This month marks the 40th anniversary of the first intake of medical students at the University of Southampton, and whilst we celebrate our past achievements, we are also looking forward to the opportunities of the future.

There have been huge changes in both the NHS and University over the last 18 months. These changes are about working more efficiently and enhancing quality.

The shift in higher education funding from a central grant to student fees will mean a significant increase in student expectations. Medicine is still a very popular choice, and this year we have had 4,050 applications for our 246 available places, an increase of 14% on the previous year. For the BM5 programme, the minimum A Level requirement is AAA, but there will be increased competition for the best students in years to come, and we must continue to innovate to ensure that Southampton remains a first choice medical school.

The University’s educational strategy is to ensure that students have a flexible, personalised, high quality experience that enhances their employability. The BM programme teams have started to explore how we can renew the medical curriculum, and ensure that those graduating in 10 years’ time will have the appropriate skills, attributes and professionalism. The BM4, 5 and 6 programmes will be reviewed and revalidated, a process that will be completed in 2013.

We have also entered into a partnership with health provider Gesundheit Nordhessen Holding (GNH) in Kassel, Germany, to develop a Bachelor of Medicine (European) programme. The aim is to set up an innovative European medical programme accredited by the GMC that allows students to develop a European perspective on medicine while meeting the learning outcomes of the GMC’s guidance document for medical education, “Tomorrow’s Doctors.” Twenty-four students from Germany will spend their first two years in Southampton, and return to Germany for most of their clinical attachments and their Foundation programme.

In the postgraduate sphere, we are working with the Faculty of Health Sciences, which provides a successful Masters in Advanced Clinical Practice. This is a flexible, student-centred programme open to all registered healthcare professionals and designed to enable experienced practitioners advance their knowledge, skills and competence. We can strengthen our attractiveness to students by sharing modules and marketing them together.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Susan Ponsford from the School of Law as our new Faculty Education Manager. Susan will lead the student administrative team. The new functional teams are led by Alison Stanton (Admissions), Sally Rushworth (Assessment), Lisa Porges (Student Administration), Frances Nyland (Placements and QA), and Kerri Gardiner (Graduate School). All posts are now filled and the teams are working well. I wish you all success in your new roles.

There are many changes and it is an exciting time for the new Faculty of Medicine. Thank you all for your hard work and support.

Chris Stephens
New MEDUSA module on Student Assistantships

A new eLearning module is now available for clinical teachers engaged in the recently launched Final Year Student Assistantship. This is the latest addition to our staff development website MEDUSA (Medical Education Development Unit Staff Development Access – www.southampton.ac.uk/medusa).

The module on the Student Assistantship starts by inviting you to articulate precisely what you hope to learn. A thought-provoking video provides insights into the preparedness of Foundation doctors as they emerge from medical school, and helps you develop and understand your own perspective. You will learn about the cognitive apprenticeship, a very useful framework for teaching students in the workplace setting, and you will be invited to have a go at using this framework to plan some teaching. Finally, you will be reminded of your initially-stated learning needs, so you can determine whether they have been met, and a “Next Steps” section provides resources to help you address any knowledge gaps. Another MEDUSA module – “Constructive Feedback” – will also be very useful as preparation for the Student Apprenticeship. You can use the “My MEDUSA” function to monitor your progress, and to print out a record of your activity for reference, or for use in annual appraisals.

To access MEDUSA (www.southampton.ac.uk/medusa), you will need your University or Faculty of Medicine login and password – if you do not have one, or you cannot remember it, follow the instructions on the webpage.

Kevin Galbraith

Are you familiar with Tomorrow’s Doctors?

Are you familiar with the General Medical Council’s outcomes and standards for undergraduate medical education? Do you know the standards prescribed for the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment in medical education? Do you know what the law says about undergraduate medical education? All of this information and more is described in Tomorrow’s Doctors (GMC, 2009). It is a GMC requirement that all teachers of medical students have knowledge of the document.

Tomorrow’s Doctors outlines the responsibilities of the GMC, medical schools, NHS organisations, doctors and students for ensuring the standards expected in medical education. It lists three overarching learning outcomes for graduates: the doctor as a scholar and scientist; the doctor as a practitioner; and the doctor as a professional.

The doctor as scholar and scientist includes the application of the principles, methods and knowledge of biomedicine, psychology, social science, population health and the improvement of health and healthcare. It also includes the ability to apply scientific methods to medical research.

The doctor as practitioner includes detailed learning outcomes relating to: consultation, diagnosis and management; effective communication; immediate care in medical emergencies; prescribing; practical procedures; and the use of information. The outcomes prescribed for the doctor as a professional provide details of the expectations that graduates will behave according to ethical and legal principles and will reflect, learn and teach others. It also covers crucial areas such as working as part of a multi-disciplinary team and the importance of protecting patients and improving care.

