



# FACULTY OF PAIN MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Anaesthetists

## FPMTAC Response to Trainee Questions

*FPMTAC/003/October 2015*

On 9th October 2015 some pain medicine trainees met with the Faculty Training and Assessment Committee (FPMTAC). Below is a summary of the queries raised and the responses from FPMTAC.

All trainee comments naturally remain anonymous.

### **1 Exam**

*Trainees queried the relevance of the FPPMRCA exam as it does not lead to a Certificate of Completion of Training in Pain Medicine.*

FPMTAC advised the aim of the FPPMRCA exam was to raise both the standards of clinical care and also the credibility of Pain Medicine as a sub-specialty. Although at present it is not possible to achieve CCT in Pain Medicine this could change in the future and the FPPMRCA SOE exam would help support this change. FPMTAC advised that the exam questions were carefully designed to assess candidate's knowledge and feedback from previous candidates showed that the exam questions were fair and of a high standard. FPMTAC also highlighted that it would be a good asset when applying for consultant roles.

### **2 Certificates of Completion of Training in Pain Medicine**

*Trainees queries why a CCT did not exist in Pain Medicine.*

FPMTAC advised this issue relates to The Shape of Training Review and that at present the GMC has closed applications for further specialities. However, the exam in conjunction with a strong professional body means that in the future the case for a CCT in Pain Medicine will be a very strong one. As Pain Medicine is a sub-specialty of Anaesthesia it stands to reason that only anaesthetists at present can complete an APT year and eventually obtain FPPMRCA.

### **3 On-Call Commitments**

*Trainees expressed the on-going issue of on-call commitments impacting pain medicine training.*

FPMTAC recognised the continuing issue and advised of practical solutions from their experience which some trainees have been able to apply, although recognised these

would not be applicable to everyone. These solutions included trying to change night shifts for day shifts with other trainees, trying to have fixed on-call day commitment on a day where there may not be a lot of activity in the department and even trying to get the advanced pain trainee to become the rota master to help facilitate these types of changes.

FPMTAC reported that the August 2010 curriculum states: "Whilst it is recognised that a non pain medicine on call commitment is often undertaken during the period of advanced pain medicine training, it should not be more onerous than 1:8 to ensure that it does not detract from training; it is the responsibility of local supervisors to ensure that if it does interfere, time in training will have to be extended to ensure the competencies are achieved"; and suggested if ongoing issues are occurring then these should be raised with your LPMESs and if necessary they should be escalated through the Faculty. Evidence of the rota over a 3-6 month period should be produced to show it is not complaint with our curriculum and a reflective statement regarding how the rota impacted on your training should be made.

Some trainees felt that doing full time pain and being un-banded would have an impact on maintaining anaesthetic skills as well as financial implications and would ideally like to do day on-call shifts only.

#### **4 Requirements Regarding Specialist Services**

*Trainees requested that the Faculty publish the minimum number of sessions required in specialist sessions such as paediatric pain and spinal cord stimulators.*

FPMTAC advised the Faculty would not outline the minimum number of sessions required as each trainee's experience would vary depending on their region and hospital rotation. Trainees were encouraged to take opportunities to visit other centres if necessary to gain the appropriate level of experience and a good understanding of the subject.

#### **5 Detailed Information Regarding Training Posts**

*Trainees requested further information about training posts nationwide.*

FPMTAC advised as part of the quality assurance procedures being developed by the Faculty, information about training posts available across the UK will become available soon. This may include information such as on-call commitments, the services offered, the size of the department etc which will allow trainees to make informed choices.

#### **6 Trainee Survey**

FPMTAC reported there had been a lack of responses for the recent trainee survey in certain regions and urged trainees to complete the survey. They advised the Faculty

does not have access to the GMC survey and therefore is reliant on trainees responding to the Faculty survey in order to improve training.

## **7 FPMRCA Exam Course**

*FPMTAC advised the next FPMRCA exam tutorials would be taking place on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016 and strongly encouraged trainees to attend. The day will include tutorials, a lecture in Psychology of Pain and Psychological Interventions, as well as group workshops and VIVA practice.*