

GP Obstetrics Advisory Committee

The GP Obstetrics Advisory Committee (GPOAC) was formed in 2005 to represent the views of Diplomates within the College, thus providing an opportunity to provide input relating to Continuing Professional Development and College statements. Since then, GPOAC activities have expanded dramatically in the representation of Diplomates.

Representation on RANZCOG Council

In this financial year, GPOAC representation on the RANZCOG Council has been increased from one to two members. These members now also represent the GPOAC at meetings of the Continuing Professional Development Committee and the Women's Health Committee.

Diplomates Days

Continuing Professional Development has remained a priority this financial year. Successful Diplomates Days were held in October 2007 at the RANZCOG ASM on the Gold Coast, Queensland, catering for both procedural and non-procedural general practitioners. Another two-day program was held in conjunction with the Provincial Fellows ASM in Hervey Bay, Queensland, in April 2008. For the first time, an intensive one-day program was dedicated to basic obstetric ultrasound, which was limited to 20 procedural GPs. This program will be held again at the next Provincial Fellows ASM in Broome, Western Australia, in May 2009 and will provide for both specialist and GP obstetricians.

To better cater for non-procedural Diplomates, work is commencing on having Diplomates Days at state-based ASMs. It is envisaged that this will commence with the 2009 New South Wales/ Queensland ASM.

Membership

While the number of candidates sitting for the Diploma examinations has increased, of concern, however, has been a decline in the number of Diplomates renewing membership of the College. Through active engagement of Diplomates with regular newsletters, regular Category One training days and an active presence at ASMs for both the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), we have for the first time in over ten years seen a dramatic rise in the number of Diplomates maintaining their membership of the College.

RANZCOG has a total of 2403 Diplomates, with 515 holding the DipRACOG, 1777 holding the DRANZCOG and 111 holding the DRANZCOG Advanced. It was pleasing to note that 1643 of the 1716 Diplomates with women's health requirements in the 2005-2007 triennium completed their requirements for renewal of their Diploma for a further three years. During the 2007/2008 financial year, 37 Diplomates resigned.

Revised Diploma Curriculum

Work on a new and more accessible Diploma has begun. The aim is to develop the Diploma into a broader based, more flexible training program and make it more attractive to new graduates, as well as those currently employed in general practice. It is envisaged that the revised model will include online learning modules that can be delivered through distance education, in addition to hospital-based clinical training.

Specialist Obstetric Locum Scheme (SOLS)

The Specialist Obstetrician Locum Scheme (SOLS) pilot project is funded by the Australian Government and designed to supply affordable, quality locum relief to rural obstetricians. The pilot has now been successfully completed and RANZCOG has made a budget submission for continuation of the scheme and to include an extension of the funding to GP obstetricians.

RACGP and ACRRM Scientific Meetings

RANZCOG, along with the GPOAC, has continued to attend both RACGP and ACRRM events in order to promote the Diploma to new graduates and keep Diplomates abreast of the current workings of the College, as well as upcoming educational activities.

Dr Jeff Taylor

Chair, GP Obstetrics Advisory Committee

Val Spark

Coordinator, GP Obstetrics Advisory Committee