

Annual Review 2008/2009



Royal College of
Obstetricians and
Gynaecologists

Setting standards to improve women's health

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A copy of the 2008 Annual Report & Accounts can be found on the College's website at www.rcog.org.uk.

A copy of all Council responses to documents of national significance can be found on the College website: www.rcog.org.uk.

Unless indicated otherwise, all appointments are as at 31 December 2008.

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PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



Sabaratnam Arulkumaran
President

The College has been proactive in influencing the Department of Health and National Health Service to help improve women's and newborns' health. The document *The Future Role of the Consultant* was timely in looking at how our Fellows and Members will work in the future to improve health services to provide high-quality, safe care to women in maternity and gynaecology. The College reacted effectively and is continuing to offer all the help it can to our trainees and consultants in facing the challenges brought about by Modernising Medical Careers, the European Working Time Directive (EWTĐ), the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts requirements for increased consultant-delivered services and the Darzi agenda for excellent health for all. The College was a step ahead on these issues by defining the future role of the consultant and tailoring the curriculum according to what would be the best model for delivery of women's health care. Following the approval of the General Core, Academic and Subspecialty Curricula and the assessment component, the Education Board set its goals on strengthening recruitment into the specialty. We are proud that the College led the harmonised recruitment process, which helped us to recruit the best candidates to our specialty without burdening the consultant bodies around the country to conduct several rounds of interviews. This example has been taken up as good practice by the Department of Health and has been adopted by several other Royal Colleges. The Education Directorate has been busy formulating the e-logbook and producing courses that are fit for purpose for the Advanced Training Skills Modules. The StratOG.net Editorial Board has been developing our distance learning programme to complement this work. The revised Basic Practical Skills in Obstetrics and Gynaecology training

course was conducted in the College several times in 2008. This will enhance training in the first two years. The current focus is on how we can manage issues related to the EWTĐ by using the increased funds for consultant expansion. This should help to reorganise the consultant's timetable to improve consultant-delivered services and to find quality time for trainees to enable better training within the limited number of hours they will work under the Directive.

Quality, safety and clinical effectiveness are terms used by the new régime at the Department of Health. The College has done well in this arena by producing three essential documents, *Safer Childbirth, Standards for Maternity Care and Standards for Gynaecology*. The maternity standards document is a synthesis of 800 standards from 50 sourced documents into 30 manageable standards. It was produced with the help of the Royal College of Midwives, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and the Royal College of Anaesthetists. Other interested parties, such as the Healthcare Commission, the NHS Litigation Authority, the King's Fund and lay representatives, including the National Childbirth Trust, contributed immensely to the process. We have made a specific appeal to the Department of Health and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to consider these standards as sourced documents to produce quality metrics. We have indicated the expertise that we could provide and our willingness to get engaged in the process to produce quality matrices that can be collected at the trust, regional and national level. We are keen to make sure that individual units will use these documents to improve the standards of care they provide. Those responsible for reorganisation of services should use these standards to

evaluate whether the proposed new services could provide the standards of care described for maternity and gynaecology.

High birth rates, the mobility of the population and increased immigration has led to a complexity of issues in maternity and gynaecological care. The use of the Maternity Dashboard as a clinical governance tool to continuously review issues related to four specific domains of capacity, workforce, training and clinical outcome, followed by risk incidents and complaints, provides an overview of the quality and safety of services and will give early warning before the services come under threat. Trusts and strategic health authorities will be able to assimilate the available information easily and can act early to provide needed resources to deliver safe, high-quality, effective care. The College has produced good practice guidelines related to the Dashboard and its use has been recommended by the Department of Health and the King's Fund.

Relicensing will start in 2009, followed by recertification and revalidation in the next few years. The Standards Directorate is busy finalising the detail. Valuable input from Council will be incorporated and this document will form the spine for our work on revalidation. Here again, we are in the forefront compared to many other Colleges.

The absorption of the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMEB) as part of the General Medical Council and the formation of Medical Education in England signals the desire for medical education to have continuity, with a smooth transition from undergraduate to postgraduate specialty training, to post-specialisation lifelong education and training. The College has been a forerunner in this thinking and has already produced a National Undergraduate Curriculum. This dovetails into the curriculum that we proposed for the specialty trainees that was approved by PMEB. We will develop the continuing professional development programme so that it will be fit for purpose for revalidation.

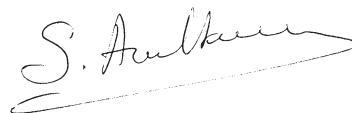
The activities of the International Office saw a steep climb during 2008. We hope that we have been a major influence in making the G8 countries rethink their financial contribution to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The College joined the International Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, the European Board and College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and the White Ribbon Alliance to produce advocacy documents that were sent to leaders of the G8 countries. Our request was further strengthened by the input and advice of our Prime Minister's wife, Mrs

Sarah Brown. Alongside the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, the International Office delivered a number of Life Saving Skills courses throughout the year and has developed a proper evaluation tool to look at the benefits delivered at grassroots level. The results of the evaluation exercises helped us to promote this activity and the Department for International Development has provided £2.8m in funding for us to continue with these activities in different countries. Additional work on how to adopt and adapt guidelines to local needs, the production of new, relevant guidelines for international settings and training in fistula work will be the focus of the International Office in the coming years.

The Chief and Deputy Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Departments have worked hard to produce savings without reducing the efficiency of the College. This has resulted in a positive balance of funds for the College. The sale of the President's House enabled us to settle the pension fund deficit and to construct extra residential rooms within the College. There is a big demand for the Domus and this facility has already been greatly appreciated by the Fellows and Members who have stayed there. In terms of new construction, there is a lot more to be done. The planned South Wing extension should provide the needed space for our future training needs. We will activate this plan in the near future and shall aim for corporate funding, although generous donations from Fellows, Members and well-wishers will help us immensely.

