

## Medical Foundation Programme report calls for better supervision of trainee doctors

Medical Education England (MEE) has today launched its evaluation of the medical Foundation Programme, which was chaired by Professor John Collins, Visiting Professor in the Nuffield Department of Surgery at the University of Oxford.

Professor Collins' report, '*Foundation for Excellence*', is a detailed evaluation of the Foundation Programme based on extensive written and oral evidence that included a review of nearly 300 relevant publications. Professor Collins was supported by an Expert Panel that helped to conduct the evaluation and develop the final report and recommendations.

*Foundation for Excellence* has widespread professional support and was commended by both MEE's Medical Programme Board and main Board.

The report found that the Foundation Programme has many strengths and provides a critical interface between medical school and medical practice. There were also, however, a number of concerns around design, content, safety and quality. The two principal findings are that:

- the length of the programme should remain unchanged at two years but this should be reviewed in 2015 when the impact of the General Medical Council (GMC) recommendations in Tomorrow's Doctors will be clearer; and
- there was concern about evidence presented regarding variation in the deployment and supervision of trainees with some saying they had been asked to practise beyond their level of competence.

Professor Collins said: 'In meetings with trainees across England, the Evaluation Panel heard the repeated theme of some trainees being asked to practise beyond their level of competence and without adequate supervision... This places patients at unnecessary risk and gives the trainee the message that suboptimal care is condoned, neither of which is part of the professional values and aspirations of a good doctor'.

He said: 'We admire and applaud the large number of doctors, other health professionals and employers who work hard to ensure safe patient care and to provide the best education and training for the UK's medical workforce.'

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'Equally, we were alarmed by the evidence presented to us reflecting unacceptable practice. This must be addressed as a matter of urgency.'

His report makes 33 recommendations and the principal findings are supported by similar evidence from the 2009 PMETB Survey of Foundation Doctors, reports from Lord Patel and Professor Sir John Temple and the recently released GMC National Training Surveys 2010.

Professor Sir Christopher Edwards, Chairman of MEE, said: 'We were very fortunate to be able to appoint someone of Professor Collins' calibre to lead this evaluation and he has produced a detailed, thorough and comprehensive report that has widespread medical backing through Medical Education England.'

Sir Christopher said: 'Professor Collins has highlighted the critical interface between medical school and medical practice when new Foundation doctors have their first real experience of providing patient care in hospital settings. It is clear from the evidence he heard, and from other recent respected and credible sources of evidence, that, in some cases, trainees are not being adequately supervised and there is a clear patient safety issue that needs to be addressed.'

## Ends

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## Notes for Editors:

*Foundation for Excellence* will be available from 6pm on the MEE website [www.mee.nhs.uk](http://www.mee.nhs.uk)

## About MEE

MEE provides independent expert advice to ministers and input into the policy-making process on the content and structure of professional education and training as it relates to doctors, dental teams, healthcare scientists and technologists, and pharmacy teams, and on the quality of workforce planning for these groups.

MEE was asked to commission a formal evaluation of the medical Foundation Programme as part of the NHS Next Stage Review.

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## **About Professor Collins**

Professor Collins is Visiting Professor, Nuffield Department of Surgery, University of Oxford, and Visiting Research Fellow at Green Templeton College, Oxford.

His most recent positions include Dean of Education at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in Melbourne and Professorial Fellow in the Departments of Surgery and Medical Education at the University of Melbourne.

Professor Collins is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and is an Honorary Fellow of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland.

He was previously a member of the steering committee that reviewed Postgraduate Years 1 and 2 in New Zealand and has 29 publications related to medical education.

## **About the Expert Advisory Panel**

The role of the expert advisory panel was to provide support for the independent Chair (Professor John Collins) in conducting the evaluation and developing the final report and recommendations. The panel members, and the positions they held at the time, were:

- Professor Stuart Macpherson, Chairman, Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board
- Professor Dinesh Bhugra, President, Royal College of Psychiatrists
- Mr Paul Buckley, Director of Education, General Medical Council
- Mrs Sally Malin, lay representative, MEE Medical Programme Board
- Professor Tony Weetman, Chair, Medical Schools Council
- Professor Peter Kopelman, Principal of St. George's, University of London
- Professor Jacky Hayden, Chair, English Postgraduate Deans
- Dr Johann Malawana, Junior Doctors Committee, British Medical Association
- Dr Ollie White, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, trainee doctors group
- Mr Nicholas Deakin, Medical Students Committee, British Medical Association
- Professor Moira Livingston, Director of Workforce, North East Strategic Health Authority
- Professor Michael Goldacre, Professor of Healthcare Epidemiology, University of Oxford
- Professor Michael Watson, UK Chair, Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans
- Mr David Grantham, Head of Programmes, NHS Employers

**Thursday 4 November, 2010**

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