

Dr Lance Sandle  
Registrar

## International Committee

A meeting of the **International Committee** was held on **Wednesday 18 May 2022** at **10:30 am (GMT)** via Zoom.

The meeting was chaired by **Professor Ismail Matalaka, Clinical Director of International Activities.**

<b>Present:</b>	Professor Ismail Matalaka	Clinical Director of International Activities
	Professor Angharad Davies	Vice President for Learning
	Professor Lai-Meng Looi	International Regional Advisor for the Western Pacific Region
	Dr Maysa Al-Hussaini	International Regional Advisor for the Middle East & North Africa
	Dr Naresh Kikkeri	International Regional Advisor for Americas
	Dr Kedar Deodhar	International Regional Advisor for South East Asia
	Dr Ranganathan Iyer	Associate International Regional Advisor for South East Asia
	Dr Hebah Ali	Clinical Director of Examinations
	Dr Anan Ghazy	International Education Lead – ITSS Histopathology
		International Education Lead – the Sponsorship Scheme
<b>In attendance:</b>	Dr Wale Atoyebi	International Education Lead – ITSS Microbiology
	Professor John Obafunwa	International Education Lead – MTI scheme
		Clinical Lead for the ARISE project
	Dr Omar Layth Qassid	International Regional Advisor for Sub-Saharan Africa
		Associate International Regional Advisor for the Middle East & North Africa
<b>IC Apologies:</b>	Professor Nicki Cohen	Clinical Director of Training and Assessment
	Dr Sanjv Manek	Clinical Director of Examinations
	Dr Monica Terlizzo	International Regional Advisor for Europe

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were duly noted.

### ITEM NO. 1 - FEEDBACK FROM THE DIASPORA GROUPS

---

Feedback was received from the diaspora groups about their activities, including their challenges and opportunities, as well as their upcoming plans.

### ITEM NO. 2 – CLINICAL DIRECTOR UPDATES

---

There were no declarations of interest declared.

The minutes were approved as an accurate recording of the meeting held on the 21 November 2021.

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Professor Ismail Matalaka provided a summary of his activities undertaken since the IC meeting on Wednesday 9<sup>TH</sup> November 2021. These activities included the following:

1. Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons Faculty of Laboratory Medicine through a funded opportunity provided by Tropical Health and Education Trust (THET) has enabled the development of twenty-four video lectures, in a move to strengthen their four main curricula (chemical pathology, haematology, histopathology, and medical microbiology).
2. Planning for International Pathology Day 2022, taking place on Tuesday 1 November, earlier than the official day of celebration happening on Wednesday 9 November, is proceeding to shape a programme around the theme “adapting laboratory medicine to global developments and challenges” in honour of the College’s 60th Anniversary.
3. Managing communications and administration facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the College and the West African College of Physicians (WACP) in April.
4. Resuming official activities on the ARISE sickle cell project commenced on the 1 February this year. Plans are in motion to host secondees, primarily from Nigeria again from this summer.
5. A series of six virtual lectures for a multi-disciplinary audience on antimicrobial resistance and antimicrobial stewardship. They are being run in collaboration with the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria (NPMCN) and colleagues from NHS Wales.
6. Supporting the Scientific Conference of Kurdistan Society of Pathology, the International Regional Advisor for the MENA region represented the College by giving two in-person talks and delivering an address in the opening ceremony. Additionally, the event was co-badged with the College logo, and CPD accredited by the Professionalism Directorate.
7. Applying to the BMA Information Fund in September 2021, to receive up to £2,000 worth of medical books and learning materials for healthcare professionals in Myanmar to assist with their continued professional development (CPD), brought news in January that our application had been successful.
8. Supporting Medlab Middle East, three College Fellows delivered in-person talks on behalf of the College this January.
9. Hosting a virtual event in collaboration with Mohammed Bin Rashid University (MBRU) one of our MoU partners, welcome Fellows who passed their FRCPath Part 2 histopathology exam in Dubai and Egypt last autumn, as well provide a virtual update for members in the MENA region.
10. In February, the International team we were advised that the Sri Lankan government experienced issues paying the monthly stipends of their centrally funded Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM) MTI applicants due to the Sri Lankan economy being severely impacted by the ongoing pandemic. As a result, the treasury decided to limit foreign bank transfers. PGIM are responsible for all Sri Lankan MTI salaries, The issue was extremely concerning as it would leave Sri Lankan trainees in the UK in a difficult position as they are not entitled to any public funding; the funding provided by the Sri Lankan government is granted to cover accommodation (rent), food, transport, and basic needs in the UK. Without the funding they were unable to cover the items above. This issue has now been resolved and our Country Advisor has connected us to the Postgraduate Dean in Sri Lanka at PGIM should any further issues arise. The PGIM are the only institute in Sri Lanka responsible for the specialist training of doctors.
11. Following the successful pilot of IPS in January this year, the second IPS was run in South Africa on the 11th and 12th of November. Several highly skilled pathologists were secured covering all regions in South Africa to present to a well-attended audience. Presentations covered the majority of subspecialties in Pathology including a very engaging talk on Forensic Pathology in South Africa.
12. IPS was held in South-East Asia on the 7 May 2022. The event was held over 1 day and included talks across all the subspecialties in pathology and will discuss how rewarding a career in pathology is. This event is being organised by our International Regional Advisors Dr Kedar Deodar and Dr Ranganathan Iyer and the International department. India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Myanmar students and interns have all attended the event.

