

Annual General Meeting of the Royal College of General Practitioners

THE twenty-fifth Annual General Meeting of the College was held at Imperial College, London, on 19 November 1977. Dr E. V. Kuenssberg, CBE, was re-elected President of the College and took the chair. About 350 people were present.

Election of Honorary Fellows

The Rt Hon. Kenneth Robinson was elected an Honorary Fellow of the College.

New Fellows

Anderson, G. H.	Mason, H. C.
Bernstein, S.	O'Sullivan, M.
Bryant, T. R.	Price, J. H.
Caldwell, J. R.	Ractliffe, D. S.
Clark, E. M.	Reiss, B. B.
Craddock, D.	Robinson, E. T.
Cunningham, G. A. B.	Rose, E.
Donald, J. G.	Rose, J.
Eminson, P. F.	Scott, K.
Goldman, J.	Schöpflin, K.
Goodhart, Sir J. G.	Sutherland, J. K.
Grob, P. R.	Walker, J. H.
Ham, J. C.	Waters, W. H. R.
Harris, L. B. M.	White, E. L.
Hunt, H. A.	White, J. B.
Josephs, C.	Young, K. H. M.
Josse, S. E.	Zidel, J. S.
Law, R.	
McAldin, J. D.	
McMaster, J. S.	

Baron Dr Ver Heyden de Lancey Memorial Award

The new Baron Dr Ver Heyden de Lancey Memorial Award was presented to Dr R. J. F. H. Pinsent, OBE, MA, MD, FRCGP, FRACGP, for his unique work for general practice over a quarter of a century.

George Abercrombie Award

The George Abercrombie Award was presented to Dr John Fry, OBE, MD, FRCS, FRCGP, for his outstanding contributions to the literature of general practice.

Upjohn Travelling Fellowship

Upjohn Travelling Fellowships were awarded to the following:

J. G. S. Buchanan, MRCGP, DCH, DRCOG, Alexandria, Dumbartonshire, to study the problems of the alcoholic in general practice.

J. K. Coope, MB, CH.B, DRCOG, Bollington, Cheshire, to study hormone replacement therapy in the UK.

G. H. Fowler, MA, MRCGP, DCH, DRCOG, Oxford, to study medical education in Southampton and Tromsø: a comparative study from the primary care viewpoint.

M. Goodman, MRCGP, DRCOG, Liverpool, to study virology in general practice.

A. C. Inwald, MRCGP, London, to study a comparison of self-referred cases to accident and emergency departments in district general hospitals in an urban and semi-rural district.

S. J. Jachuck, MB, BS, Newcastle upon Tyne, to study the correlation between ascending aorta pressure and arm-cuff sphygmomanometric studies.

C. McNamara, MB, CH.B, Preston, to study medical audit and its application in a busy partnership.

D. E. P. Shapland, MA, MB, B.CHIR, FRCS, MRCOG, Brecon, Powys, to study medical audit of hospital medical care provided by general practitioners.

O. K. Shorten, FRCGP, Cork, to study modern practice premises.

V. S. Williams, MRCGP, DCH, DRCOG, Ashington, Northumberland, to study "Our system is the best—or is it?"

Butterworth Gold Medal

The Butterworth Gold Medal was awarded to Dr R. J. Taylor, MRCGP, General Practitioner, Aberdeen.

Fraser Rose Gold Medal

The Fraser Rose Gold Medal for the best performance in the MRCGP examination was awarded to Dr J. W. Drummond, MRCGP, General Practitioner, Dumfries.

Other prizes and awards

The Upjohn Essay Prize for 1977 was awarded to Dr A. J. Tulloch, MD, FRCGP, DRCOG, General Practitioner, Bicester, Oxfordshire, for his report on "Investigation

of ways of improving shared care of chronic disease by hospital and family doctors”.

The Undergraduate Essay Prizes were awarded to: Dr P. J. B. Frith, St Mary's Hospital Medical School (first prize), Dr P. S. Ward, University of Bristol Medical School (second prize), and Dr G. M. Duchesne, University of Bristol Medical School (third prize).

The first SIMG/Janssen Award of the International Society for General Practice for 1976 was presented to Dr K. J. Bolden, MRCP, General Practitioner, Exeter.

Presentations

A portrait of Lady Elizabeth Villiers, in the style of Kneller, was presented to the College by Dr M. K. Thompson on behalf of the owner, Mrs Alma Couch.

Dr David Gill, on behalf of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, presented a Loving Cup to the College to mark the College's Silver Jubilee.

James Mackenzie Lecture

The James Mackenzie Lecture was delivered by Dr D. J. Pereira Gray, FRCP, on "Feeling at Home" (published in the January *Journal*).

Membership of Council

There was an election for membership of the Council in which the following were elected: D. L. Crombie, C. R. Kay, M. L. Marinker, and J. S. McCormick.

