

Report following the July 2018 meeting of the Faculty of Pain Medicine Board

The FPM Board met on July 9 in Melbourne.

Associate Professor Phillip Peyton, Chair of the ANZCA Clinical Trials Network Executive met with the Board to discuss opportunities for potential collaboration in advancing the FPM research agenda, as well as engaging with anaesthetists more closely in addressing the safe and appropriate use of opioids in clinical practice.

FPM Board meeting dates for 2018: Thursday October 18, and Monday November 26.

Honours, appointments and awards: The faculty congratulates the following fellows who were recognised in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours list with award of Member in the General Division (AM):

- Associate Professor Geoffrey David Champion, AM, FRACP, FFPMANZCA – NSW
For significant service to medicine in the field of paediatric rheumatology, and to medical research and treatment of musculoskeletal pain.
- Dr Michael Gerrard Cooper, AM, FANZCA, FFPMANZCA – NSW
For significant service to medicine in the field of anaesthesia as a clinician, teacher, mentor and historian.
- A/Prof Charles Roger Goucke, AM, FANZCA, FFPMANZCA– WA (A past-dean of FPM)
For significant service to medicine in the field of pain management as a clinician, academic and mentor, and to professional societies.

Consultation on FPM Board restructuring: At the AGM there was preliminary discussion of the future structure of the Faculty board. On the basis of feedback received at the AGM, the Board will develop a discussion paper for a period of consultation with fellows, trainees and other stakeholder groups.

Statement of intent with Hong Kong Board of Pain Medicine: A meeting of representatives of ANZCA, FPM and the Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists (HKCA) was held during the ASM in Sydney to discuss potential areas of collaboration. Subsequently, the FPM has forwarded a statement of intent to the HKCA outlining areas of common interest which are being progressed to mutual benefit.

Sustainable workforce and wellbeing

Workforce advocacy – New Zealand health economics data: The final draft of the Sapere Health Economics report has been delivered and currently being reviewed by the FPM.

New Fellows Working Group: The concept of establishing a New Fellows Working Group was supported by Board. It was anticipated that this would be a fairly informal group/communication forum chaired by the New Fellow Board Member, Dr Harry Eeman.

New Fellows: The faculty congratulates the following doctors on their admission to FPM fellowship by completion of the training program:

- Dr Jason Chow, FRANZCOG (NSW)
- Dr Suran Dhanapala, FANZCA (Vic)

Leadership and advocacy

FPM Meeting with Federal Minister for Health: The FPM Dean, Dr Meredith Craigie, Vice-Dean Dr Michael Vagg and General Manager Helen Morris met Mr Hunt in Melbourne on July 16, 2018 to discuss a range of issues including the National Pain Strategy, opioid prescribing and the need for a consistent national rollout of real time prescription monitoring.

Mr Hunt acknowledged FPM's role as a valued advisor and the meeting was very positive.

Other topics focused on extending the number of allied health visits for chronic pain patients, specialist pain medicine physician access to item number 132 and FPM educational initiatives to support rural and remote health practitioners.

Actions arising out of the meeting included FPM working with the federal Chief Medical Officer to develop an online forum on opioid prescribing.

MBS Review Taskforce: Around 30 clinical committees are currently sitting with the target of delivering findings by December 2018. Dr Chris Hayes is chairing the Pain Management Clinical Committee and other FPM fellows on this committee include Dr Lindy Roberts, Dr Tim Semple, Dr Marc Russo, A/Prof Tillman Boesel and Dr Graham Rice. The committee is reviewing sixty-two procedural items regarding their applicability.

The Pain Management Clinical Committee is preparing an issues paper addressing broader clinical issues to be sent to Professor Bruce Robinson and the Taskforce.

The third meeting of the pain management clinical committee will be held on August 13 in Melbourne and FPM will be a key group invited to give comment on the issues and progress to date.

National Pain Strategy

The FPM Dean represented the Faculty at a roundtable on the priorities for the National Pain Strategy convened by PainAustralia on June 21, 2018. The roundtable was facilitated by medical writer Sophie Scott. Around 15 stakeholders attended to discuss priorities for the strategy refresh.