The 'Green Plan' for the College has been taken forward by our Chief Executive and a number of enthusiastic staff members. We are determined to contribute positively to the reduction of carbon emissions. Additional facilities for video conferencing should make us closer to our colleagues from all around the world but also help with our carbon reduction strategy.

We are proud of these achievements and credit should go to all the Committees, Fellows and Members, and the staff of the College for their enormous contributions. I would like to thank my fellow Honorary Officers and each and every one of you for your significant contribution, which has helped us to achieve many of the feats described in this Annual Report. My special thanks to Ms Beryl Stevens and our staff for producing this report.



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Helen Moffatt
Chief Executive

It has been another busy and challenging year for the College. Activities continue to grow in the departments of education and standards and our portfolio of international projects widens. The needs of women and of our membership in the UK across the world influence everything that we do.

After a financially difficult year in 2007, the hard work of Officers and staff resulted in a much improved position in 2008. However, the themes of securing more income from a variety of sources, and finding internal efficiencies to reduce spend, continues so that the College can weather the storm of the very difficult economic climate and create flexibility to change and expand services where needed.

We have worked hard to improve our responsiveness to the membership and people who come to us for advice and support. Key to this has been the development of the website. It will continue to be adapted with feedback and daily use. Facilities such as online payments will make life easier for Members, Fellows and trainees and the reorganisation of information should be easier for the many visitors to our site to use. During the last year, a new core information technology (IT) system was installed. This offers the opportunity for us to become more efficient in how we work. Developments that make best use of this IT system will need to continue well into 2009 to reap the full benefits of the change.

It has also been a year for reflecting on our corporate responsibility towards the environment. In late 2008, we created a Green Group, charged with finding ways to reduce our consumption of energy, recycle more, ensure that developments to the building are environmentally friendly

and purchased from sustainable sources. We also want to reduce travel where possible, particularly with a move to more videoconferencing. The Green Charter was launched in March 2009, which summarises the practical steps we are taking. As well as reducing our impact on the environment, the changes that are being made will also help us make better use of our resources.

At the end of the year, we received approval from Westminster Council to extend the building to the south. More can be found about this important development elsewhere in this report. The immediate task is to raise funds to support the build.

Our relationships with our close partners continue to be a priority. Of particular note, WellBeing of Women raised over £1m through the Lord Mayor's Appeal last year, which has enabled the Baby Bio Bank to open in London. This is a fabulous achievement. Throughout 2008, the Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health has been preparing to operate as a separate entity and this will happen during the summer of 2009.

I hope that you enjoy reading this review. Feedback is important to us, if you have any ideas or thoughts that strike you as you read about the College's activities in the past year, please email me at hmoftatt@rcog.org.uk.

Helen Moffatt



Members of the Senior Management Team

MANAGEMENT

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Chief Executive

Helen Moffatt

Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Affairs

Beryl Stevens

Head of Finance

Sandra Tetsola

Director of Education

Michael Murphy

Personnel Manager

Rachel Dell

Director of Services

Jon Price

Director of Standards

Charnjit Dhillon

HEAD OF

Bookshop

Richard Baber

Communications and External Affairs

Gerald Chan

Conferences and Postgraduate Meetings

Aimee Pike

Facilities

Jan Horsnell

Information Services

Lucy Reid

Postgraduate Training Department

Belinda Grantham-Hill

Estates

Andrew Madzia

Publications

Jane Moody

Specialist Registration

Sarah Qureshi



Council | May 2008

COUNCIL

President

Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran

Senior Vice President

Anthony Dale Falconer

Vice President

Tahir Ahmed Mahmood

Vice President

Margaret Jennifer Blott

Honorary Treasurer

Mr Julian Woolfson

Honorary Secretary

Mr Richard Charles Warren

ELECTED FELLOWS

London

Wendy Reid

Melanie Davies

Eastern

Roger Walton

Howard Giles

Northern/Yorkshire

Paul Hilton

South West

Sanjay Vyas

North West

David Richmond

South East

John Beynon

Trent

William Leigh Ledger

West Midlands

Anthony Deans

Guthrie Roberts

Wales

Simon John Emery

Scotland

Alan Dougal Cameron

Christine Parry West

Ireland

Colm O'Herlihy

Paul Fogarty

International (England)

