

19/05/2006

Dear Members

**We are writing to consult you about proposed changes to psychiatric training which will be discussed at the June meeting of Council.**

For some years there has been discussion across the College about the number of Certificates of Completion of Training (CCTs) (formerly CCSTs) which should be available to trainees in psychiatry. With the rapid changes taking place in medical education at the moment it seems timely for the Dean and myself to consult you, the Members and Fellows of our College.

Some background may be helpful. In 2001 work commenced on a learning outcomes based curriculum for the psychiatric CCSTs. This revealed that, whereas the knowledge base they require differs, the great majority of skills trainees acquire for the various psychiatric specialties are generic and common to them all; all psychiatry CCT holders are first and foremost psychiatrists. That work formed the basis of the revised curriculum prepared for and recently approved by the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB). Over the years the College has had various discussions with PMETB and its predecessor, the Specialist Training Authority (the STA) about the possibility of both expanding and reducing the number of CCTs available. In 1997 the College applied for the recognition of Substance Misuse Psychiatry as a specialty with its own CCT. This application was unsuccessful. Subsequently there was widespread support amongst College members for reducing the number of recognised specialities to two from the existing six. Although the College has received various messages over time from PMETB and the STA we now understand that it is possible to alter the number of CCTs which may be awarded: we are now considering reducing the number of psychiatric CCTs to one or two from the current six.

A move to two CCTs would require amendment to UK legislation and a move to one CCT would require amendments to UK and European legislation. To amend both sets of legislation would probably take many years. With the entry into Unified Training (UTG) starting on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007 now is the right time to look at this as it would allow us to set mechanisms in place for the UTG trainees so that they will know what CCT they are working towards.

The College would be able to seek approval from PMETB for additional sub-specialist curricula in more areas than our current six CCT specialties which would be retrained as accredited specialisms. This would enable most if not all trainees to acquire accredited specialist skills alongside their core training and would increase the flexibility of training as well as bringing our CCT structure more into line with that elsewhere in Europe.

We would like you to read the option appraisal available on the College website (<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/training/postgraduateeducation.aspx>) and then if you have a strong preference for one or two CCTs or for the status quo, please write to us at [khillman@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:khillman@rcpsych.ac.uk) with your reasons.

Best wishes,

Professor Sheila Hollins  
President

Professor Dinesh Bhugra  
Dean

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