



The DITC met for the first time in 2007 on Monday, 26 March. Issues discussed included the upcoming ACE Information Evenings, the admissions policies of the two medical schools, medical workforce issues and the imminent DITC elections. As usual we were briefed on the activities of NZMA National Office, which continues to be busy on our behalf making submissions on issues such as the review of standing orders, the medical workforce taskforce, and the regulation of herbal medicine and BZP-containing party pills, along with its continuing advocacy, amongst other things, around the laboratory contracting debacle and maternity services. We also discussed the governance review that is under way in the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) and its potential implications for trainees in New Zealand.

Medical Workforce

The NZMA presented to the Health Workforce Taskforce back in December 2006 and our presentation was well received by the group. Its report is now with the Minister and we wait patiently to see both its contents and the Government's reaction to it. Keep an eye out for articles on the subject that are appearing in the April edition of Medspeak, due out this week..

The Medical Workforce continues to be a major concern with significant staffing issues in a number of DHBs, including an SMO crisis in Southland, the ongoing shortages in the Auckland region, and the situation recently notified to us affecting house officers at Hutt Valley. While specific industrial issues are most appropriately notified to, and dealt with, by the NZRDA, we do appreciate hearing your issues and concerns so they can inform our advocacy at the national level. We continue to raise workforce issues with the Minister and Ministry of Health at every opportunity.

Code of Ethics

The NZMA Code of Ethics is the accepted code for medical practice in New Zealand. Formal input is being sought from all the medical colleges, the Medical Council, Health and Disability Commissioner and university ethics departments, in the first round of consultation. NZMA members will be consulted as part of the process and we will let you know when this is happening.

The Code can be found here: <http://www.nzma.org.nz/about/ethics/codeofethics.pdf>

Mentoring Proposal

The NZMA has been approached about establishing a mentoring programme at Auckland Medical School. We believe that mentoring is a very worthwhile concept and will be exploring with the University how the NZMA can help to make it a reality.

ACE Information Evenings

Back by popular demand, the NZMA, in conjunction with NZMSA and the ACE Centre, will again be running ACE Information Evenings throughout the country in the last week of May. These evenings have traditionally been aimed at Trainee Interns, but in response to feedback received we will be refining them slightly to appeal to both fifth year students and Trainee Interns.

Look out for more details in the next edition of Medspeak.

Trainee Organisation Forum

The DITC was represented by Chair, Dr Andrew Old, at an Australian Medical Association Trainee Forum held in Sydney in February. This forum brought together representatives from the trainee bodies of many colleges and was a great opportunity for identifying common issues and learning from others' experiences.

The NZMA is keen to run a similar event for New Zealand later this year so keep an eye out for more details in the coming months.

DITC Elections

As announced in the last Tinnitus, elections for all DITC positions are now taking place. Full details are published in Medspeak, but if you're interested in standing you need to be an RMO financial member of the NZMA and be nominated by another member. Nominations close on 24 April. There are five elected positions on the Council. I would encourage anyone who is interested to put their name forward as it's a fantastic opportunity to meet some really interesting people and gain a greater understanding of the health system we're all a part of.

Retirement of the DITC's Longest Serving Member

Finally, it was with a great deal of regret that the DITC farewelled Dr Julie Fitzjohn at our March meeting. Julie was instrumental in establishing the DITC and has served consistently as a councillor ever since. The DITC would not be the institution it is today without her tireless commitment, and her energy and enthusiasm will be greatly missed. We wish her all the best for the future and hope to see her back in another capacity before too long!

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

<http://www.nzma.org.nz/ditc/>

