

**Confirmed Minutes**  
**Staff and Associate Specialist (SAS) Committee**  
**Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

**Present:** Miss Su-Anna Boddy (Co-Chair- in Chair)  
Mr Victor Babu (Co-Chair)  
Mrs Maya Harris  
Mr Makani Hemadri  
Ms Gazalla Safdar  
Mr Narveshwa Sinha  
Mr Umesh Ullal

**Attending:** Ms Clare Wynn-Mackenzie - Opportunities in Surgery Project Manager

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

1.1. Miss Boddy opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Apologies were received from Ms Garg and Mr Arya.

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July were confirmed as a correct record. It was agreed to publish the minutes on the College's website.

**ACTION:** Ms Wynn-Mackenzie to publish the minutes from the last meeting on the College website

**3. Matters Arising from the minutes**

3.1. The actions from the last meeting as outlined in attachment B were reviewed and the following points were noted:

- Mr Ullal met with SAS tutors / Representatives from several trusts urging them to ask their surgical colleagues to register with the college.
- The committee received copies of the President's newsletter commending the National SAS conference and expressing his support for the grade.

**4. Chair's Report**

**4.1. Role of Specialty Doctors**

4.1.1. Miss Boddy reported that following questions raised by Alan Johnson, President of ENT UK, a debate is expected at December Council meeting regarding the role of the College in approving the job plans of Specialty Doctors. It is hoped that this will result in the College producing some guidance for medical staffs (medical HR) on specialty doctor job planning and recruitment processes.

4.1.2. Mr Babu noted that the specialty doctor grade is new and different from the previous staff grade and discussion followed about the structure of the specialty doctor grade and the criteria required to pass each "threshold". Mr Hemadri suggested that the committee should consider producing guidelines on what is required *in surgery* to pass each threshold.

4.1.3. Miss Boddy noted that the December Council debate would more likely focus on specialty doctor job planning and the role of the College in this, and asked the committee to feed their views to Mr Babu.

**ACTION: ALL** to pass their views on the specialty doctor grade to Mr Babu to collate prior to Council in December

## 4.2. Use of College Portfolio

- 4.2.1. Miss Boddy reported that she had recently received a letter from the President of the RCP implying that SAS surgeons are not aware that they are able to use various College tools. She requested that the committee ensures that local SAS colleagues are aware that Associate Specialists are able to use the College Surgeons Portfolio: [www.surgeonsportfolio.org](http://www.surgeonsportfolio.org).
- 4.2.2. Miss Boddy further reported that she and Prof. Stanley (College Vice President) are exploring the possibility of introducing an “Associate” category to allow SAS and other surgeons who are not Members or Fellows to form a link with the College. She noted that details such as benefits and eligibility are still to be considered but will hopefully include access to the portfolio and educational programmes. The committee received this proposal favourably.

## 5. Training

### 5.1. Top Up Training

- 5.1.1. The committee received attachment C and two tabled papers from Mr Sinha providing examples of how this training can be achieved. Miss Boddy noted that the Joint Royal College SAS committee remain keen to develop this paper for each college and that these example would make the paper more useful. The committee discussed the models and their own experiences and agreed that they should be worked into the final draft of the paper.
- 5.1.2. The committee agreed that references to “training” should be replaced with “education” to avoid confusing the issue with formal training grades. The new title of the paper should be “further educational development”. The paper should begin with a very positive statement supporting development opportunities for SAS grades.
- 5.1.3. Mr Babu noted that the paper should highlight that it is not only operative experience that is required, but education may also be needed in clinics etc. Miss Safdar commented that the DH CPD fund can be used to fund a secondment and that this should also be highlighted.

**ACTION:** Miss Safdar to provide an example of how to arrange a secondment.

**ACTION:** Ms Wynn-Mackenzie to revise the paper with Mr Sinha as per the committee’s comments.

**ACTION:** Miss Boddy to consider how to take this paper forward.

### 5.2. SAS Training Requirements

- 5.2.1. In the light of discussion on the previous item, it was agreed not to consider this item as all points had been covered.

## 6. On Call Status

- 6.1. Miss Boddy reported that the College has received queries asking whether it is appropriate for an AS to be first on-call (i.e. with ultimate responsibility when on call). This only applies to associate specialists – not staff grades or specialty doctors – and so is a time-limited concern as the this grade is closed. Ultimately, this decision lies with the trust as employer. However, it may be useful for the College to offer some guidance on this (which would not be binding to trusts).
- 6.2. The committee noted that there is little clarity over whether this is permissible. BMA documentation states that associate specialists work at increased levels of autonomy but it does not state that this is total, suggesting that it would be beyond the remit of an associate specialist to be first on call. However, associate specialists are permitted to “act up” for a consultant for a period between 14 days and 6 months, implying that he / she could be first on call.