James Johnston Walker

Lesley Regan

John Shepherd

Patrick Michael Shaughn

O'Brien

International British Isles

James Connor Doran

ELECTED MEMBERS

London

Narendra Pisal

Keith Duncan

Eastern

John Alexander Latimer

Northern/Yorkshire

Peter Blakeman

South West

Mark James

North West

Andrew John Drakeley

South East

Ashwani Monga

Trent

David Nunns

West Midlands

Thomas Justin Clark

Scotland

Andrew John Thomson

Ireland

Carolyn Bailie

Co-opted Member

Katharine Edey MRCOG

Chair, Trainees' Committee

Invited Members

Gillian Baker

Chair, Consumers' Forum

Christine Robinson

Faculty of Sexual and

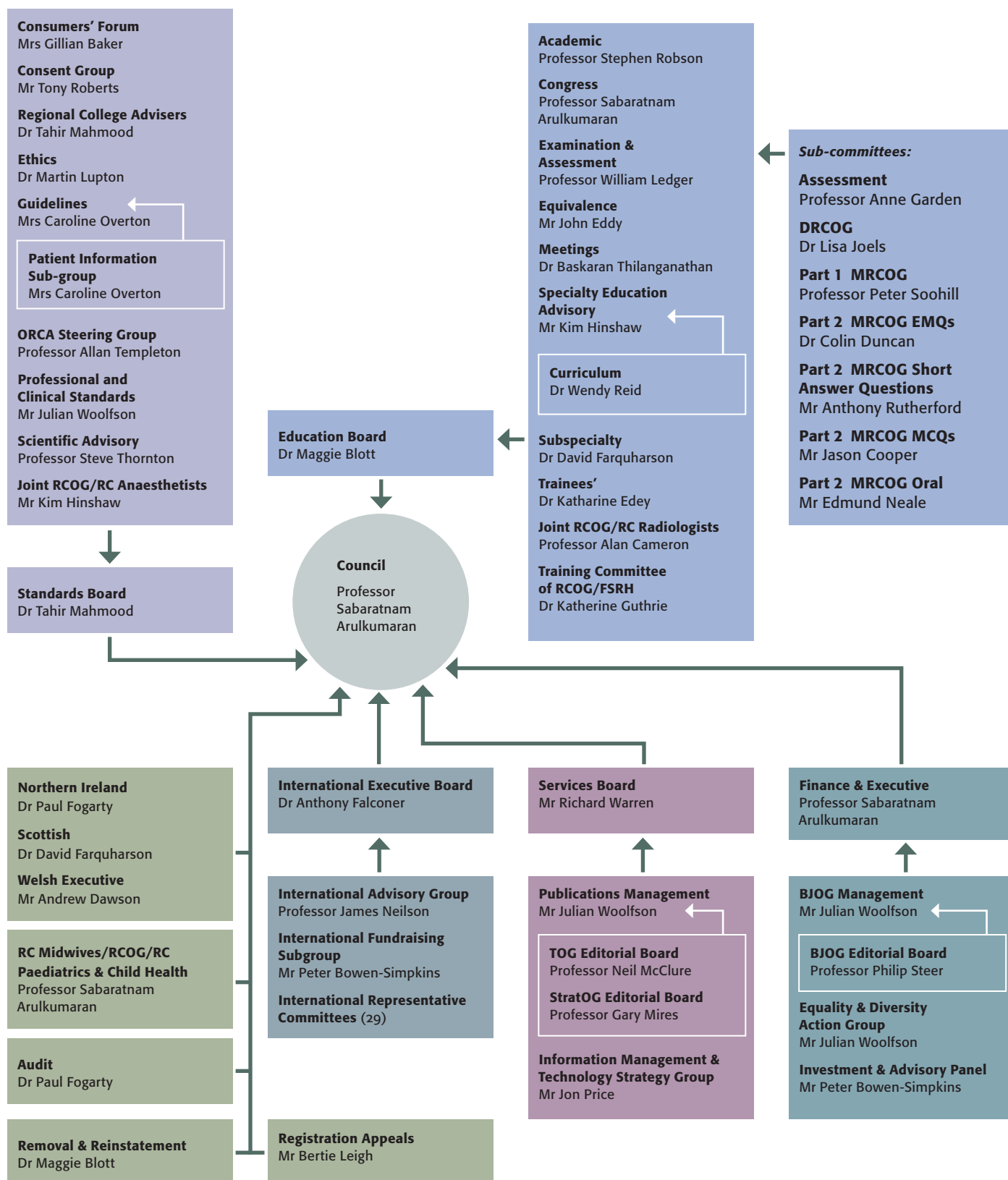
Reproductive Healthcare,

RCOG

Liz Stephens

President, Royal College of Midwives

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND CHAIRS



HONORARY APPOINTMENTS



Careers Officer (Senior)

Mr Roger Giles

Careers Officer (Junior)

