

Joint Planning Advisory Committee

Report of Meeting on 14 October 1986

The Joint Planning Advisory Committee (JPAC) selected Mental Illness (Adult) for early review as it appeared to the Central Manpower Committee that there were too many senior registrars completing training to fill expected consultant vacancies even allowing for a modest expansion in the grade. The Committee's calculations were based on the assumption that three years was the recommended period of higher professional training.

The College set up a joint working party with the Joint Committee on Higher Psychiatric Training (JCHPT) to prepare a report for JPAC.* In its response to JPAC the College stated that the original recommendations on length of training in the Senior Registrar grade had been for four years as the desirable period. Three years were a current minimum, because of the shortage of senior registrars to satisfy the demand for consultant posts. The College and JCHPT would want the length of training to return to four years as soon as possible. This was agreed, and on this basis it became clear that there were too few rather than too many senior registrars seeking consultant posts each year. The report also showed that consultant expansion was greater than the Department of Health had predicted and with the increasing demand for services for the elderly mentally ill and in the dependence/addiction field there was an urgent need for trained specialists.

The College representatives at the October meeting with JPAC were Dr Fiona Caldicott and Professor David Goldberg (who represented the President). They were given an interested and sympathetic hearing and there was support from various members of the Committee for the notion

**The committee consisted of President (Chairman), Professor R. H. S. Mindham (JCHPT), Professor D. Goldberg (JCHPT), Dr Fiona Caldicott (Chairman, College Manpower Committee), Dr J. L. T. Birley (Dean) and Dr Stella Clark (CTC).*

that 'expert advice' from the College about the length of training at senior registrar level should be accepted. It was agreed that approximately 40 new senior registrar posts in Mental Illness (Adult) should be established to provide for likely expansion and the filling of a backlog of vacant consultant posts. There was some concern that there were not sufficient well trained registrars to fill the expanded establishment of senior registrars but the College representatives were able to refute this. In addition to this expansion there will be a redistribution of Senior Registrar posts according to the JPAC formula. The new posts should generally be in the deprived regions and in posts in the Psychiatry of Old Age and the Dependencies (Alcohol and Drug Abuse).

Some anxiety was expressed about Regions' ability to provide the necessary funding for their increased establishment. It was thought that some funding would come from the conversion of the excess of registrar posts to senior registrar posts, and as much of the conversion would be for a limited period until consultant vacancies were filled, and new consultant posts established, the funding would be made available. The Joint Planning Advisory Committee met again in November to review its decisions but it is unlikely that Regions will learn about their quota of posts until early in 1987.

The Joint Planning Advisory Committee is preparing to review the number of Senior Registrar posts in the specialties of Child Psychiatry and Psychotherapy next year, followed by Forensic Psychiatry and Mental Handicap in 1988. Copies of the submission from the joint working party between the College and the JCHPT to the Joint Planning Advisory Committee are available from the College.

THOMAS BEWLEY
Chairman

December 1986 *Joint RCPsych/JCHPT Working Party*

Working with Torture Victims in Uganda

The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture is looking for a psychiatrist with a general medical background to work with an expatriate colleague (probably a psychiatric social worker) to establish a clinical service for former victims of torture in Uganda. The post will be for one year (from a date to be negotiated) and will be based in the Makereri University Department of Psychiatry, at Mulago Hospital, Kampala. Apart from the clinical component, the job will also involve safari work, the training of local staff and research.

This post would suit a self-reliant psychiatrist at senior registrar level who enjoys teaching and research. It is assumed that the successful candidate will be granted a period of unpaid leave in order to contribute to this pioneering, humanitarian programme. For further information please write as soon as possible to: The Director, Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, National Temperance Hospital, 110/114 Hampstead Road, London NW1 2LT or telephone 01 388 8204.