Medical Board of Australia: The FPM Dean, Vice-Dean and ANZCA CEO met with AHPRA representatives on May 31 to discuss the issue of patient complaints directed against specialist pain medicine physicians relating to opioid de-prescribing. AHPRA reassured the group that there is no indication that these types of notifications are increasing. They have restructured to triage complaints more rapidly and have set clear guidelines that see many complaints sent back without the doctor being contacted. AHPRA are not concerned about complaints regarding current good clinical practice; however, they are interested in issues related to unprofessional behavior including communication between health practitioners and patients and their referring doctors.

The following ideas were to be advanced following the meeting:

- Workshop for AHPRA clinical advisers;
- Invitations to AHPRA to attend FPM forums to explain regulatory matters;
- Potential pilot of a formal advisory service in relation to specialised treatments;
- Ongoing advisory relationship in relation to development of standards and issues in general practice.

FPM Consultative Forum: "Opioids and chronic pain" was the topic of conversation at the third forum held by the faculty on June 16 attended by 53 faculty fellows, trainees and delegates with an additional 10 participants joining the conversation remotely.

Following this forum, a survey was circulated to trainees and fellows and the feedback will be collated to inform the faculty's position and strategy as it engages in the on-going conversations with consumers, regulators, government and our colleagues in other healthcare disciplines around safe and appropriate use of opioids and provision of best-evidence care for all with chronic pain.

Position Statement PM10: The Board has approved, for publication and further discussion, a revised faculty position statement on medicinal cannabis (PILOT until December 2018). The fundamental stance taken by the faculty in this respect has not changed since the statement was first published in 2015: The scientific evidence for the efficacy of cannabinoids in the management of people with chronic non-cancer pain is insufficient to justify endorsement of their clinical use. The statement can be read [here](#).

The background paper to PM-10 has been modified to discuss not only the Stockings et al paper and the TGA guidance but also a synopsis of the major preceding publications on which much opinion, especially from advocates and the industry, has been based.

Position Statement on Procedures in Pain Medicine: The Board convened a Procedures Working Group (PWG) to pursue strategic initiatives in the area of procedural pain medicine. The PWG has developed a [position statement](#) on Procedures in Pain Management which was approved by the Board as a pilot for six months (PILOT until January 2019). The faculty welcomes feedback from fellows, trainees and external stakeholders during this pilot period via [email](#).

FPM policy on the development and review of professional documents: The Board endorsed [AP01 Policy for the Development and Review of Professional Documents](#) which describes the process for development and review of professional documents.

Notified Fellow's Publication:

Dr Chris Hayes FANZCA, FFPMANZCA

Prescribing wellness: comprehensive pain management outside specialist services: Simon Holliday, Chris Hayes, Lester Jones, Jill Gordon, Newman Harris, and Michael Nicholas

<https://doi.org/10.18773/austprescr.2018.023>

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Research and quality improvement

Better Pain Management: There has been a sustained focus on marketing activities and June was a record month for module sales. The Better Pain Management website can be accessed here: www.betterpainmanagement.com.au.

Electronic Persistent Pain Outcomes Collaboration (ePPOC): The amalgamation of the ePPOC Management Advisory Group (MAG) and the Scientific and Clinical Advisory Committee (SCAC) has progressed. There is now a single governance body, the Clinical and Management Advisory Committee (CMAC).

ePPOC is involved in the evaluation of an iCare trial of early intervention pain management for injured workers. The trial will use the ePPOC minimum dataset and software to collect a number of outcome measures. ePPOC has been approached by the Pharmacy Guild to be involved in a Chronic Pain MedsCheck trial. The trial would utilise a short version of the ePPOC questionnaire to assess patient outcomes.

Education and training

Six month course for medical practitioners in clinical pain medicine: Under the FPM 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, one of the key strategies in achieving the goal of ‘Enhancing the suite of FPM educational offerings in Australia, New Zealand and internationally’ is to develop and market a six-month course for medical practitioners in multidisciplinary pain medicine. The FPM has written to key stakeholder groups to seek their feedback on the concept and the likely interest of their memberships.

Scientific meetings:

Spring Meeting October 19-21, 2018: Registration is now open for the Spring Meeting “Looking north, looking up at pain” at the Pullman Cairns International. At the Faculty’s invitation, The Hong Kong Board of Pain has nominated three representatives to the Organising Committee and they have been engaged in planning the program. The dinner will take place at the Salt House restaurant with the guest speaker Mr Michael Eather, Director Fireworks Gallery. The latest program is available on the [website](#).



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