Miss Melissa Whitten

CPD Officer

Mr Mahmood Shafi

Director of E-Learning

Professor Gary Mires

Less than Full time

Training Adviser

Ms Sue Ward

Sponsorship Officer/

Adviser for Refugee

Doctors

Mr Manisankar Das

Medical Workforce Adviser

Dr David Richmond

Deputy Medical

Workforce Adviser

Mr John Latimer

Recruitment Officer

Professor Janice Rymer

ATSM Officer

Dr Clare McKenzie

PMETB Liaison Officer

Mr Peter Reid

Clinical Directors' Lead

Mr David Churchill

Lead International Diploma in Women's Health

Mr Nigel Davies

Honorary Cellarer

Mr John Malvern

Heritage Adviser

Mr Anthony Kenney

Honorary Public Relations Officers

Mr Richard Warren

Mr Julian Woolfson

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF

BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Professor Philip Steer

The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist

Professor Neil McClure

StratOG.net

Professor Gary Mires

CONVENER OF

Meetings

Dr Basky Thilaganathan

Study Groups

Professor Sean Kehoe

Training the Trainers' Courses

Mr Manjit Obrahi

Mr Timothy Draycott

Part 1 Revision Courses

Dr Baskaran Thilaganathan

Dr Claudine Domoney

Part 2 Revision Courses

Mr David Redford

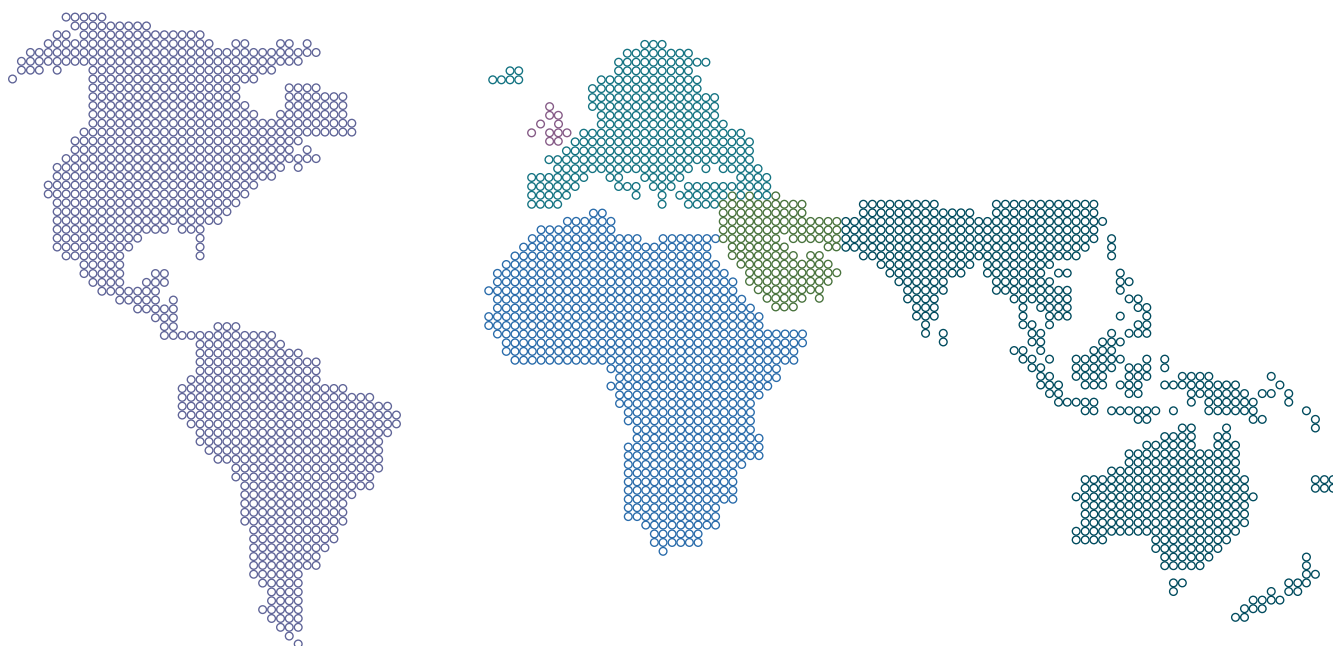
Part 2 Revision Courses

Assistant Convener

Mr Anthony Hollingworth

Basic Surgical Skills Courses

Mr Mark Roberts



GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF FELLOWS AND MEMBERS

British Isles	Fellows	Members	Europe	Fellows	Members
British Armed Forces	1	0	Austria	2	0
Channel Islands	11	7	Belgium	10	11
England	2013	2825	Croatia	0	1
Isle of Man	4	2	Cyprus	14	4
Northern Ireland	72	84	Finland	4	0
Republic of Ireland	113	193	France	7	3
Scotland	268	288	Georgia	1	0
Wales	120	179	Germany	7	9
	2602	3578	Gibraltar	1	0
			Greece	10	28
			Hungary	3	0
			Iceland	1	6
			Italy	3	1
			Lithuania	1	0
			Malta	20	10
			Netherlands	13	10
			Norway	1	2
			Portugal	1	2
			Spain	7	7
			Sweden	7	0
			Switzerland	11	0
			Turkey	2	0
				126	94

Americas	Fellows	Members
Anguilla	0	1
Antigua and Barbuda	0	2
Argentina	1	0
Bahamas	4	6
Barbados	5	8
Belize	1	0
Bermuda	1	0
Canada	179	85
Cayman Islands	2	2
Grenada	1	0
Guyana	2	0
Jamaica	29	14
Mexico	1	0
Nicaragua	0	1
Paraguay	1	0
St Kitts and Nevis	1	1
St Lucia	2	2
St Vincent and the Grenadines	2	1
Trinidad and Tobago	21	30
Turks & Caicos Islands	0	1
United States	271	84
Virgin Islands (US)	0	1
	524	239

Africa	Fellows	Members
Botswana	0	3
Cameroon	2	2
Egypt	89	63
Ethiopia	2	4
Gambia	1	0
Ghana	33	5
Kenya	10	1
Malawi	1	1
Mauritius	14	11
Namibia	5	0
Nigeria	123	14
Sierra Leone	3	1
South Africa	190	34
Sudan	23	17
Swaziland	1	0
Tanzania, United Republic of	3	2
Tunisia	0	2
Uganda	3	0
Zambia	3	7
Zimbabwe	11	4
	517	171

Middle East	Fellows	Members
Bahrain	10	2
Iran (Islamic Republic)	1	1
Iraq	20	5
Israel	13	3
Jordan	31	19
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	82	95
Kuwait	23	33
Lebanon	0	2
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	7	7
Oman	9	29
Palestine	1	0
Qatar	5	8
Syrian Arab Republic	5	4
United Arab Emirates	60	138
Via Israel	7	1
	274	347

Asia & Australasia	Fellows	Members
Australia	758	215
Bangladesh	10	11
Brunei Darussalam	6	10
China	3	0
Fiji	1	3
Hong Kong	205	176
India	353	337
Indonesia	0	3
Japan	0	1
Malaysia	186	207
Myanmar	31	29
Nepal	8	2
New Zealand	142	57
Pakistan	98	78
Papua New Guinea	2	0
Samoa	0	1
Singapore	124	126
Solomon Islands	1	0
Sri Lanka	87	50
Thailand	10	3
	2025	1306

MEMBERSHIP

During 2008, 325 new Members and 191 Fellows were admitted. We also had the privilege of admitting a total of 12 Fellows ad eundem – five during the opening ceremony of the 7th International Scientific Meeting in Montreal on 17 September and a further seven during the Fellows' admission ceremony held in London on 26 September.