The standards for the delivery of teaching described in Tomorrow’s Doctors are grouped under nine domains. For each domain there are set standards and more technical criteria. The evidence that the GMC will take into account for each domain is also listed. The domains are: patient safety; quality assurance, review and evaluation; equality, diversity and opportunity; student selection; design and delivery of the curriculum, including assessment; support and development of students, teachers and the local faculty; management of teaching, learning and assessment; education resources and capacity; and outcomes.

Teaching Tomorrow’s Doctors Course

This is a 4 day course open to anyone who teaches Southampton medical undergraduates. The aims of the course are to offer staff opportunities to:

− Develop their teaching roles
− Explore the BM Curriculum and how it is developing
− Consider a range of learning and teaching theory
− Share teaching experience

Dates for the autumn 2012 course (Course 29) are as follows:

Wednesday 3 October 2012 and Thursday 4 October 2012
and

Wednesday 14 November 2012 and Thursday 15 November 2012

Further information and electronic application form available at: www.southampton.ac.uk/medu
Southampton Medical School – the very early years

In the late 1960’s, the Government decided that the country needed three new Medical Schools and set up a Royal Commission to work out where these should be. I believe there were about twenty bids from Universities and our site visit was sometime in the 1967/68 academic year.

At this time, I was a third year PhD student in the Department of Physiology and Biochemistry. On the appointed day of the site visit, we all had to appear wearing a clean white lab coat and to be doing something “medically relevant.” Lord Todd, who was the Chair of the Commission, peered at my angiotensin bioassay preparation and grunted before moving on. I have always believed the grunt was significant to the future of the School! It was some months later that we heard there was to be a new Medical School in Southampton. The others selected were Nottingham and Leicester.

Several months later, I was summoned to see the Professor. He told me “Got this new Medical School coming – you can have a lectureship and you have 48 hours to think about it.” For 36 hours, I was planning to go to the USA to do a postdoctoral job but then I weakened and decided to stay for three years.

After the appointment of Donald Acheson, as the Foundation Dean, a small group of senior members produced a very novel outline curriculum. This included systems courses, an approach which was only used in one other Medical School in the world at the time. This was a good idea that has since been applied to all of the Medical Schools in the country but at the time there was no precedent. The next step was to make it operational. The Professor of Physiology became ill and was absent for a year and there were very few of us on the ground. A lot of the basic science planning for the systems courses was left to a couple of us who were still about 26/27. There was a Working Party for each systems course and I covered cardiovascular, respiratory, renal, endocrine and reproductive systems. The other members of the Working Party were the local senior consultants at the time. I spent an awful lot of evenings and weekends, trying to learn enough long words to get through the next Working Party meeting.

The first students came in 1971 and I found myself teaching all sorts of things, simply because there was no one else to do it. At this time I was also heavily involved in commissioning parts of the Boldrewood building, particularly the Biomedical Sciences Unit. I was one of the first four people to move into Boldrewood. It is a little strange to think that shortly after I retired three years ago, the building was pulled down. Fortunately, the curriculum has survived and I am proud to have been associated with it.

Alan Noble

The revalidation process for the BM4, 5 and 6 programmes is taking shape. This presents an opportunity for the Faculty to review all three programmes, ensuring closer integration between BM4 and BM5, and enabling delivery of the BM(EU) programme.

A team composed of the BM programme directors, representatives from the early and later years of the programmes and a representative from the research elements, has examined our current provision, some of the educational drivers for change, and the views of teachers and students. From this information, the team is shaping proposals for revised curricula. There will be opportunities to discuss this widely through year and course steering groups. It is also our intention to set up a web based opportunity for staff and students to view and comment on proposals.

We have circulated a survey for teachers and would encourage anyone teaching our students to complete this; it remains open until 16 December 2011. The link for the survey is https://www.som.soton.ac.uk/quest/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=m4LI864.

We will provide updates in forthcoming issues of Facilitator and look forward to working with many of you as this exciting project develops.

Louise Dubras, Marcus Parry

A new European Bachelor of Medicine programme

October saw the signing of a ground-breaking agreement with a German health care provider, Gesundheit Nordhessen Holding, based in Kassel, to develop an innovative new programme for medical students.

The European Bachelor of Medicine programme, or BM(EU), will see up to twenty-four German students a year study in Southampton for two years before returning to Germany for their final three years.

The agreement was officially signed by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Don Nutbeam, Jürgen Kaiser, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of GNH and Deputy Mayor of Kassel, and Dr Gerhard Sontheimer, Chairman of the Board of Management of Gesundheit Nordhessen Holding.