Honorary Treasurer's report

The Honorary Treasurer, Dr S. J. Carne, presented his report. The financial situation was fairly stable, and although inflation had been running at 20 per cent the College expenses had only gone up by 11 per cent. The accounts for the past financial year had been audited by Messrs Price Waterhouse on behalf of Mr Ancrum Evans, and he expressed the College's appreciation of the financial advice and assistance given by Mr Evans since the foundation of the College.

The report and accounts were adopted.

Chairman of Council's report

Dr M. J. Linnett, Chairman of Council, presented his report.

Dr Linnett said that the College's evidence to the Royal Commission on the NHS "involved one of the most extensive exercises in consultation among the faculties and individual members that had ever been undertaken". It had been presented to the Commission in the new year and published in the April *Journal*. The College had subsequently been invited to give oral evidence, and members of the Commission had been particularly interested in the mechanisms for providing high quality primary care and the special problems of conurbations.

The College was engaged in discussions with the DHSS about the way in which standards and requirements of promoting good care in inner city areas could be re-examined, "for it is widely acknowledged that such care leaves much to be desired." The College was collecting data about the delivery of primary health care in conurbations.

The NHS (Vocational Training) Act was now law and was "a landmark in the evolution of postgraduate training for general practice." Despite the shortage of time for comment on the consultative document on regulations under the Act the general practice bodies had achieved "remarkable accord". We now awaited with interest the publication of the draft regulations.

Council had given its preliminary response to the Court Report on Child Care in which it had welcomed the Report in general terms but rejected the proposal of the "general practitioner paediatrician". A working party had been appointed by Council and was intensively considering detailed comment. It would subsequently report to Council, which would then initiate extensive consultation within the College.

1977 had been the first year in which the *College Journal* had been published by Update Publications Limited. The *Journal* still however maintained the "distinctive College appearance and style" and he complimented the Editor on steering the *Journal* "through this difficult period while maintaining and improving its standards".

The fourth of the new *Occasional Papers* had been published by the *Journal* and was available from 14 Princes Gate. This was *A System of Training for General Practice*, by Dr D. J. Pereira Gray, and he hoped all the series would be widely read.

He particularly welcomed *Trends in General Practice*, edited by Dr John Fry, which had replaced the fourth edition of *Present State and Future Needs of General Practice* and which provided "a wide survey of many important aspects of general practice". This should be particularly useful to trainers and trainees preparing for the College examination.

The Scientific Foundation Board, the amalgamation of the previous Research and Education Foundations, had now met under the chairmanship of Sir George Godber. He welcomed as outside members of the Board Sir Michael Swann, Chairman of the BBC, and Professor Martin Vessey, of the University of Oxford.

The newly formed Research Division Executive had been working for a year and its new structure had proved successful in allowing it to respond quickly and scientifically to emerging issues of importance.

The recent paper on mortality through cardiovascular disease in users of the oral contraceptive pill had proved to be "the most sensitive of the flow of reports emerging from the Oral Contraception Study". The College was grateful for the considerable help it had received from many sources in order that guidance for doctors should be available at the time the paper was published, and in the delicate exercise of ensuring that

the issue was not discussed in the press before publication of the scientific paper. He paid tribute to the Director of the Oral Contraception Study, Dr Clifford Kay, who had been honoured this year with a CBE, and congratulated him on the "high standard of scientific integrity which he and his 1,100 recording general practitioners had maintained throughout the study".

College committees

The amalgamation of the Board of Censors and the Education Committee two years ago had not proved as successful as hoped and Council had since decided that they should in future function separately. The Board of Censors in particular had the formidable task of improving the examination and developing new methods of assessment. This year 828 candidates had presented themselves for the examination. The Education Committee had the equally difficult task of helping the faculties to discuss the way towards a "more realistic approach to continuing education".

The new Practice Organization Committee was planning a gazetteer of innovatory practices and was assisting in the Central Information Service for General Medical Practice.

Dr Linnett noted that the Medical Recording Service Foundation had now been dissolved and had been reconstituted as a new independent charity called the Graves Medical Audiovisual Library. The College was grateful to Sir George Godber for agreeing to be its chairman.

Awards and endowments

The College had received much support from outside bodies and he was particularly pleased to announce that Astra Limited had generously donated new Research Awards for Trainees with an annual first prize of £500, a second prize of £250, and a third of £100.

He was also pleased to announce that the Wolfson Travelling Professorship for 1977-78 had been conferred on Dr John Horder, OBE, FRCP, FRCGP, General Practitioner, London, and for 1978-79 on Dr Geoffrey Marsh, MD, FRCGP, General Practitioner, Stockton-on-Tees.

15 Princes Gate

The Chairman welcomed the extension of the College headquarters which was a wise investment and would allow much more room for the expansion of the College's activities and accommodation. Much work had already been done, and with the College's architects, plans were being made for the most effective use of the two buildings as a single unit.