New Fellows ad eundem admitted in Montreal, with Officers: Dr Maggie Blott, Professor Ronald Gibbs, Professor Michael Mennuti, Mr Julian Woolfson, Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran (President), Dr Tahir Mahmood, Professor James Scott, Dr Guylaine Lefebvre and Dr Tony Falconer



New Fellows ad eundem admitted in London, with Officers: (front row) Professor Jacques Milliez, Professor Friday Okonofua, Professor Walter Jonat, Dr Janet Mary Rennie, Professor Margaret Stanley, Professor Bajo Arenas, Professor Pedro Acien (back row) Mr Julian Woolfson, Dr Maggie Blott, Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran (President), Dr Tony Falconer, Mr Ric Warren, Dr Tahir Mahmood



Fistula patients at the Bahirdar Hamlin Fistula Centre, Ethiopia

AWARDS

During 2007, over £120,000 was awarded from our restricted funds for research fellowships, travelling scholarships, prizes and lectures. Full details can be found in the *Annual Report* for 2008. Many recipients say such awards have presented life-changing experiences. Here are some examples of comments we have received:

Ethicon Travel Award

Dr Shirley Patricia Heywood, Pokhara, Nepal, who visited Bahirdar Hamlin Fistula Centre, Bahirdar, Ethiopia:

'I have the necessary knowledge now to plan introduction of service for fistula patients in the area of Nepal in which I work and have some idea on how to produce a radio education broadcast. I already have a list of patients with fistulae needing surgery. I look forward to being able to help these patients and hope that as I gain experience I will be able to teach this area of surgery to the gynaecologist at the Mid West Regional Hospital.'

Green-Armytage and Spackman Travelling Scholarship

Shylasree Thumkur Surappa, University Hospital of Wales, UK, who visited Memorial Sloan Kettering Center, New York and H. Moffit Cancer Center, Tampa, USA:

'This trip has given me great confidence in overall patient management. The surgical exposure (especially bowel surgery and laparoscopic surgery) I gained during this period was tremendous. This is the first time H Moffit Centre has received a subspecialty trainee as a visiting scholar. They were very keen on setting up a regular programme for training and research with us. This is money well spent, as it has opened up a new window for research and training on both sites.'

Eden Travelling Fellowship

Dr Lisa Story, Clinical Research Fellow Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, London, who visited the International Zurich Magnetic Resonance Education Centre, Switzerland:

'I am currently a PhD student at Imperial College, London. My research project involves assessing the effects of intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) on fetal brain development. IUGR is a significant clinical problem, affecting up to 10% of pregnancies within the United Kingdom. It is associated with significant morbidity and mortality. There is a 15-fold increased risk of intrauterine or neonatal death. In the neonatal period, these children are at higher risk of respiratory and gastrointestinal complications and even if they do survive beyond infancy there is a higher rate of neurodevelopmental sequelae and the metabolic syndrome. Consequently, this is very significant not just for these children and their families but society in general. Not only did I learn about techniques and principles that are very useful for optimising my results, I also learned a lot of interesting information with regard to techniques that may be suitable for future projects such as phosphorous magnetic resonance spectroscopy and CSI.'

Overseas Fund Travel Award

Dr Jean Calleja Agius, Marta Dei Hospital, Malta, who visited Centre for Reproductive Sciences, University College London, UK:

'Through this study, a new research collaboration between the Departments of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Malta and in UCL has been established. This

particular visit has been of pivotal importance for my PhD studies. The objectives were achieved with a very satisfactory outcome. I passed my transfer viva, and was upgraded to PhD.'

RCOG Ethicon Medical Elective Award

Sohur Mire, Centre for International Health and Development, University College London, UK, who visited Edna Adan Maternity Hospital and Ministry of Health and Labour in Somaliland:

'I spoke Somali, which meant I could explain things and write things in Somali for student nurses, who did not have much teaching on newborn resuscitation. This was one of the most rewarding and important things I have done. To communicate well with colleagues and transmit enthusiasm for better care of patients is an excellent professional asset.'

Fenella Faye Wilkinson, Birmingham University who visited Antonio Lorena Hospital Cusco, Peru:

'My elective in Peru opened my eyes to the difference in obstetric care across the world, and the importance of improving obstetric care in poorer countries. Women must pay for their own investigations, medication, equipment and caesareans, if needed. It was clear that investigations are only performed when absolutely necessary and treatment, including pain relief during and after labour, was minimal. It was not uncommon to see an episiotomy undertaken with insufficient anaesthesia, which was traumatic. Patients were not allowed to make a sound if in pain, even if there was insufficient anaesthesia. The elective taught me skills that I have not used before and confirmed my wishes to pursue a career in obstetrics and gynaecology.'



MRCOG Prize Medallists

For the candidate who received a mark above all other candidates in:

MAY Nirmala Chandrasekaran (left)

NOVEMBER Christos Ioannou (right)

DRCOG Prize Medallists

For the candidate who received a mark above all other candidates in:

APRIL James Paul Richard Higgins

OCTOBER Georgina Tara Standen



A participant on a Life Saving Skills course in Kisumu, Kenya

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

2008 has seen the International Office busier than ever and making significant progress, not only in working with our international Fellows and Members but also in our efforts to improve the sexual and reproductive health of women around the world.

Our work over the past year has been wide-ranging and challenging in many ways. Activities included administering the International Doctors Training Programme, working with 29 Representative Committees and six newly formed Liaison Groups, developing standards and audit protocols to improve outcomes for women's health in Eastern Europe, developing projects to address the lack of skilled birth attendance in under-resourced countries and complications of childbirth, such as fistula, and undertaking advocacy work to highlight the scandal of growing disparities in maternal and neonatal health care between advantaged and disadvantaged populations.