13. The College continues to discuss and distribute information on our refugee scheme. The International Education Officer has met with some of the other College's launching various schemes for refugees and hopes to hold an information webinar detailing the benefits of joining our scheme, encouraging refugee pathologists to join the College scheme and participate in our events.
14. A humanitarian resources page has been developed to support all countries affected by war as well as a page dedicated to Ukrainian pathologists both in Ukraine and those trying to flee Ukraine. These pages will also link to information about the College's Refugee Scheme which was launched last September. Resources include charities that can provide shelter in the UK, guidance for working and living in the UK and links to organisations that are able help doctors register with the GMC via PLAB. The international team are also in contact with the College's Country Advisors for Ukraine, Dr Olga Wise, and Dr Mark Howard, and together we are exploring how the College can provide further support.

### ITEM NO. 3 – REPORTS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL ADVISORS

---

Reports were received from the International Regional Advisors as follows:

#### (a) Americas

##### **Summary of activities undertaken taken during this period**

- Nothing significant to report

##### **Emerging issues, opportunities & trends**

- Artificial intelligence and its applications in all areas of morphological pathology – implications on training, clinical practice, and work force development.
- Promotion of leadership and expertise in genomic pathology and embedding them in conventional pathology arena.
- Training opportunities to pathology trainees in clinical and translational research areas beyond borders.

##### **Future Priorities and Objectives**

- Second tele-meeting of Fellows in the region of Americas
- Plan meetings during upcoming major national/ international meetings

#### (b) The Middle East & North Africa (MENA)

- Dr Farima Al-Hashimi was elected as our country advisor in Bahrain but she never got any confirmation from the college.
- Few of our country advisors in the MENA region seem to work in isolation from us (myself and Maysa); and we seem to know their activities only during the IC meetings. We aim to work as a one strong team to make sure that the whole area receive equal opportunities and provide feedback to the college.
- We need a college representative to cover the West MENA region; i.e. Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania. I have tried to approach doctors from Iran but no one showed a genuine interest.

#### (c) South-East Asia (SEA)

##### **Summary of activities undertaken taken during this period**

- Technician (MLSO) training programme, held on 11,12th Nov 2021 (online)
- Included Histopathology, Cytology, Hematology, Microbiology and Serology sample processing and quality control issues. This was attended by about 330 delegates.
- International Pathology School (IPS) programme for undergraduate medical students, held on 7th Mat 2022 (included short lectures on Hematology, Histopathology, cytology, Metabolic Pathology,



Microbiology, Transfusion Medicine and Molecular Pathology). Dr Matalka and Dr Davies gave their comments at the start of the programme. This was attended by about 120 medical students.

