

For clinical psychology:

Each district should establish a minimum one w.t.e. Principal Grade psychologist specialising in the care of the elderly.

There should be one w.t.e. such post for every 20,000 population aged over 65 in the catchment area.

There should be more funded training posts in clinical psychology.

Work with the elderly should be included as a core placement as part of the British Psychological Society course accreditation requirements.

An increase in the number of supervisors for work with the elderly needs to be encouraged.

Diploma requirements should include more assessments in relation to the elderly.

Academic input concerned with psychology and the elderly on clinical psychology training courses should be standardised.

Opportunities for 'updating' on developments in the field need to be created.

Joint/rotational basic grade posts to include the elderly should be encouraged.

Senior grade psychologists might be encouraged to supervise more than one specialty.

Posts of all grades should be available within each health district.

Conclusion

It is now well established that both psychiatry and clinical psychology have much to contribute in the field of old age. It is therefore important to ensure that the quality and quantity of this contribution are well known, and that every effort is made to attract people to the speciality.

The work of the Overseas Desk

Background

The Overseas Desk of the College was set up in March 1988, following discussion of the need for such a development at the Executive and Finance Committee in May 1987, and a description of what it might do was published in the *Bulletin* on February 1988. Since its inception the Working Group for Overseas Liaison has met regularly. Membership of this Working Group has been the Dean; Dr Fiona Caldicott, Sub-Dean; Miss Lynette Napper, Education Officer; and Miss Suzanna Goodwyn, Assistant Education Officer. This Working Group is answerable to the Executive and Finance Committee of the College, and its minutes go to the Education Committee; it is an integral part of the Education Department in the College.

Remit of the Overseas Desk

The Working Group for Overseas Liaison has concerned itself with the four main areas for which the Overseas Desk was established. These have been as follows:

- (i) **Overseas trainees** Over the last few months the Overseas Doctors' Training Scheme of the Royal College of Psychiatrists has been established.
- (ii) **Mutual recognition of psychiatric qualifications** Consideration has been given to qualifications in Europe, in other English-speaking countries, and in other countries.
- (iii) **Links with, and services for, members overseas** There is scope for considerable development. So far this item has been implemented by setting up Regional Meetings of the College.
- (iv) **Psychiatric training overseas** Members of the College resident in the British Isles have continued to make visits to countries overseas, especially those with traditional links with the Royal College. These visits have involved teaching, examining for local postgraduate examinations, and improving psychiatric educational facilities. The College has been asked to provide examiners in Singapore and Sri Lanka and has recently carried out an Approval visit to Hong Kong.

It is hoped that the College could be an agent for funding overseas trainees coming to the United Kingdom for specific areas of training, and also for facilitating teaching activities at the request of members overseas.

- (v) **Other matters of psychiatric concern** The College has an involvement in psychiatric practice in various other countries. However, only the four areas mentioned above are of relevance to the Overseas Desk.

Overseas Doctors' Training Scheme

The Royal College has instituted a training scheme in psychiatry for doctors from abroad. Many doctors have come to the United Kingdom and Ireland on their own initiative for further training in psychiatry, but, unfortunately they have sometimes obtained inappropriate jobs which have offered limited training or training with little relevance to the needs of their own countries. The College Scheme is intended to facilitate the training of postgraduates from overseas by placing well-selected candidates in good training posts, and ensuring that the training offered is of a high standard, providing appropriate preparation for work in their own country. This Scheme is not intended to be exclusive, and will not interfere with individual arrangements between consultants, training scheme organisers and overseas doctors. Nevertheless, doctors who apply to the College Scheme should not at the same time seek a post in the UK through other channels.

Two recent developments in the United Kingdom have expedited the need for, and advantages of, establishing an Overseas Doctors' Training Scheme. The new immigration rules in the United Kingdom came into force in April 1985, and this resulted in a limitation of postgraduate training in this country for overseas doctors to a maximum of four years provided that the candidate's progress is satisfactory. The second development is the implementation by the Department of Health of *Achieving a Balance: Plan for Action* in 1988. This limits the number of registrar posts in each Region in England and Wales, which can be filled by doctors seeking a future career in the United Kingdom, and thereby enables a certain number of posts within the National Health Service to be available for overseas doctors. Career (UK based) and visitor (overseas) registrars will receive training on an equal basis, and will be on the same training schemes. Senior house officer and registrar posts need not necessarily be advertised, nor subject to the normal advisory appointments committee if filled by overseas graduates, and so health authorities are able to agree contracts in advance of appointment. Somewhat similar arrangements pertain in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Overseas Doctors' Training Scheme is open to all applicants from abroad, with the exception of nationals of the European Economic Community whose junior doctors are eligible to apply for career posts on the same basis as UK graduates. The ODTS will operate under the arrangements for double sponsorship introduced by the General Medical Council. The application of each candidate must be supported by an overseas sponsor who will usually be a training scheme organiser or head of department of psychiatry in his or her own country. The role of overseas sponsor may also be undertaken by a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in the candidate's home country, or, in exceptional cases by a Member of the College in that country, who is known to Fellows and Members in the UK.

