Another Step Forward

Welcome to Primary Care Educator News! We hope this new look newsletter, which will be distributed with Education for Primary Care, will develop to give you news, ideas and comment that will help you in your role in education. Members of the three organisations will also receive a copy by email.

The newsletter is a significant development in its own right and we are grateful to Radcliffe Publishing for providing the support and expertise to make it possible. Perhaps more significant is the close working and planning between NAPCE, UKAPD and UKCEA that has made this possible. Each organisation has a history of successfully supporting and leading different groups of educators and we hope this will not change as support needs to be tailored to the needs of the members. However, by working closely together, we hope to develop resources that are needed by educators on the ground.

High quality training and courses are available for educators in Deaneries and Primary Care Organisations, as well as provided by the commercial sector. We plan to explore areas where needs are not always addressed and develop workshops, conferences and resources that our members need. A national programme of training for new appraisers is the first to launch in October, building on the successful provision by NAPCE of training in PCTs and Deaneries. This should make training more accessible to individuals and small organisations. Elsewhere in the newsletter are details of courses to start early in 2010 and we hope that further skills and support workshops will be available for all educators, whether GP trainers, appraisers, PCT educators or Deanery based educators. We hope also that by providing these events we will contribute to the development of higher standards for education of educators. If you want to be involved in these initiatives then please do get in touch.

Communication is important and in the 21st century websites are key. When you receive this newsletter, the new, jointly funded and commissioned, website will be launching and will enable members of UKCEA, NAPCE and UKAPD to access information more easily and more reliably. In time we hope that courses will be booked online and the resources available for download increase. Each organisation will maintain its own presence but you will see the websites work (like the organisations!) closely together. Find us at www.ukapd.org, www.napce.net and www.ukcea.net.

Communication, or at least effective communication, is two way. The newsletter and the website will need to be read and visited(!) if they are to achieve anything and the content will have to be worth reading. That is where you come in and we hope you will be actively involved and see the benefit in sharing your ideas and news with others with the same interests.

Changes in healthcare provision leading to requirements for new skills, new developments in professional training and the (imminent) introduction of revalidation will make new demands on educators and appraisers. Existing work patterns will change (without losing the wisdom gained over years in the process) and it is important that best practice is shared and educators supported through these changes. We hope that this newsletter can symbolise the development of effective leadership and support for primary care educators and that you will want to be involved in the new initiatives planned and underway. We look forward to working with you and learning from you.

Dr Nick Lyons
Chairman NAPCE
UKCEA NEWS

UKCEA is the craft organisation of the UK’s GP associate advisers, directors and deans providing educational support for its members and their constituents. The highlight of the UKCEA year is the annual residential conference which rotates around the UK Deaneries, this year hosted by the North Western Deanery in Manchester.

UKCEA has been particularly successful in gauging the educational needs of its members and has run major conferences as a result. Its quality assurance panel accredits distance-based learning activities and the organisation has a skills directory enabling members to work jointly on topics of common interest. It runs a mentorship programme for all new associates, and offers bursaries of up to £5000 to assist members in carrying out original research. UKCEA has championed the cause of GP trainers and GP tutors particularly when they have felt isolated and forgotten.

Over the last three years UKCEA has been working closely with NAPCE and UKAPD carrying out joint ventures and discussing the possibility of forming one umbrella organisation with appropriate close affiliation. It shares a website and newsletter with NAPCE but plans are underway for a new website covering all three organisations to be launched later this autumn. UKCEA, NAPCE and UKAPD working together now represent over 800 educators; the collaboration is well placed to serve the educational and development needs of doctors throughout their training and working lives.

Dr K N Kini
Chair of UKCEA

NAPCE NEWS

NAPCE has always seen appraisal as a key educational activity. We have been closely involved in the development of quality standards for appraisal and are now working with the NHS Revalidation Support Team to inform development of the training of appraisers. The NAPCE Appraisal conference is now in its 7th year and is recognised as a key national event.

Recently we have worked with PCTs and Deaneries to develop appraisal training courses, aiming to raise standards for training and inform best practice. Two packages have been developed:

New Appraiser Skills Training focuses on ensuring delegates understand the purpose of appraisal and begin to acquire skills needed to become an appraiser. Personal feedback is given, building on assessment of individual skills. Appraiser Skills Development courses provide experienced appraisers with an opportunity to benchmark their skills against a competency framework and to focus their development as appraisers. NAPCE material can be licensed for use in organisations where skills exist to deliver it. We are now launching national appraiser training events and these will enable organisations who want to train small numbers of appraisers to do so in a cost effective manner.

If you have the time and the skills and would like to be trained as a facilitator for these events then please feel free to contact NAPCE and discuss whether this is for you. Please direct enquiries to jane@napce.net.

Dr N Lyons
Chair of NAPCE

UKAPD NEWS

At our recent AGM in June our outgoing Chairman Roger Burns handed me, the incoming Chairman, a headband made up of the colours of de Bono’s thinking hats.

GP Training and beyond is changing as outlined elsewhere in the Journal and this newsletter. Expansion of GP Training numbers with increased duration of training has implications for the traditional day-release programmes and training practice attachments. The role of the programme director (PD) is diversely evolving across Deaneries. Colleagues have been exploring other models of delivering GP Training such as locality-based programmes, virtual learning environments such as Moodle, e-GP etc.