#### **Emerging issues, opportunities and trends**

- To do Country advisors' meeting (SE Asia)
- Can participate in educational programmes for trainees (personally; and also draw attention to the online PG training programme run by some of our colleagues- Dr Borges and Dr Gujral (India))
- The FRCPath examination dates and attendance issues are getting addressed (feedback from two Indian Pathologists)

#### **Priorities for the next period and upcoming activities**

- Country advisors' meeting
- CME on Obstetric infections: Tentative plan Oct, Nov 2022

#### **(d) Sub Saharan Africa (SSA)**

##### **Summary of activities undertaken taken during this period**

- I had discussions with the President of the West African College of Physicians and to a limited extent the Chairman of the Faculty of Laboratory Medicine, with respect to taking advantage of the interest of the RCPATH in the sub-region.
- I had some discussions with the colleagues in Ghana about the activities and intentions of the RCPATH, and particularly with respect to assistance with the training curriculum.
- I had discussions with colleagues (Key members of the Executive) in the young College of Pathologists of East, Central and Southern Africa (COPECSA). I have set up a WhatsApp Group with them and I hope that developments will be communicated shortly to the RCPATH.
- Finally, there has been an on-going interaction with the Country Advisor for Nigeria, particularly involving the planned series of AMR Lectures and other coming activities.

##### **Emerging issues, opportunities and trends**

- The request for a Part 1 FRCPath Centre for Nigeria is still hopefully on the table. That same request has come up in my recent discussions with colleagues in COPECSA. I pray that the RCPATH will give it a speedy consideration. [It was confirmed that FRCPath Part 1 examinations were now being delivered online permanently.]

##### **Priorities for the next period and upcoming activities**

- Possibility of an MOU with COPECSA.
- Replication of the Curriculum initiative with the Ghana College of Surgeons and Physicians, with COPECSA.
- Follow-up on the LabSkills Initiative with COPECSA.

#### **(e) Western Pacific (Inc. Australasia)**

##### **Summary of activities undertaken taken during this period**

- Malaysian Master of Pathology examinations (hybrid-mode) in May 2022 (currently on-going)
- Malaysian National Pathology Curriculum targets completion in Nov 2022
  - Parallel pathways to accommodate training towards FRCPath and FRCPA being incorporated
- Malaysian Medical Council mandated standards for entry into National Specialist Register
  - To be finalized this year



### **Emerging issues, opportunities and trends**

- Almost the whole region is easing out of Covid-19 Pandemic
  - Opening of businesses, schools, travel, tourism, domestic and international borders
  - Quarantine procedures & SOPs easing
  - Masks and physical distancing only indoors
- Most pathology conferences and MDTs still prefer virtual or hybrid mode (becoming new normal)

### **Priorities for the next period and upcoming activities**

- Capacity-Building in Myanmar
  - Engagements with Myanmar uncertain due to political situation
- Strengthen parallel training in Malaysia towards FRCPath
  - Developments in National Pathology Curriculum and National Specialist Register will encourage more
  - FRCPath trainees in Malaysia
- Easing of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions
  - More involvement of International Members in RCPPath initiatives

## **ITEM NO. 4 – INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT REPORT**

---

A summary and review of the College's international work and achievements, as well as key updates on curricula and the College's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the period November 2021 – May 2022 was provided. This included updates on:

### **International Education Update**

- International Pathology School
- MTI
- Sponsorship
- International Trainee Support Scheme
- RCPPath Refugee Initiative
- Humanitarian support

### **International Projects**

- ARISE
- Ghana College of Physicians and surgeons & the Tropical Health Education Trust (THET) – Ghana Health workforce partnership
- Antimicrobial resistance and antimicrobial stewardship training
- International Pathology Day
- Talks have recently taken place between the College and Arab Board of Health Specialisations in a move towards renewing the expired memorandum of understanding.
- A memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the College and the West African College of Physicians (WACP) has been approved by College Council.
- An application made to the BMA Information Fund last year, to receive up to £2,000 worth of medical books and learning materials for healthcare professionals in Myanmar to assist with their continued professional development (CPD) was announced successful in January.

### **General College updates**

- The College's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations
- Updated curricula
- CESR information

#### **ITEM NO. 5 – ANY OTHER BUSINES**

---

- Professor Matalka reported that Tanna Hawkins would be leaving the College shortly to take up another job. The committee wished Tanna well and thanked her for all of her hard work.

#### **ITEM NO. 6 – MEETINGS/ EVENTS SCHEDULE**

---

The Committee noted the following schedule of meetings:

Date	Activity
3 November 2022	Diaspora Meeting & International Committee
1 November 2022	International Pathology Day

#### **MEETING CLOSE**

---