In 2008, the Representative Committees have continued to perform an excellent job in promoting the specialty in their respective countries. The past year has also seen the establishment of a number of Liaison Groups in the UK. Currently, 40% of the NHS workforce is from other countries than the UK and 90% of RCOG membership candidates are trained outside the UK. Having such a huge diaspora in the UK presents the College with a unique opportunity to benefit from their energy, enthusiasm and commitment to improving health care for women in their home countries. The Iraqi Liaison Group was the first to be established, followed quickly by Sudan and, more recently, Ghana, Egypt, Pakistan and Nigeria. We extend our thanks to the Chairmen of these groups: Dr Ali Kubba, Mr Muhannad Zakaria, Dr Hani Fawzi, Dr Pail Mensah, Dr M Hatem, Dr Ghazna Siddique and Mr William Atiomo.

The International Office has, over the past three years, made an increasing contribution towards improving women's health care in developing and under-resourced countries. In 2008, we undertook advocacy work to raise awareness of maternal mortality and lobby for funding. We were delighted that so many Fellows and Members responded to our request

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To increase awareness of and promote the need for more effective use of knowledge and tools to impact on the maternal and neonatal health indicators at a global level.
- ▶ To focus on three key project areas:
 - ▷ roll-out of Life Saving Skills courses in five countries (three in Africa, two in Asia)
 - ▷ development of Fistula Training Programme in partnership with FIGO and the Fistula Surgeon's Group and roll-out in pilot centres in Africa and Asia
 - ▷ continuing work with colleagues in Eastern Europe to support the development of audit protocols to improve outcomes for women's health.

in July to support our efforts by lobbying parliamentarians and G8 leaders. We have been carrying out this advocacy in partnership with the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO), the European Board and College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and the White Ribbon Alliance and are greatly supported by Sarah Brown, the Prime Minister's wife, in this respect.

During 2008, in partnership with the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), 11 Life Saving Skills – Essential Obstetric and Newborn Care (LSS-EO & NC) courses were held in five countries. In 2008 alone, 541 health workers

benefited. Our efforts appear to be starting to bear fruit and we are very proud to announce that, at the end of the year, the UK Department for International Development awarded the partnership a grant of nearly £3 million to organise and evaluate the sustainability of LSS-EO&NC courses. We intend to roll out this programme in Kenya, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Orissa State in India and Bangladesh. The bid process was led by Dr Nynke van den Broek from LSTM, who has been a key player in getting this work off the ground and we are all very excited about starting this work in 2009.

Our work in developing projects and programmes with the LSTM has progressed significantly and, as well as developing the LSS-EO & NC course, we have also been working on developing a fistula training programme. Obstetric fistula is one of the most serious and debilitating long-term complications of childbirth. Women suffering from fistula are often excluded from their communities and live in isolation. An estimated two million women worldwide suffer from fistula, with between 50,000 and 100,000 new cases every year. The vast majority of these women could benefit from relatively simple surgical procedures that would repair the damage and enable them to return to a normal life. To provide treatment requires both an increase in the number of fistula surgeons and an improvement in the training of potential surgeons. In partnership with FIGO and the International Society of Obstetric Fistula Surgeons, the RCOG is developing an ambitious training package to be delivered within specialist hospitals. Our education team, led by Dr Wendy Reid and Mr Oliver Jones, has adapted original



Chairs of International Representative Committees 2008



Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
Setting standards in women's health & care

8th International Scientific Meeting 2009 7th – 9th December 2009, Abu Dhabi

Key dates	
March 12, 2009	Professional Programme & Call for papers
June 23, 2009	Returns deadline for abstracts
August 27, 2009	Confirmation of Abstract acceptance
September 24, 2009	Final of abstracts registration
7th – 9th December, 2009	8th International Scientific Meeting 2009

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work undertaken by Patrick Hogston and has developed a competency-based training curriculum. We are now seeking funding for the roll-out of the programme.

In March, a group of senior members of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, including the President and Senior Vice President attended an international conference in Erbil, Iraq. This idea took four years to come to fruition and was finally realised in April under the leadership of Dr Atia Al Salihi and the constructive support of the Iraqi Liaison Group. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in July with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research for the Kurdistan region of Iraq to facilitate collaborative work related to future postgraduate educational and standards methodologies. The intention is that this work will be extended throughout Iraq during the coming year.

Work has continued in developing the RCOG Eurovision agenda in collaboration with national societies of countries in Eastern Europe under the leadership of Dr Mourad Seif FRCOG, Manchester. The aim is to assist with the development



Top A midwife update session on neonatal resuscitation, Mulago Hospital, Kampala, Uganda **Above left** Women at the Khayelitsha screening project, Cape Town, South Africa **Above right** A Life Saving Skills course in Africa

of standards and audit processes to improve maternal and reproductive healthcare. Plans are underway for a meeting in Lithuania to be held in April 2009.

Throughout the year, the UAE Representative Committee has been working closely with members of the Congress Committee on plans for the forthcoming International Scientific Meeting to be held in Abu Dhabi in December 2009. We are confident that this will culminate in a fruitful and worthwhile event for all who attend.

The International Office's success would not have been possible without the generosity and dedication of all our volunteers. We would like to extend a special thank you to those who have contributed their time and energy to travelling and sharing their expertise in places where it is needed most. We acknowledge the bravery and courage of many of our members who, in dangerous and almost impossible circumstances, continue to provide medical care to the women of their countries with little concern for their own safety.



STANDARDS AND CLINICAL GOVERNANCE

The key role of the Standards Directorate is to keep abreast of national developments with regard to clinical and professional policies, to consider their impact on the specialty of obstetrics and gynaecology and the College membership.

During 2008, we responded to 51 consultations ranging from General Medical Council (GMC) consultations on revalidation to several reports by Lord Darzi, Department of Health and the NHS. Representatives from the Directorate also participated in national conferences, workshops and meetings with those responsible for developing national policy.