Despite these changes we do need to preserve our role as primary care educationalists and our close relationship with learners and trainers where our core strengths and rewards reside. Many of you know that Ramesh Mehay is producing a multi-authored GP Educator’s Handbook which will facilitate our supportive and educationalist roles as PDs. He has been overwhelmed by the offers and quality of authorship and the final product looks to be amazing.

As Nick Lyons writes elsewhere in this newsletter we have continued to forge closer links with NAPCE and UKCEA which does strengthen our ability to influence change by ensuring our representations at ‘nodal points of influence’. I am excited about the future, but appreciate that we will need de Bono’s hats and his lateral constructive thinking language of ‘PO’ to convert any perceived threats to opportunities and weaknesses to strengths.


Dr P Chahal
Chair of the UKAPD

(Please also consider writing for this newsletter. Contact details at end of newsletter)
The UKCEA Workforce Surveys

Since 2005 UKCEA has undertaken regular surveys of the numbers of primary care educators employed in Deaneries in the United Kingdom. The surveys report on trends in numbers and types of educators employed within Deaneries and include confidential feedback from new employees and those who have recently left Deanery employment. As a non-political umbrella body with no negotiating ability UKCEA is in a good position to collate workforce information. The original aims of UKCEA in undertaking these reports were:

- To inform the Department of Health, the BMA and other interested parties about the overall numbers and pay bands of deputy and associate directors, course organisers, tutors and other non-medically qualified primary care educators in Deanery employment
- To provide information about the trends in the numbers of these workers along with information about trainer numbers.
- To inform Deaneries about new roles developing nationally in other Deaneries
- To provide information about vacancies
- To allow employees leaving Deanery employment to feedback anonymously their reasons for their leaving
- To monitor the satisfaction of new employees with the UKCEA mentoring scheme and the conditions of their employment in Deaneries.

Changes in the nature of primary care medical education have meant that the composition of the workforce has been changing rapidly. As the only UK-wide survey of Deanery educators, UKCEA believes the results are an important source of information about the current state of primary care education.

The most recent survey conducted in the spring of 2009 is the fifth report to be produced. In the near future UKCEA hopes to publish a commentary on the findings of the surveys to date in Education for Primary Care, but here are the headlines from the survey this year:

- There appears to have been an overall growth in the number of primary care medical educators employed in Deaneries
- This growth appears to have occurred in both educators involved in continuing professional development and those involved in specialty training
- The numbers of associate directors appear to have increased significantly since the last survey in 2007
- Over the last few years numbers of programme directors have increased markedly while posts designated as course organisers have reduced
- The number of appraisers employed in Wales and Northern Ireland continues to grow
- Medical staff employed in Deaneries continue to be generally happy with their employment. However there is continued concern about reduced remuneration compared to clinical activity and inadequate human resource and infrastructure support
- The survey demonstrates an expansion in the numbers of doctors in specialty training for general practice; the number of active trainers continues to grow across the UK.

In summary therefore Deaneries have successfully expanded training capacity to enable increased numbers of doctors to undertake specialty training for general practice in the UK. This has occurred at the same time as Foundation training in general practice has been widely introduced, thus further expanding teaching capacity in primary care. There appears to be no shortfall in the supply of trainers or primary care medical educators across the UK as a whole. Deaneries have clearly responded admirably to the requirements of Foundation, specialty training and CPD despite the difficult times the NHS is entering; UKCEA is grateful to all deans, directors and their staff for their assistance in compiling the survey.

Dr John Howard
UKCEA Executive Member

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

YOU AND THE NEWSLETTER

If you are reading this newsletter, then it is yours! If you are involved in primary care education in any way then we want to hear from you and include your news and your ideas in the newsletter. You can tell readers what you are doing, what you think they should be doing or, if you want to know how to do something, then it is a good place to ask! We don’t want it to be too serious all the time so some light hearted comments would be welcome... who knows you might even want a regular column!

BURSARIES

UKCEA, NAPCE and UKAPD are working to further develop the existing bursaries. These aim to develop thinking in targeted areas, but also to give individuals the opportunity to look in more detail at areas of education that interest them. If you would like more details then please contact us!

EDUCATORS HANDBOOK

UKAPD are leading the development of a handbook for educators. This important piece of work should be useful for all of us and as this develops more details will be published in the newsletter.
Would you like to develop your skills as an educator?

From early in 2010 NAPCE, UKAPD and UKCEA will be working together to offer a developing menu of workshops for educators in primary care. Three separate workshops will be available in the first stage, building on the success of appraisal training offered by NAPCE.

Topics available include:

1. Developing educational practice
2. Developing leadership for educators
3. Enhancing project delivery for educators

These sessions are aimed at those already working as PCT educators, tutors, trainers and undergraduate teachers. They will also be helpful to those who are planning to start teaching.

The sessions will be run in venues in several parts of the country. So watch for further details in the newsletter and prepare to join us for some days which will change the way you teach. You will be able to book for separate days or for all three.

Dr Richard Mann and Dr Honor Merriman
Members of NAPCE