The first students to benefit from the new exchange programme will begin their degrees in October 2013. During their first two years in Southampton they will learn medical theory and techniques, and gain practical experience in the NHS, alongside students on the existing five year Bachelor of Medicine (BM) programme.

In years three, four and five, they will continue the practical element of their degree in Kassel Hospital in central Germany, where they will undertake further training after they graduate to gain full registration with the General Medical Council.

Some UK medical students studying on the BM5 programme will also be given the opportunity to undertake hospital placements in Germany during their later years.

Development of the new programme will be led by Dr Clare Polack, the BM(EU) Programme Director, and the project will be managed by Marcus Parry, the Faculty’s Educational Development Manager. Other staff from the Medical Education Development Unit will be involved in providing support and staff development for teaching staff in Germany.

Marcus Parry
Medical Humanities exhibition

On 13th October, over 100 visitors - including staff, students and members of the public - attended the opening of the art exhibition Tomorrow’s Doctors: Imaginative and Engaged at the Level 4 Gallery in Hartley Library. The exhibition, which ran for a week, was curated by Linda Turner and Kathy Kendall with funding from the Faculty of Medicine Enterprise Group. It included artwork, poetry, music, and video created by BM5 Year 1 students as part of the Medical Humanities Student Selected Unit (SSU).

Tomorrow’s Doctors: Imaginative and Engaged also included work by members of the patient support groups Keeping Pace with Pain and The Stroke Association, and by Medical Humanities tutors. The exhibition illustrated the relational and synergetic processes of learning the science of medicine, and understanding human experiences of health and illness.

The Vice Chancellor Professor Don Nutbeam opened the private viewing and commented, “This is an extraordinarily clever way of putting humanity into the science of medicine...of encouraging and supporting students to think about what it feels like to be a patient, and how to better relate to patients. I am deeply impressed, not just by the quality of outputs but that all of our students get the opportunity and are encouraged to do this.”

Helen Aung, a third year medical student, commented, “The medical humanities (SSU) has helped us to sharpen our scientific skills, deepen our understanding and reflect upon our own learning and development.”

Our partners in the new European Bachelor of Medicine programme, who travelled from Kassel, Germany, were able to take a sneak preview of the exhibition when signing the international exchange agreement, and were very impressed by the quality of the art work.

The success of the exhibition was further illustrated by comments in the visitors’ book such as “Fantastic - creative, sensitive, intelligent work at the interface” and “A revelatory exhibition.”

Linda Turner and Kathy Kendall

...and it’s “Goodbye” from him

After five very enjoyable years editing “Facilitator,” I will soon hand the baton to another as I move on in January. I would like to thank all those who have contributed articles, gracefully tolerated my pestering, my vigorous picture-cropping, amateur editing, and ardent devotion to long sentences peppered with commas (see, there goes another).

I would particularly like to thank Marcus Parry and Faith Hill for their invaluable intelligence regarding what’s going on in the Faculty, and Sam Cantwell and the team in the Print Centre, who cope admirably with late additions and revisions, and somehow manage to design and print Facilitator in no time at all.

If someone else had written this, I would have pared it down horribly.

Best wishes to all those with whom I have worked,

Kevin Galbraith

Changes in the Medical Education Development Unit (MEDU)

We have seen many changes within the Medical Education Development Unit since the group moved to the Life Sciences Building at the main University last year. Shelley Parr has become the Director of the BM4 Programme and Clare Polack has recently become Director of the new European Bachelor of Medicine programme. Several established staff with key education roles within the Faculty have joined the Unit within the last year, including: Frazer Anderson, Trevor Bryant, Sunhea Choi, Karen Nugent and David Smith. New members of staff have also joined us, including Paula Hunt - who is supporting the teaching of communication skills - and a new education researcher, Regina Karousou. We are delighted to welcome all of these members to the MEDU team.

MEDU has also been part of a number of structural changes within the Faculty and the University. The Unit is now part of the larger Academic Unit for Medical Education – along with the Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences. The Faculty also has new administrative arrangements in place and we are pleased to be working with Anne Clayton, Kirsteen Coombes, Sue Hildyard and Elizabeth Keel-Diffey.

To find out more about members of MEDU or about the work of the Unit please visit our new website at www.southampton.ac.uk/medu. This website has been developed by two Southampton University students working as interns across the summer months and they have done an excellent job. It is now very easy to access information about MEDU staff development, curriculum development and education and specialist research at the click of a button!

Faith Hill

Contact us

For more details about the Medical Education Development Unit and our staff development courses, please go to:
www.southampton.ac.uk/medu

NHS staff can register at www.shared.soton.ac.uk/nhs/

If you wish to contribute to this newsletter, please contact Kevin Galbraith medu@southampton.ac.uk