



The NZMA's Doctors-in-Training Council (DiTC) met for the second time this year on the 28th of June. Issues discussed included: the ACE matching scheme and development of an ACE FAQ booklet; Incentive Based Debt Relief & Bonding (in light of renewed political interest in the latter); the ongoing industrial situation; planning for our second trainee forum and medical education and training – particularly the machinations of the Medical Training Board (MTB). The Council was lucky to have a couple of hours with Len Cook, Chair of the MTB, who gave us a presentation on the work the MTB was doing followed by a lively discussion on some of the key issues. As usual, we were briefed on activities of National Office, which continues to be busy on our behalf preparing for the review of the Health Practitioners' Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA), finalising the review of the Code of Ethics, and submitting on a range of issues.

The meeting also marked a changing of the guard with Dr Derek Buchanan stepping down after a year on Council and Dr Andrew Old, who has been Chair of the DiTC for the last three years, standing down. Dr Brandon Adams, the current Deputy Chair is now acting-Chair until elections are held – more on that later.

Medical Workforce

Hopefully most of you will be aware that one of the key recommendations of the Workforce Taskforce report, published in May last year, was the establishment of a Medical Training Board. The MTB, chaired by Len Cook, former Government Statistician, was established at the end of 2007 and is due to make its first report any day now. The report will cover two themes, the so-called transition years (TI-PGY1-PGY2) and medical workforce projections and planning. As mentioned above, we were lucky to be able to grill Len Cook at our last meeting and we look forward to seeing and commenting on its first report as there will be many things that affect the education and training of RMOs. DiTC member Dr Cindy Towns is a member of the MTB.

NZMA Trainee Forum

On 10 November 2007 the NZMA hosted its inaugural Trainee Forum. Representatives from all the specialist colleges and the RDA were invited, with the forum intended to provide an opportunity for the open sharing of issues, ideas and information between New Zealand's trainee representatives. Specific aims were:

- Open a two-way dialogue between the DiTC and local trainee groups in order to better inform our advocacy around training issues;
- Identify issues of concern for which we and the group can share knowledge and experience, and help develop solutions;
- Explore the different models of trainee representation within Colleges with a view to supporting Colleges and trainees to develop the most effective structures for their own organisations;
- Provide an update to participants on the national medico-political environment and current issues.

The structure was based on a successful forum held for Australian trainees hosted by the Australian Medical Association (AMA) and we were lucky that the Chair of the AMA's Council of Doctors in Training was able to attend to provide an Australian perspective.

Feedback from the forum was very positive with all participants agreeing it should be run again. Planning is well under way for a second forum to be held in November this year, and invitations have been sent out.

ACE Matching Process

The ACE match for 2008 occurred on 31 July, with early reports showing that the process has run less smoothly than in previous years. It appears there have been a number of system errors resulting in a couple of lost applications and a number of 'misplaced' references amongst other issues.

At the time of writing these issues are being worked through and the DiTC, along with NZMSA, is working with ACE to ensure no TIs are disadvantaged and subsequently to make sure these errors are corrected for next year's match.

The DiTC has produced an ACE FAQ based on our members' experience with the process over the last five years. We are keen for feedback on questions that aren't addressed and intend it to be a living document. The FAQ can be found on the DiTC webpage (<http://www.nzma.org.nz/ditc/>).

Incentive Based Debt Relief / Bonding

You may have seen media coverage indicating that all the major political parties are looking at some form of incentive scheme designed to retain NZ graduates. Unfortunately the rhetoric has focussed on these as being 'bonding' schemes and the NZMA, along with NZMSA, continue to advocate our preference for non-bonded programmes over bonded ones.

The DiTC is developing a policy on incentive schemes and would be interested in members' thoughts and ideas on what should be in it. Please contact us on the email address below.

DiTC Elections

The NZMA Board recently agreed to expand the DiTC to seven members and move to an annual (rather than biannual) election cycle. With the recent resignation of two Council members, that means there are vacancies for **four** new councillors. You should have received a call for nominations by now but if not, please visit our website and download one from there. If you would like more information on what the role entails please email us (ditc@nzma.org.nz)

DiTC Website

The DiTC website was established a little over two years ago and we are continually looking at ways of making it more useful for you, our members. If you have any thoughts about what sort of information or links you'd like to see on the site please let us know on the email address below. The website can be found at: <http://www.nzma.org.nz/ditc/>.

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

