

# College guidance on considering requests for member surveys



## Purpose of paper

To set out the process for considering requests by faculties, committees, individuals or external organisations for undertaking a survey of College members.

## Background and rationale

The College recognises that surveys have a valuable role in understanding the views of members to inform and support its work. These can be relatively comprehensive or limited in scope, and tend to be either:

- **Member wide** – the largest type of survey disseminated to every member and generally on high profile/ broad topic (e.g. the Mental Health Act Review); or
- **Faculty wide** – limited to one or a combination of faculties on a speciality specific issue (e.g. the 2017 General Adult Faculty survey on acute care).

The College is also frequently approached by external organisations looking to circulate a survey to members to support their work.

Some negative comments about the frequency of surveys have been received and the response rates are generally low. There have also been times when one part of the College has proposed a survey without being aware that another part of the College is working on the same topic.

## Implementing a process for approving surveys

It is important that surveys are used appropriately to ensure:

- they support and reflect the College's strategic objectives
- they are of a high quality and are fit for purpose
- that members are not contacted too frequently or in an uncoordinated way (which would affect participation rates).

To do so, the following process is used by the College to consider requests to undertake surveys.

- Anyone looking to undertake a survey will need to provide the following information:
  - The purpose of the survey and how it will be used
  - When it would be circulated and to whom
  - How it supports the College's objectives and priorities.
- This information should be passed to the College's Policy and Standards Manager who will oversee the approval process and will have responsibility for:
  - Seeking input from relevant staff on the appropriateness, quality and value of the proposed survey; and
  - Monitoring the number of proposed, planned and active surveys to ensure they are undertaken in a coordinated way.
- The Policy and Standards Manager will subsequently liaise with the College Registrar to seek approval for the survey, who will determine whether it can be signed off or needs a view from the other College Officers.
- When the College is asked to consider circulating a survey developed by an external organisation, the request should be forwarded to the Policy and Standards Manager who will liaise with relevant staff and faculties/committees on the appropriateness, quality and value of the proposed survey before liaising with the College Registrar.