During 2008, a great deal of time was spent on setting standards for recertification of obstetricians and gynaecologists, as well the processes for revalidation. This also necessitated revision of the CPD programme to make it robust for the purposes of recertification.

Quality standards are high, not only on the College's agenda but also on the NHS agenda. Two parallel working parties, focusing on *Standards for Maternity Care* and *Standards for Gynaecology*, published their work in July. The former collated and appraised over 800 published standards and distilled these into 30 standards for the organisation of maternity care. The group on gynaecology collaborated with specialist societies in drawing together standards in 20 key areas. These standards were launched by Ann Keen, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Health Services), as part of the National Health Service's 60th anniversary celebrations. We also published the *Maternity Dashboard: Clinical Performance and Governance Score Card* to encourage all maternity units to plan and improve their maternity services. It serves as a clinical performance and governance score-card to help to identify patient safety issues in advance so that timely and appropriate action can be instituted to ensure high-quality and safe maternity care. Lord Darzi and the Chief Medical Officer subsequently recommended the use of clinical dashboards across other specialties.

The newly established Office for Research and Clinical Audit (ORCA) published its report on the research project, *Children's and Maternity Services in 2009: Working Time Solutions*.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To improve standards of obstetric and gynaecological services: maintain our programme of Green-top Guidelines, Scientific Advisory Committee Opinion Papers, Consent and Good Practice Guidance; advise external agencies on organisation of services.
- ▶ To monitor implementation of College standards across women's health by facilitating the role of Regional College Advisers and establishing the Safety and Quality Committee.
- ▶ To develop a system for recertification of obstetricians and gynaecologists and linking this to the continuing professional development (CPD) programme.

It not only sets out solutions but also tools for planning and achieving European Working Time Directive 2009 requirements. The intrapartum care bundles project with the National Patient Safety Agency and the Royal College of Midwives will report in 2009. The analysis of the prevention of early-onset neonatal group B streptococcal disease in UK obstetric units audit data continues and has resulted in a publication in the *Health Services Journal* on local adaptation of national recommendations.

Another new and exciting activity within Standards is the establishment of the National Reproductive Health Research Network. Its central objective is to facilitate the evaluation of interventions to improve reproductive health outcomes for women, their children and their families. The Network will have a major focus on clinical trials but will also include other study designs relevant to the overall objective. This RCOG initiative will complement the work of the National Institute for Health Research, Comprehensive Clinical Research Network, in supporting delivery of the research portfolio in our specialty.

High Quality Care for All sets out the vision to make quality the organising principle of everything we do. The NHS is now focusing on leadership at all levels to secure this vision. This is very much in line with the College's vision in developing the role of 'quality champions' in the form of Regional College Advisers.

The Standards Board's overview of the strategic

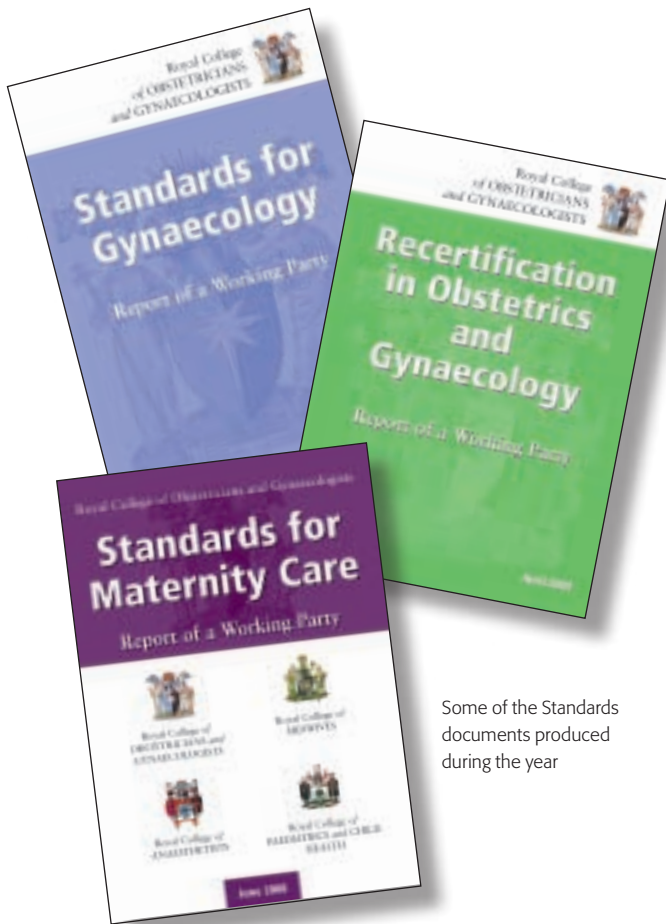
direction of its reporting committees ensures consistent and complementary guidance without duplication. The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) has many roles within and external to the RCOG. It provides the scientific review, analysis and interpretation required for RCOG decisions, external consultations and policy development. A significant proportion of its time is devoted to interpreting scientific evidence and providing College input to government policy documents, consultations and opinions. For example, the SAC provided data on fetal pain, which was incorporated into the response to the Government regarding changes to the law on abortion. The Committee has also had a major role in shaping the policy for single-embryo transfer and provided the scientific background for decisions on cord blood banking.

Horizon scanning is an important function of the SAC. The committee liaises with specialist groups to identify new developments which are likely to influence scientific and clinical practice. Such information is helpful for guiding the commissioning of new articles by the Editorial Board of *The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist* and the identification of topics for clinical study groups as well as the development of opinion papers.

