

Association for Clinical Biochemistry Trainees Committee (TC)

The 65th Meeting of the ACB Trainees Committee was held on Friday 11th March 2011. The following topics were addressed:

New Style FRCPATH examination:

Some job descriptions require candidates to have passed Part 1 but it may not be clear to employers that this no longer includes a practical component. Job descriptions may need to be changed and this has now been highlighted to the Education Committee, Regional Tutors and Council. All previous PFI Fails on the old scheme are to be wiped clean for the new scheme.

Study Leave

An issue was raised by trainees in the Southern Region. Recommendations have been made based on questionnaire results, but trainees are encouraged to have problems gaining study leave documented at their annual appraisals.

Modernising Scientific Careers (MSC)

Adverts for 2011 intake have been placed and interviews have taken place. The exact nature of the training and where this training will be provided is still unknown. The provision of funding for training courses / Focus / Training weeks for those on the new scheme is unclear.

Trainees' Evenings at ACB Training Courses

The Birmingham Spring 2011 Trainees' Evening covered "The changing role of a clinical biochemist, how do we engage with users?" The Committee will organise the Trainees' evening for Liverpool Autumn 2011 to focus on Quality/QIPP. Owing to the imminent changes to training schemes under MSC the best format for future training courses is being considered.

Medical Trainee Involvement

Training course questionnaires have highlighted difficulties in contacting medical trainees. This is currently being addressed. All day breakfast meetings are to be held in Focus 2011 to encourage medical trainees to get involved. The introductory day run by the Royal College has helped reach out to the medical trainees.

Trainee Interaction with the Committee

Trainee's interaction with the committee is not as extensive as we would like. There have been occasions when emails circulated to the wider trainee body for opinions, comments or volunteering opportunities have gone completely unanswered. In the current climate trainees need to be proactive to ensure our opinions are counted for the future. Trainees are encouraged to get involved with EBLM at Focus, with the view to achieving publication. EBLM is now included in the Part 2 FRCPATH examination and participation is desirable for CVs.

HPC Registration

South East representatives have been contacted by trainees about issues with ACS interviews. Problems have arisen due to insufficient volunteer assessors, more applicants than usual in September and the delay of December interviews due to bad weather. The guidance notes on the ACS website state a reply will be received within 8 weeks of submission although this is clearly stated as a guide only. If the response by the ACS to the latest submission is not improved, the time frame for response provided in the guidance notes will be raised with the ACS.

NICE Guideline Summaries

It would be useful for trainees to share summaries of laboratory relevant guidelines in order to keep up to date with current issues affecting practice. The Trainees' committee will shortly be launching a project to involve trainees in summarising these guidelines using a template. New guidelines will be distributed to trainees via their regional reps. Trainees are reminded again that this is relevant for Part 2 FRCPATH.

Pathology Modernisation

A discussion was held, pathology centralisation is currently progressing at different rates throughout the country, with different approaches being taken in different areas. The Trainees' Committee will continue to monitor developments for effects on the trainee body.

IFCC Taskforce for Young Scientists

The Communications Officer has taken up the role as the UK representative for the IFCC Taskforce. It is important for young scientists to keep up to date with the IFCC.

Clinical Practice

The second in the series of the Metabolic Medicine Training days was held late in 2010. The topic for this meeting was nutrition, fluid and bones.

Communications Officer Report

The ACB website is currently undergoing redesign to include the Trainees' Section. Tips for building HPC Portfolios will be included in the new website format. The Trainees' Mailbase is currently under-used. Trainees will be encouraged to sign up to the Mailbase via the Trainees' Section of the ACB Website once the new website has been launched.