Dear Colleague,

Please see the communication below from the RCGP Chief Examiner in regards to a forthcoming change to the MRCGP AKT.

Kind regards,

Pippa

Communication to all GP Directors from the Chief Examiner, RCGP

Dear Colleague

I am writing to let you know about a forthcoming change to delivery of the MRCGP Applied Knowledge Test which will come into effect for the next examination scheduled for 29 October 2014, and hope that you will be able to disseminate this communication widely within your deanery.

The following statement, which will be available on the RCGP website shortly, explains the rationale for the change in the duration of the AKT from 3 hours to 3 hours and 10 minutes. We have undertaken an equality impact assessment and this has been accepted by the GMC who are happy for this change to be implemented with immediate effect. You will also see that we will also be making an on-screen calculator available for all candidates.

As part of our ongoing strategy to address the differential pass rates between UK graduates and International Medical Graduates in the MRCGP, we commissioned an independent review of the AKT and CSA components by the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER). Professor John Norcini, who conducted the review, suggested that we should consider increasing the amount of time candidates have available to complete the AKT. Although there is no evidence that time constraints in the AKT contribute in any way to the differential pass rates, they might pose more of a challenge for those candidates who are less proficient in the English language.

The GMC has given us permission to increase the duration of the AKT by 10 minutes on these grounds and we intend to implement this change from the next sitting of the AKT in October 2014.

In addition to the extra time, an on-screen calculator will be made available. This is being provided at the request of candidates, but any calculation within the AKT will require only simple basic arithmetic, and most candidates will not need to use the calculator.

The additional time provided for the AKT will not change the standard required to achieve a pass in the AKT. Candidates who require additional time as a result of a declared disability will have this calculated on the basis of the new AKT duration.

Could I also take this opportunity to issue an invitation to trainers in your deanery who you think might benefit from observing the CSA examination at first hand? As you will know we’ll be holding examinations on a monthly basis with effect from October 2014 until May 2015 so there should be sufficient capacity to accommodate those who might be interested. All enquiries in this regard should be addressed to James Clark in the Examinations Department: james.clark@rcgp.org.uk.

With many thanks and best wishes

Dr Pauline Foreman
Chief Examiner