Mr David Green, Procurator Fiscal's Office, Scotland  
Dr Ralph Bouhaidar, Workforce and Recruitment Lead  
Dr Kathryn Urankar, Neuropathology SAC representative  
Dr Esther Youd, Chair of the Death Investigations Committee  
Dr Amanda Jeffrey, British Association in Forensic Medicine  
Mr Martin Allix, Home Office / Senior Forensic Pathology Manager  
Dr Marjorie Turner, Chair of Panel of Examiners

**Apologies:** Dr Dean Jones, Senior Forensic Pathology Manager  
Dr Philip Lumb, BAFM President  
Dr James Lyness, State Pathologist's Department  
Dr Nicholas Shaw, The Coroner's Society  
Dr Sri Annavarapu, Pre/Perinatal/Paediatric Pathology SAC Chair  
Professor Peter Johnston, Vice President, Professionalism  
Dr David Bailey, Death Investigations Committee  
Dr Jonathan Medcalf, Association of Clinical Pathologists

**In attendance:** Louise Mair, Governance and Committees Services Officer

**Minutes (unconfirmed)**

**FP.01/23 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced the new Governance and Committees Services Officer, Louise Mair, who will be supporting the SAC going forward.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**FP.02/23 Minutes of the Last Meeting, Actions, Matters Arising**

- (a) The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2022 were approved as a correct record.
- (b) The following updates to the action log were noted:

**FP.02/20:** The Chair will send the revised 'Indicators of Suspicion' document to the Clinical Effectiveness team for publication. It has been approved by the FPSG but needs to be approved by the Death Investigations Committee.

**Action: The Governance and Committees Services Officer to circulate the 'Indicators of Suspicion' document to the Death Investigations Committee for approval.**

**FP.13/20:** At the previous SAC meeting, Dr Philip Lumb advised that 2<sup>nd</sup> autopsies had been due to be discussed at the Coroner's Society Medico Legal Committee however this meeting had been cancelled. The SAC agreed that as there hasn't been any further progress with this, the action could be closed.

**FP.02/22ci:** There was no update on the action to discuss the College response to the Forensic Science Regulator consultation in the absence of both Prof Johnston and Dr Bailey. The Governance and Committees Officer to follow up on the progress of this action with Prof Johnston. Action to remain open.

**FP.04/22:** Prof Johnston to discuss college response to the Forensic Science Regulator with Dr Bailey. Action to remain open.

**FP.19/22:** Dr Lumb to submit patient safety bulletin on second autopsies. This action is ongoing, and there should be an update at the next meeting.

**FP.23/22:** Chair to write to Prof Angharad Davies, VP for Learning and Jo Brinklow, the Director of Learning with a summary of the discussion on alternative routes onto Home Office register and a request for advice on how to proceed. This action is ongoing and will remain open.

- (c) Dr Jeffrey highlighted a misspelling for item FP.16/22 regarding Dr Stoodley's surname, the Governance and Committees Services Officer agreed to amend this in the previous minutes.

**Action: The Governance and Committees Services Officer to correct the misspelling of Dr Stoodley's surname on the previous SAC meeting minutes.**

#### **FP. 03/23 Governance**

- (a) The workplan was reviewed. No updates were required. All SAC members were asked to consider topics that could be added to the workplan.

**FP. 04/23 Workforce**

As Fiona Addiscott, the College's Workforce Manager was an apology for the meeting, it was agreed this item could be discussed at the next meeting.

**FP. 05/23 Training in Forensic Pathology/Curriculum Updates**

(a) Training and Curriculum

The Chair reported that there were no new curriculum updates since the new curriculum had launched in August 2021. It was noted that there remains one trainee on the old curriculum in Scotland.

(b) To discuss Training equivalence for those coming to Forensic Pathology with primary qualification in Histopathology

The Chair advised that this issue has arisen due to a histopathologist wanting to register on the Home Office's list. The issue has taken some time to resolve, but the Director of Learning, Joanne Brinklow has provided policy document from 2010, advising that full forensic training is needed to become a Forensic Pathologist and be registered on the Home Office list.

Dr Turner queried whether the 2010 policy referred to which qualifications are required as the GMC stated in 2010/2011 that a candidate can only gain equivalence by either sitting the fellowship or the diploma exam. The SAC agreed that this policy will need to be updated for international candidates who want to apply for the Home Office register, to reflect the changes since the UK left the EU.

**FP. 06/23 Examinations**

Dr Turner advised that three trainees sat their examination in Spring and asked the SAC to make trainees aware that there is now more detailed information around exam structure available on the College website. The Governance and Committees Services Officer confirmed that Dr Alan Farnworth has demitted from the SAC, and she will need to recruit a new Forensic Pathology Trainee for the SAC.

**Action: The Governance and Committees Services Officer to recruit a new Forensic Pathology Trainee Representative for the SAC.**

**FP. 07/23 Reports from Other Organisations and Bodies**

(a) Home Office

The SAC received a verbal update on Home Office matters which highlighted the following:

- Forensic Bone Pathology – Mr Allix advised that four candidates have undertaken forensic bone pathology training. The SAC noted that Dr Annavarapu has completed his training and has offered his support to minimise the current training backlog. The SAC were pleased with this

progress, as there have been some previous complaints around delays in forensic bone pathology reporting.

