



The terms of reference and constitution for the SAC in Forensic Pathology were approved by Council in early 2014 and are now on the College website. Given the widened role of the committee, two new posts are to be advertised via the President's newsletter shortly. The first is the Learning Lead who will assist the Chair and the SAC in matters relating to training and education. This post will also subsume the current Specialty Advisor's role. A workforce planning lead will also be created.

The SAC sat on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2014 and were joined by Dr Archie Prentice, President, at the second meeting. Among the topics discussed were the following:

### Training, education and examinations

The GMC approval for the existing training centres is progressing well and most of the current Specialty Registrar posts are full. The financial support of the Home Office, Crown Office and Ministry of Justice for the UK training posts is continuing and is considered vital to the future provision of specialist forensic pathology services. Concern was noted in relation to continuing difficulties in recruitment to paediatric pathology in this regard too. Avenues to facilitate the exposure of forensic pathology trainees to cardiac pathology are currently being actively explored by the SAC and the Home Office. Dr Richard Jones has kindly accepted the role of leading the forensic aspects of the College e-learning initiatives.

Professor Crane finishes his very successful term as chair of the panel of forensic pathology examiners shortly. The College are in the process of appointing two new examiners to the panel.

### Revalidation and appraisals

An annual appraisal process for self employed forensic pathologists is now established and in the second year. Joint appraisals are now being conducted for those forensic pathologists in England and Wales who are employed within the NHS or University sectors and a forensic pathology specific 360 degree feedback tool is working well. Further practitioners are being encouraged to train as assessors. The annual audit program organised by the Forensic Pathology Specialist Group of the Forensic Science Regulator is also now re-established and the revalidation process (supported by a meeting with practitioners this year) is considered to be well on track.

### Workforce

This remains relatively stable with the current mix of predominantly self employed pathologists in England and Wales, and University employed consultants in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The national review of the forensic pathology service model in England and Wales is ongoing and is due to report in 2015. Whether this will lead to any significant changes given the current financial situation remains to be seen. A number of the current trainees are due to complete training within the next 12 months and concerns continue as to the potential loss of additional personnel to Australasia and Canada, who are actively recruiting forensic pathologists.

### Documents

The codes of practice and performance standards for forensic pathology were updated recently and remain a key document.



The role of the pathologist in mass disasters is accepted to be out of date and is in the early stages of being re-written.

The document with regards to the laboratory handling of specimens of forensic relevance (currently being updated by other authors in the College) was referred by the SAC to the Forensic Science Regulator and Home Office representatives on the committee for more specialist advice around practical evidence handling.

#### Educational meetings

A College autopsy update meeting is due to take place on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 in Leicester.

#### Other matters

The SAC also noted the delay in establishing the new medical examiners system and the potential relevance of the introduction of commercial CT based autopsy services in the UK.

The committee extend their thanks to Dr Marjorie Turner who has just completed her term as Chair of the SAC, during which she was centrally involved in the establishment of the new CCT specialty and the development of the curriculum and assessment system.

Dr Paul Johnson  
SAC on Forensic Pathology