The overseas sponsor will provide a recommendation of the candidate, will act as referee for the candidate's character and ability, will make a statement recommending the candidate as suitable for further training in psychiatry in Britain, will vouch for the accuracy of the information given by the candidate, will give assurances of the candidate's knowledge of English and of the eligibility of the candidate for re-employment on returning to the home country. The role of the UK sponsor will be provided by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and it will also be the task of the College to identify a suitable training post in the National Health Service for the candidate, and to make arrangements for limited registration with the General Medical Council. It is intended that sponsorship by the College will be a guarantee of the candidate's calibre and, therefore, much importance is attached to the opinion of the overseas sponsor. The whole scheme depends totally on the vindication of mutual trust between the candidate, the overseas sponsor, the College and the receiving training scheme organiser. The Working Group liaises with the relevant authorities to obtain for each candidate Limited Registration with the General Medical Council, restricted exemption from the Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board Test (PLAB) and employment in a post in an approved scheme of training. By the end of January 1989, 48 requests for information had come from potential candidates for the ODTS, 20 definite applications had been received with the name of an overseas sponsor, and six candidates had received notice of provisional eligibility from the GMC. The first overseas doctor in the scheme was placed in February 1989 and there will certainly be more doctors in post by August 1989. The intention is that doctors on the ODTS will occupy salaried NHS training posts at registrar or senior house officer level on training schemes approved by the Royal College of Psychiatrists. On completion of training in the scheme a certificate of sponsored training will be issued by the College.

A detailed description of the ODTS has been produced with an application form, guidelines for training scheme organisers and for overseas sponsors. There is also an open letter to potential trainees in psychiatry overseas.

Regional Meetings of the Royal College of Psychiatrists

The Council of the Royal College of Psychiatrists has approved guidelines for holding overseas meetings, entitled 'Regional Meetings for Members and Fellows of the Royal College of Psychiatrists Overseas'. The first such meeting took place in Cairo from 10–12 March 1989. There is a provisional intimation of a Regional Meeting of the College to take place in Pakistan, possibly in 1990. Further Regional Meetings are under discussion.

The initiative for such meetings should come from a Member overseas with good local links in psychiatry. Such a local convenor will undertake the administrative arrangements with assistance and advice from the College. These meetings are intended primarily for Members and Fellows of the College in the host and neighbouring countries. Probably such Regional Meetings will take place alongside non-College psychiatric meetings but the College programme should be kept separate. One or more of the College Officers will be invited to the Regional Meetings, and the programme will be reviewed by the Programmes and Meetings Committee of the College.

In North America there has been for some time a 'chapter' of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. This comprises all Members and Fellows in North America. There have been occasional meetings of this group, taking place, for example, at the same time as meetings of the American Psychiatric Association.

Mutual recognition

The Overseas Desk has been making further enquiries of the details for mutual recognition in Europe. At the recent meeting of the College with the Department of Health enquiries were made concerning the implications of 1992 for postgraduate psychiatric training and exchange with Europe. The work of the Union Européenne des Médecins Spécialistes and particularly of its Monospecialist Committee in Psychiatry has been explored. Professor Sims and Dr Caldicott recently visited the German Society for Psychiatry and Nervous Diseases and discussed medical education and postgraduate training in psychiatry in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Contact has been made and there has been correspondence with the relevant postgraduate psychiatric organisations in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the USA.

The Overseas Desk has established a list of experts, based in the UK, for different parts of the world, who will be able to give us information to facilitate smooth operation of the Overseas Doctors' Training Scheme and other matters of concern. Overseas Members and Fellows have been informed by letter of the work of the Overseas Desk.

Comments and suggestions, requests for further information, and offers of expert advice would be welcome at the Overseas Desk. We wish to receive applications for the Overseas Doctors Training Scheme both from those in training in psychiatry overseas and from organisers of training schemes in the United Kingdom. For further information at the Royal College of Psychiatrists contact Suzanna Goodwyn, Assistant Education Officer.

Professor A. C. P. SIMS
Dean

London hotels

Members have requested information about hotel accommodation near the College. Within the immediate area, most hotels are either excessively expensive or of poor quality. However, members may apply to the Finance Officer for the names of two hotels providing adequate accommodation at a

reasonable price, and details of the BMA's London Hotels Priority Registration Services.

I would also be glad to receive members' comments on the suggested hotels and/or recommendations for alternatives.

W. D. Boyd
Treasurer

Election to the Fellowship 1990

The following Member was elected a Fellow of the College by the Court of Electors:

Professor Jiang Zuo Ning.