**ACTION: ALL** to discuss the status of associate specialists on call further via email (with supporting documentation) and reach an agreement. Ms Wynn-Mackenzie to draft a statement reflecting this decision.

## 7. SAS Newsletter

7.1. Miss Boddy reported that the last edition of the SAS newsletter was very well received at the joint royal college SAS committee. The committee discussed distribution and agreed that (budget permitting) the next edition should be sent to directors of postgraduate medical education and college tutors as well as to SAS surgeons themselves.

7.2. The committee agreed that articles should be included on (authors in brackets):

- The national SAS conference (Mr Sinha) and advert for next joint college conference
- SAS tutors – with examples and case studies (Mrs Harris)
- Educational Development for SAS doctors (Ms Wynn-Mackenzie)
- Mentoring (Ms Safdar)
- Patient safety: SAS doctors' involvement
- Generic courses for SAS doctors (Mr Ullal)
- Management for SAS doctors (Mr Babu)
- Appraisal (Ms Claire Steel)

**ACTION:** Ms Wynn-Mackenzie to organise publication and distribution of the next SAS newsletter.

## 8. Updates from other committees

### 8.1. Joint Royal College SAS Committee

8.1.1. Miss Boddy reported that the committee would like to affiliate to the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and have written to them requesting this. This is on the agenda of the Academy meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

8.1.2. A conference will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> Jan 2012 at the RCP. Mr Sinha offered to assist with contact for this.

*NB: subsequently, this date was changed to 27<sup>th</sup> Jan 2012.*

**ACTION:** Ms Wynn-Mackenzie to facilitate contact between Joanna Lawson (RCP) and Mr Sinha

8.1.3. The further Educational Development paper will be circulate to the committee after it is complete /

8.1.4. Future meetings will be on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at the RCOphth, moving then to the RCP and then the RCOG

### 8.2. Council

8.2.1. Mr Babu reported that he had contributed to a debate on training needs highlighting that SAS surgeons should also be able to access educational resources.

### 8.3. Patient Liaison Group

8.3.1. There was no update from Mr Hemadri due to lack of activity since the last meeting

### 8.4. RIC

8.4.1. Miss Boddy reported that the starting date for revalidation has been moved to 2012 to allow results from pilots to be analysed. Information about Responsible Officers has been agreed. Miss Boddy suggested that everyone should be undertaking strengthened appraisal now. The committee discussed their different trusts' approaches to appraisal, it was noted that appraisal should not be linked to job planning.

### 8.5. OIS

8.5.1. Miss Boddy reported that it will be recommended to PSRD that the College revise its position on mentoring and improve the information it provides about local mentoring schemes. Miss Safdar noted that progress is continuing with the local scheme she is running; mentors have been identified and will be trained.

8.5.2. The College's careers literature will be revised in early 2011, including information on SAS / SD grades. Ms Wynn-Mackenzie will ask the committee to contribute to this and are asked respond comprehensively and in a timely manner.

8.5.3. The "being a surgeon" section of the careers site will be revised the committee are asked contribute as above.

## **8.6. Trauma and Orthopaedics SAC**

8.6.1. Mr Babu provided a tabled paper updating the committee on this. He drew their attention to the confirmation that SAS doctors can apply to ST3 posts as long as they fill the criteria of the person specification.

8.6.2. He also drew the committee's attention to the UK in Training Exam (UKITE) which may be extended to all SAS surgeons. UKITE is an online self assessment exam which could give immediate results and provide good practice before the actual FRCS exit examination using UK curriculum-based questions.

## **9. Any Other Business**

### **9.1. SAS Tutors**

9.1.1. Mrs Harris has circulated an article on this via email. It was agreed that this should be developed to include examples of real SAS tutors' roles and remit, particularly highlighting the breadth of these roles. SAS Associate deans should also be considered.

**ACTION:** Mrs Harris to develop the SAS Tutor article with input from the committee

### **9.2. CORESS (Confidential reporting system in surgery)**

9.2.1. Mr Hemadri has been invited to attend meetings of the board as an SAS representative. The committee supported this appointment and agreed that when Mr Hemadri steps down, his replacement should be nominated from within the committee.

9.2.2. Mr Hemadri further reported that he has started a Clinical Innovations Improvement course which is proving popular

### **9.3. GP Commissioning**

9.3.1. Mr Sinha suggested that the committee should consider SAS doctors' role in this. After discussion, it was agreed that he should monitor developments and raise this item as appropriate.

### **9.4. Films**

9.4.1. Mr Sinha noted that he has films of the Presidents of the College and the Academy addressing the national SAS conference held over summer. It was agreed that (assuming they give their permission), these should be added to College website.

**ACTION:** Mr Sinha to send films to Ms Wynn-Mackenzie to be uploaded to the website.

## **10. Dates of Next Meetings**

**10.1.** The next meetings will be held at **2pm on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011** and **10am on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011**.

*NB: after the meeting the 9<sup>th</sup> February meeting was moved to 11am*