The future of the College

Dr Linnett said that the College's changing role meant that there was a great need for all members to attempt to define and critically assess what we were attempting

to do in caring for our patients. Early in the coming session of Council there would be a debate on the role of the faculties, Council and its committees, and the College as a whole, which would then be widely discussed by faculties.

Dr Linnett concluded by saying that in examining our work and responsibilities as doctors many traditional attitudes needed re-examination, many habits needed changing, and it was the response of the members that would help us in achieving these goals.

Resolutions from faculties

Membership

Dr R. N. Midha (South-West Wales) moved:

" 'Membership implies a commitment for life of time and effort to maintain competence through appropriate postgraduate education and audit activities (D. H. Irvine, 1977).' The South-West Wales Faculty invites Council to consider methods by which such a commitment by College members may be monitored".

This motion was supported by several members who felt that this question should be looked at by Council, although it was recognized that the Education Committee was already working on it.

Dr J. W. Baker (South-East Thames) moved:

"The South-East Thames Faculty wishes to hear how Council proposes to ensure that members maintain their qualifications".

There was a lengthy discussion on this motion with some members expressing the view that the faculties, with the support of Council, should try to find ways of ensuring members' fitness to practise over many years and of improving standards. Other members felt that the tools for assessment already existed and that self-assessment and peer group assessment were acceptable but that any other means of policing or examining members was not. These members also felt that the motion did not deal with the problem of bad general practitioners who would not be affected by such examinations in any case. The Honorary Secretary pointed out that the object of the College, as stated in the Charter, was to maintain standards, and that the College did not regulate by law but encouraged the voluntary pursuit of excellence. He felt that the two motions should be considered as an encouragement to self-assessment by people in a voluntary association who agreed to certain principles.

The two motions were passed as a reference to Council.

Court report

Dr R. N. Midha (South-West Wales) moved:

"The South-West Wales Faculty considers that the concept of general-practitioner paediatricians is not in the interest of general practice and should be opposed".

"The South-West Wales Faculty considers the formation of health visitor teams with a special

interest in paediatrics should be opposed until such time as there is a full complement of attached health visitors in general practice”.

“The South-West Wales Faculty opposes the development of an intermediate grade of paediatrician in the form of a community physician paediatrician. It is felt that all paediatricians should have access to hospital beds and that more emphasis should be placed on hospital paediatricians going out into the community”.

The first of these motions was carried.

The second motion was debated at length but it was generally agreed that it should not be voted on and the meeting passed to the third resolution which was again not voted on but passed as an expression of opinion for the guidance of the Working Party on the Court Report.

Team ethics

Dr Jane Richards (South-West England) moved:

“This meeting believes that the ethical standards of other professional members of the primary health care team must be no less than those of the medical profession”.

In discussion several members expressed the view that such a standard was not practical for some members of the primary health care team and would be impossible to attain.

A motion to move to the next business was carried.

Confidentiality

Dr R. V. H. Jones (South-West England) moved:

“This meeting reaffirms the principle that access to identifiable personal, medical, and social information about patients obtained by a clinician should not be available to any third party without either the patient’s or clinician’s specific consent”.

In the debate following the presentation of this motion it was said that care should be taken not to place additional constraints on the service given, particularly in the difficult cases of non-accidental injury to children. Dr Metcalfe said too much rigidity could stifle valuable research. Dr K. J. Bolden pointed out that this motion had been felt necessary because of the growing use of computerized patient records.

It was agreed that this motion should be passed to the Ethical Committee for study.

Ancillary staff training

Dr G. S. Duncan (Wessex) moved:

“The College is urged to press the Government to

make facilities available for the training of ancillary staff”.

The President told the meeting that the College was having talks with the Association of Medical Secretaries on this subject and a move forward was being made.

The motion was carried.

Dr G. S. Duncan (Wessex) moved:

“Council should be urged to look into the possibilities of setting up a recognized qualification for medical receptionists”.

The President reported further on this motion and said that the College, although concerned in this matter, would not try to lay down rules for other bodies. The College would be assisting on working parties and would give advice and help to concerned bodies.

The meeting agreed that this interpretation of the motion was acceptable.

Section 63 regulations

Dr D. H. H. Metcalfe (Trent) moved:

“This Annual General Meeting resolves that under Section 63 regulations governing postgraduate medical education, the clinical tutors of postgraduate centres be required to establish an Advisory Committee composed entirely of general practitioners.”

Dr Lawson said that he felt that the faculties could do no more about this than Council but there was a suggestion that it would be preferable to have two joint clinical tutors, one hospital based and one general practitioner, and the Council could help in establishing this system.

It was agreed that the motion, with the additional suggestion, should be passed as a reference to Council.

Appointment of auditors

Messrs Price Waterhouse were confirmed as auditors for the College for 1978/9.

Annual Spring Meeting

The meeting was reminded that the Annual Spring Meeting will be held in Walsall on 15 to 16 April 1978.

College Appeal

The President announced that the fund to insure the College was being well supported and had reached over £1,000. He thanked all who were contributing.

The meeting ended at 16.30 hours.