

## **REPORT**

### ***The conference of postgraduate advisers in general practice of the United Kingdom***

Of the 21 university regions of the United Kingdom, 13 have now appointed Postgraduate Advisers in General Practice. These are all active general practitioners spending up to five sessions a week of their time in university work. Their duties were defined in a memorandum from the Department of Health and Social Security and Welsh Office, March 1972 (HM(72)25).

A conference of all advisers is now held twice yearly and representatives of the national conference of postgraduate deans, General Medical Services Committee and the Royal College of General Practitioners are invited to attend. The second meeting of the conference took place at the British Postgraduate Medical Federation in December 1972.

There was discussion of a paper produced by Dr George Swift (Wessex) suggesting a modification of the present pattern of vocational training for general practice to allow more time in general practice and to make provision of time for studying on course attachments. This would mean that only 18 months would be spent in active hospital service posts. It was noted that the College is itself setting up a planning group within the education committee of Council and there will be further discussion of Dr Swift's suggestions in this group. The results of their discussion will be presented to a future meeting of the conference.

Dr John Hasler (Oxford) had started a 'clearing house' scheme for vocational training places on behalf of the education committee of Council of the College. Details of vacancies in all schemes approved for membership examination were kept by him. It should thus be possible for those unsuccessfully seeking appointments in schemes to obtain, via the Postgraduate Advisers, information about other schemes with imminent vacancies. It was also hoped to follow up the fate of those whose applications had been unsuccessful.

There was considerable discussion about the need to appoint more general practitioners in the educational field to assist in the running of vocational training and continuing education for general practitioners at local level. The discussion was opened by Dr P. Higgins (South-east Metropolitan Region) and his ideas have been transmitted to the College and the Council for Postgraduate Medical Education for comments.

It was agreed that it is desirable for a trainee or recent trainee to be included in the membership of the subcommittees for general practice of the Regional Postgraduate Committees. It was important however that such nominees should discuss policy and would not be involved with discussion of the problems of individuals.

General practitioners have sometimes had difficulties in borrowing books from postgraduate medical centre libraries. It was reported that the Council of the National Association of Clinical Tutors had agreed in principle that general practitioners should be entitled to do so.

The future selection of teachers, likely to be the responsibility of the Regional Postgraduate Committees later this year, was discussed in detail and there was and will continue to be a lively exchange of ideas about procedures. Most Postgraduate Advisers were in the process of drawing up plans about criteria and methods of selection, for approval and discussion by their General Practice Advisory Committees.

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*Secretary*