- Forensic Neuropathology – Mr Allix sought the SAC's views on the viability of developing a joint course on neuropathology and paediatrics. The Chair felt a joint option could work, as both specialties have similar approaches in the court room. Mr Allix agreed to look into developing the joint course and report back to the SAC on any progress made.

(b) Forensic and Secure Environment Committee – Dr Bouhaidar

The minutes of the Forensic and Secure Environment Committee meeting held on 26 January 2023 were received for information. Dr Bouhaidar provided a verbal update on the meeting held in January, noting that the minutes had not yet been produced. Discussions had included:

- Dr Fiona Wilcox gave an update on Coroner's views.
- The BMA conference for Forensic Doctors is scheduled for 17 July.

(c) BAFM – Dr Jeffery

Dr Jeffery advised that she hadn't attended the most recent BAFM meeting, but the minutes highlighted there was a discussion around the forensic EQA facing similar challenges to the non-forensic autopsy EQA, resulting in delays in delivery. Dr Urankar advised that the Australian forensic EQA has an accessible framework, providing everything a forensic pathologist would need for their CPD. Dr Jeffery felt this would be an interesting approach to potentially implement in the UK, Dr Urankar agreed to send the link so Dr Jeffery could take this forward to the next BAFM meeting for review.

**Action: Dr Urankar to send Dr Jeffery the link to the Australian Forensic EQA, so that Dr Jeffery can present the framework at the next BAFM for consideration in the development of the UK forensic EQA.**

Dr Jeffery highlighted there is some concern amongst the fellows that the BAFM have not been involved in discussions about the Hillsborough enquiry. Mr Allix advised that the Chair, Dr Glen Taylor is a former Forensic Scientist who is working with Dr Dean Jones and will be working extensively with the forensic community on this independent inquiry. Dr Jeffrey advised that the BAFM and the College will be able to provide valuable input into the inquiry, as they will also cover Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as England and Wales. Mr Allix agreed to feed these concerns back to Dr Dean Jones and Dr Glen Taylor.

**Action: Mr Allix to raise concerns to Dr Dean Jones, around ensuring the BAFM are consulted during the Hillsborough Inquiry.**

- (d) Coroners' Society – Dr Shaw  
There was no update provided in the absence of Dr Shaw.

**FP. 08/23 College *Bulletin*, Press and PR, Updating of College Documents**

- (a) The *Bulletin*  
The Chair invited SAC members to forward article ideas for inclusion in *The Bulletin*. Previously, there was a discussion around including an article about the approach to hanging and PMCT scanning, there was also interest in the Australian experience too.

The development of standards documents and the College's approval process for co-badging.

Mr Adams advised that the College's co-badging policy changed in 2019, resulting in any document with the college's co-badge needing to be approved by the relevant SAC and the college's communications team. This has led to some challenges, as there will often be disagreement on content between different organisations, a recent example being the BPR on code of practice and performance standards.

- (c) Best Practice Recommendations

The following Best Practice Recommendations were reviewed:

- **G131 Code of practice and performance standards for forensic pathology in England, Wales and Northern Ireland**  
As discussed under item FP.16/22, Mr Adams has established a team to review the Code of Practice with a view to amend or supplement the code for non-criminal cases and to make reporting into courts easier. This is currently in the process of being approved by the College.
- **Evergreen deaths in major disaster**  
Dr Jeffery confirmed that at the last SAC meeting, Dr Lumb had advised he was waiting for the outcome of the Hillsborough Inquiry before progressing with this BPR.

**FP. 09/23 Academic Activities, Public Engagement, SAC Webpage**

- (a) Members were invited to send any suggestions for webinars and other events for hosting via the College to the Chair. The following events were noted:

- The Chair advised that the ACP will be holding its annual autopsy update in November. The SAC noted that there is also a free ACP app that organises autopsy case presentations on a bi-monthly basis available to ACP members.
- Mr Allix has sent a placeholder invite to forensic pathologists in Scotland and Northern Ireland for a Home Office event being held in London and asked for recommendations for key-note speakers. The

Chair and Dr Jeffery recommended an expert on fatal anaphylaxis who presented at a recent Death Investigations Committee meeting.

**Action: The Chair to send the contact details for a recent speaker who provided a presentation around fatal anaphylaxis at a recent DIC meeting to Mr Allix for home office event**

Mr Allix agreed to look into the possibility of holding a hybrid event and to re-circulate the invite as some members had received an invite to the event.

- (b) SAC Website - Members were invited to send any suggestions for additional website content to the Chair.

**FP. 10/23 Death Investigations Committee**

The minutes of the Death Investigations Committee meeting held on 10 November 2022 were received for information. The SAC welcomed the new Chair of the Death and Investigations Committee, Dr Esther Youd. Dr Youd advised the SAC that she is currently reviewing the membership structure, as there are some notable gaps in expertise, such as no autopsy pathologist representatives. Dr Youd will continue to keep the SAC updated on any changes in membership structure.

**FP. 11/23 Environmental Sustainability**

The SAC discussed how environmental sustainability could be incorporated into their work given they do not have laboratory environment practices. It was noted that electric vans are now used to transport between mortuaries.

**FP. 12/23 Any Other Business**

The Committee noted that the current Chair's term of office is due to end in November 2023. The Chair encouraged members to consider applying for the role of Chair once recruitment begins.

**FP. 13/23 Dates of Future Meetings**

Wednesday 20 September 2023, 2.00pm

The meeting closed at 14.44pm