

The College

AUTUMN QUARTERLY MEETING 1986

The Autumn Quarterly Meeting was held at Kensington Town Hall, London on 29 and 30 October 1986 under the Presidency of Dr Thomas Bewley.

BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting was held on Thursday, 30 October 1986, attended by 55 Members of the College.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Spring Quarterly Meeting held at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology on 16 April 1986 and published in the *Bulletin*, August 1986 were approved and signed.

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

President, ladies and gentlemen, much has happened in the College since I presented my last Report to the Membership in July. Council met a fortnight ago and I will begin by reporting on several important matters which were discussed at that meeting.

The Officers of this College and of the Royal College of General Practitioners met during the summer to draft a joint statement concerning the Approval of Doctors Under Section 12 of the Mental Health Act 1983. This statement contains two general principles:

1. that sufficient numbers of approved doctors must be available in every region and that these approved doctors must be sufficiently skilled and
2. that the Royal College of Psychiatrists criterion, approved by Council in January 1984 which recommends that all doctors approved under Section 12 should possess the MRCPsych, should remain as the *ideal*.

The statement goes on to make several recommendations to ensure that until this ideal is achieved, all areas, particularly rural areas, have sufficient numbers of doctors to cover emergency admission. Council endorsed this joint statement, which has also been endorsed by the Council of the Royal College of General Practitioners. It was agreed that it should be seen as an interim measure to be reviewed in five years time. During this period the College will consider ways in which to increase the number of approved doctors with the MRCPsych. Copies of the joint statement are available from the College.

I reported to you in July that the College's comments on the Draft Code of Practice were sent to the Secretary of

State at the end of June. We hope very much that we will be able to see the revised Code of Practice when it is issued by the Department. The Special Committee convened by Council to discuss the Code of Practice meets at the beginning of November and it will be considering the various responses from other bodies to the Draft Code.

Few members of the College can fail to have heard about the College's new report on alcohol entitled *Alcohol: Our Favourite Drug*. This excellent book was prepared by a Special Committee of Council, chaired by Dr Bruce Ritson, and we are extremely grateful to the authors. We had a very successful press conference in the College and obtained not only radio and television time, but also newspaper coverage ranging from all the nationals through to small local papers and even the *Sydney Morning Herald*! Much of the credit for this must go to our professional PR advisers Granard Communications, although they were of course dealing with an excellent product. The College is now considering various ways in which it can implement the recommendations in this book.

I am pleased to be able to report that the College's new Research Unit is now complete. Visitors to the College will have noticed in the last six months that a flurry of building activity has been going on at the back of 17 Belgrave Square. A splendid two-storey house is now ready, together with a small paved garden. This already contains the Examinations Department and will house the Research Unit as soon as a Research Director and the staff have been appointed. Any member of the College is, of course, most welcome to visit this building. I am pleased therefore to be able to tell you that the Members' Room on the ground floor is now back in use.

The Public Policy Committee convened a Working Party to discuss compulsory treatment in the community and their report was presented to the Executive and Finance Committee in October. The Executive and Finance Committee and Council have endorsed the main recommendation in this report, that the College should propose an amendment to the Mental Health Act 1983, to provide for the compulsory treatment of patients in the community. This new legislation would be aimed at two categories of patients, those who had been hospitalised and who relapse when they choose to discontinue treatment after leaving hospital and those who could be treated in the community without requiring initial hospitalisation.

Council discussed at its recent meeting the comments prepared by the Forensic Section and the Public Policy Committee on the DHSS/Home Office Consultative Document, *Offenders Suffering from Psychopathic Disorders*. Council agreed that the College should recommend that there be no change in the present arrangements governing admission and discharge of offenders suffering from

psychopathic disorders. Council approved the various recommendations which the Forensic Psychiatry Section made to improve the present system. Copies of the College's response to the DHSS and Home Office are available from the College.

There will be a lecture for school children on Friday, 19 December at the Royal Society in London at 3.00 p.m. Professor Anthony Clare will be delivering this lecture which will be entitled 'Aren't We All A Little Mad?' Further details about this can be obtained from the Education Officer.

Council rejected the proposals contained in the DHSS Consultation Document *Hospital Medical Staffing - Achieving a Balance*. They approved the interim response to this document, prepared by the Dean, which identified the chief areas of concern for psychiatrists. Copies of this are also available from the College.

The College is organising two symposia in the near future. The first, in November, has been organised by the

Special (Political Abuse of Psychiatry) Committee. The meeting is between the College and representatives of other Royal Medical Colleges, to discuss the political abuse of psychiatry with a special focus on the USSR. The second conference will take place in April and has been organised by the Public Policy Committee with the intention of establishing a closer liaison with voluntary organisations and charities established by and for patients' relatives. This consensus meeting will discuss 'What is a good mental health service?: A carer's perspective'.

Finally the following results of recent elections and appointments have been announced:

Dr W. A. G. McCallum has been elected as Vice-President; Dr K. Schapira and Professor A. C. P. Sims have been re-appointed as Sub-Deans and Dr J. Higgins has been appointed as Sub-Dean.

PROF. R. G. PRIEST
Registrar

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Notice to Fellows and Members

Fellows and Members are reminded of their rights under the Bye-laws and Regulations, as follows:

Bye-law XI

The President shall be elected annually from amongst the Fellows.

Regulation XI

- (1) As soon as may be practicable after the first day of January in any year the Council shall hold a nomination meeting and shall . . . nominate not less than one candidate and not more than three candidates . . .

- (2) Between the first day of January in any year and the date which is four clear weeks after the nomination meeting of the Council, written nominations, accompanied in each case by the nominees' written consent to stand for election, may be lodged with the Registrar, provided that each such nomination is supported in writing by not less than twelve Members of the College who are not members of the Council.
- (3) An election by ballot shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations.

The nominating meeting of the Council will be held on 13 January 1987 and the last date for receiving nominations under (2) above will therefore be 10 February 1987.

ELECTION TO THE FELLOWSHIP

Candidates for election to the Fellowship are considered annually by the Court of Electors.

Candidates may not make a personal approach to the College for election, *but must be nominated by two sponsors, who must be Fellows of the College.*

Sponsors should *apply in writing* to the Registrar for the relevant forms. Completed nominations should be submitted to the Registrar by 30 September in any year, for considerations by the Court at its meeting the following February.

Eligibility of nominees

- a. Candidates must either be Members of the College by Examination of more than five years standing, or

Members who have been granted exemption from Examination.

- b. The Fellowship is ordinarily awarded to a Member for unusual distinction in teaching, research, and/or administrative ability, or for exceptional service to patients, especially where the supporting services have been inadequate. Sponsors are therefore asked to indicate any factors which go beyond the carrying out of consultant or academic duties by the candidates of their choice.

All sponsors and all successful candidates will be notified by letter of the decision of the Court of Electors.

Individuals elected to the Fellowship become entitled to use the designation FRCPsych after they have paid the prescribed registration fee.