

The Scottish Standing Committee of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland meet three times per year. In May and November the meetings are held in Perth and in February a meeting is held with Office Bearers of the Association in Stirling prior to the Annual Open Meeting.

The following is a summary of the meeting held on Wednesday 1st November in Perth Royal Infirmary

Assistance for the Anaesthetist

The Core Competencies document produced by NHS Education Scotland with input from a group chaired by Dr Alan Hope (WIG) had been endorsed by the Council as a suitable course and would be incorporated in the updated “glossy” “The Anaesthetic Team”. A group had been set up, chaired by Dr Heather Hosie (SGH), to implement the core competencies and propose a process of endorsement for the Board of the College in Scotland to consider.

Manpower and Medical Training

Concern was expressed over the implementation of Modernising Medical Careers and its impact on current trainees in anaesthesia, future career aspiration and service provision. The committee supported rationalisation of services and maintenance of a consultant- based service and were to make enquiries about the high proportion of posts in anaesthesia being allocated to FTSTA.

Anaesthetic Practitioners

A distance-learning course, provided by Edinburgh University in conjunction with 4 Health Boards had begun with an initial cohort of 12 students from a mixed health care and science background. Dr Henry Robb (Falkirk) is Clinical Co-ordinator, facilitating the introduction of this role and Dr Peter Alston (RIE) is the Programme Director for the course. Further funding for a further 2 years in addition to the first three years is being sought in order to fully evaluate the project and other Health Boards are being invited to participate.

Treatment Centres

It is anticipated that a contract will be signed between the Executive and a healthcare provider to perform mainly orthopaedic procedures at Stracathro Hospital, Angus for Grampian, Tayside and fife Health Boards. Initial information was that there would not be automatic parity between surgeons and anaesthetists and early indications were that it was likely that medical staff providing these services would not be local.

Chronic Pain

Despite the McEwan Report (2004), there remains considerable inequality across Scotland in provision and access to chronic pain services. Efforts are being made by chronic pain specialists in Scotland to develop Standards for Care in Chronic Pain with Quality Improvement Scotland and in the interim there may development of a managed clinical network in the West of Scotland

Association Meetings

Dr Gavin Gordon (VI) and Dr James Dougall (WIG) are organising the Annual Open Meeting for the Scottish Standing Committee to be held on 23rd February 2007 at the Conference Centre in Stirling Royal Infirmary. Dr Catriona Connolly has arranged for the delivery of a further two Seminars at Scone Palace on 8th and 9th March 2007.

Reports are received from representative groups including the RCA Board in Scotland, The Scottish Consultants Committee (www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/sccannualreport06), the Scottish Society of Anaesthetists (www.scottishsocietyofanaesthetists.co.uk), Dr Cameron Howie (GGHB), Specialty Advisor to the Chief Medical Officer and SASM via Dr Harry McFarlane (ARI), Chairman of SASM Liaison Group.

Elections for two members of the Standing Committee will be held in January 2007.