

Tinnitus - Newsletter of the NZMA Doctors-in-Training Council

June 2007

The DITC welcomed two new members to the June meeting. Derek Buchanan is a senior house surgeon at Middlemore Hospital and Dylan Mordaunt is a first year house surgeon at Auckland City Hospital. The group re-elected Andrew Old (Public Health registrar – Auckland) to chairperson and Brandon Adams (Surgical registrar – Auckland) was elected to the newly established deputy chair position. Cindy Towns (house surgeon – Dunedin) makes up the remainder of the elected group. Other members are Nick Fancourt (President, NZMSA), Dr Peter Foley (NZMA Chairman) and CEO Cameron McIver.

Medical Workforce

The last two years have seen an array of committees and publications focused on our medical training and workforce. The latest document, published in May has the rather long name: [Reshaping Medical Education and Training to meet the Challenges of the 21st Century: a report to the Ministers of Health and for Tertiary Education from the Workforce Taskforce](#). Essentially the recommendations are for increasing provisional registration to two years with a greater educational focus (as opposed to a solely service focus), increasing the number of medical students with a greater focus on generalism (rather than early sub-specialisation), development of new roles to support medical practitioners (such as physician assistants) and the establishment of a medical training board to implement the recommendations. Although in agreement with some of the recommendations, the DITC remains frustrated by the lack of action on key workforce issues which have now been clearly delineated by several high level groups.

Industrial situation

The last month has seen the initiation of [stop-work meetings](#) by the [Association of Salaried Medical Specialists](#) – the union representing many senior doctors. Recent [suspensions](#) amongst members of the Medical Laboratory Workers Union in some centres for 'partial strikes' have also raised concerns. The NZRDA begins its new round of MECA negotiations with pressing issues of recruitment and retention likely to be key points given continued [RMO shortages](#) and the high [cost of locums](#).

Clinical Handover

Clinical handover continues to be a popular topic of discussion. The [Australian Medical Association](#) and [British Medical Association](#) have recently developed resources for their constituents, and given the NZMA permission to use them. The NZMA has offered them to the [MOU Executive](#), which also has this topic on its agenda. We look forward to the results of the recent NZRDA audit on clinical handover.

Advanced Choice of Employment (ACE)

DITC members presented at the ACE information evenings held throughout the country this month. The closing date for job applications was June 22 and the evenings were well attended by trainee interns. DITC members were involved in lobbying for the establishment of the original scheme and have observed that the questions tend toward the same themes year to year. We have agreed to collate these observations and produce a FAQ sheet to be placed on the NZMA website and given out to TIs next year. The [ACE matching scheme](#) contract comes up for renewal at the end of the year – we will update members of who and how the service will be run from 2008.

United Kingdom: *Modernising Medical Careers* and the *Medical Training Application Service*

The UK medical workforce situation continues to develop, with the newly implemented [Medical Training Application Service \(MTAS\)](#) being described in a recent [judicial review](#) by the High Court, as a 'dreadful mess', with 'disastrous consequences'. The online system was set-up for the

selection of foundation house officers (equivalent to our pre-vocational HOs) and speciality registrar posts, however the MTAS has been bathed in controversy -- issues including the underlying theory, online security breaches, application process and transparency, and execution of the selection process. Aside from a severe shortfall of available training posts - 34,000 applicants for 18,500 jobs - the application questions had been criticised as unable to identify the best candidates, with many talented doctors failing to secure even a single job interview. Several key figures have resigned, including the [BMA Chairman](#) who resigned following membership pressure for a [conciliatory letter](#) written to the editor of *The Times*. This issue is of significance to both New Zealand ex-patriot RMOs and to those planning looking for training opportunities in the UK.

Medical Education

ANZMET

This year Sydney will hold the [inaugural Australian Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Forum](#), incorporating the 12th National [Pre-vocational Medical Education Forum](#) - an event which has grown considerable over the last few years, and has had RMOs present from New Zealand, particularly from Auckland District Health Board. The Forum will focus on the future of medical education and training; resilience, job satisfaction and career development; and clinical leadership. Those interested in presenting should have abstracts submitted via the conference website by the 30 June. See <http://www.anzmet.com.au/> for details.

Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine - Trainee Recruitment for 2008

The training programme is now advertising for potential trainees for the 2008 intake. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please direct them to the [Training Application](#) section of the public website and/or the Faculty Office. Applications close on **31 July 2007**.

We are also keen to feature details of training programmes of other medical colleges. Please send information to shani@nzma.org.nz.

Summer Studentship

The DITC will soon be seeking applications for the 2007 summer studentship project entitled, "Professionalism of RMOs". The idea underlying the new project is to investigate areas pertinent to doctors-in-training. For those undergraduate students looking to apply for this year's summer studentship, application details will be advised in the upcoming weeks. We hope that the last summer studentship will be presented at the ANZMET conference. If you have ideas for a project for 2008-9, please contact us.

Events

[NZMA](#) teamed up with [MAS](#) to support events in both Wellington and Auckland recently, including the 'High-rollers' end-of-run party at Chicane Bar on Auckland City's Ponsonby Road.

As ever, we are keen for feedback, ideas or questions. Please email us at ditc@nzma.org.nz

Visit our web page: <http://www.nzma.org.nz/ditc/>

Dylan Mordaunt