The SAC also develops and publishes opinion papers on topics where research is rapidly changing clinical practice or where debate among members, the public or other bodies indicates that a College position is appropriate. In 2008, the following five papers were published:

- ▶ Air travel and pregnancy
- ▶ Immunological testing and interventions for reproductive failure
- ▶ Metformin therapy for the management of infertility in women with polycystic ovary syndrome
- ▶ Reproductive trends and assisted reproduction technologies
- ▶ Targeted therapies for the management of ovarian cancer.

The Guidelines Committee remains responsible for the production of Green-top Guidelines and, from 2009, will also review pathways of management for Map of Medicine to ensure that they are consistent with current guidelines. With support from the International Executive Board and our international members, the Guidelines Committee is developing guidance on malaria in pregnancy, postpartum



Some of the Standards documents produced during the year

haemorrhage and an update of the management of HIV in pregnancy. However, as one international guideline does not fit all countries, we are also developing a tool for the adaptation of guidelines. For most Green-top Guidelines there are parallel patient versions produced under the aegis of the Patient Information Subgroup.

The Consent Group completed three documents during the year, which incorporated several innovative features such as the College's new visual appreciation of risk.

A full and current list of all these documents is maintained and published on the College website.

The Professional and Clinical Standards Committee has supported much of the work on recertification, as well as contributing to many consultations on professional standards and policy on provision of services. Its work with the clinical directors has highlighted many issues around organisation of services and the Committee will be focusing more on 'solutions' in the future. The first such workshop is scheduled in March 2009 on 'Consultant presence on labour ward'.

Sadly, there is still a small number of clinicians and services getting into difficulties and we undertook eight reviews during 2008. Where these concern individual doctors, we offer our mentoring service to support them through what can be a very stressful time.

The Ethics Committee has considered a number of important topics and consultations during the year. They revised the RCOG's guidelines on sex selection, which had been prepared when preimplantation sex selection was in its infancy. Developments in noninvasive preimplantation diagnosis tests have refined the procedure to the point where it is now reliably used to determine the sex and blood type of the fetus, making it easier to anticipate sex-linked genetic disorders and rhesus disease. The Committee has spent time preparing a statement on hymenoplasty, which will be published in 2009. This work covers genital reconstruction surgery and takes into consideration both major cultural sensitivities and the requirements of the Female Genital Mutilation Acts. A major success for the Committee is the development of a one-year Ethics Fellowship, which the Infertility Research Trust has kindly agreed to fund. This will provide an opportunity for a specialty trainee (above ST4) to undertake a higher degree in medical ethics and law.

Joint Standing Committee meetings with the Royal College of Anaesthetists, Royal College of Midwives and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health are held regularly. These meetings are most useful as they enable us to explore common areas and to inform each other about relevant pieces of work. During the year the following topics have been addressed: the Intensive Care National Audit



An article from *You & Your Family*



and Research Centre report on obstetric admissions to intensive care; a 'good practice' statement on the urgency of caesarean section; safe childbirth; maternal critical care; and the concept of a modified early warning score. These multidisciplinary groups have raised concern about the extent of support available for deliveries and the general trend towards moving away from smaller units, especially with the enforcement of the European Working Time Directive in 2009. The College has promoted compliance with the recommendations contained in our publication *Towards Safer Childbirth* and in the Maternity Standards.

Our Consumers' Forum aims and objectives are to support and provide a resource for the RCOG to deliver a professional service that meets the needs and aspirations of women and to support effective communication between professionals and the public. Two successful public lectures were organised on cervical cancer and 'birthing choices: what is the best option for you?' Two more public lectures are planned for 2009 on polycystic ovary syndrome and mental health problems during pregnancy and after birth. Members of our Consumers' Forum are especially involved in the production of patient information, contributing greatly to the process, ensuring that the language used and the questions answered are appropriate to patients and their families. This represents a good deal of hard work and we are indebted to Consumers' Forum members for their crucial contributions. Members have also written four articles for the publication *You & your*

Family, which has created an opportunity to promote the College's activities to a wider public audience.

Members of the Consumers' Forum provide valuable input from the patient and public points of view to the detailed work of the College by contributing to a substantial number of our committees. The input of members of the Forum continues to be sought on a wide range of both internal and external consultations. These have included patient and public involvement in education and training, particularly the principle of seeking patient feedback as part of trainee assessment and the development and promotion of the NHS Choices website.

The National Collaborating Centre for Women's and Children's Health (NCC-WCH) has experienced many successes over the past year. The Centre has settled into its Goodge Street offices with a new Executive Director, Wendy Riches, and several of their guidelines have not only been published but also welcomed by the NHS. These include: *Antenatal Care Update*, *Diabetes in Pregnancy* and *Induction of Labour*. Both *Diarrhoea and Vomiting in Children* and *When to Suspect Child Maltreatment* have been out to consultation and are in the final stages of development. In addition, the following guidelines are now underway: *Hypertension in Pregnancy*, *Meningitis in Children* and *Pregnancy and Complex Social Needs*. The NCC-WCH continues to successfully produce guidelines for the NHS, improving the treatment and services for women and children nationwide.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES

In 2008, the MRCOG examination maintained its status as the 'gold standard' international examination for trainees in obstetrics and gynaecology.

To complement the examination, the College has devoted much effort to the development of workplace-based assessment (WPBA) tools as integral and innovative components of the curriculum. The College's interim report to PMETB in November stated that the College was on track for full compliance with the PMETB revised standards for curricula and assessment systems by 2010.

In 2008, a substantial research project was initiated with College funding to evaluate the current set of WPBA tools with regard to their reliability, validity, effectiveness, educational impact and cost. The project team is led by Professor Trudi Roberts of the University of Leeds and research has begun successfully in a number of Yorkshire and London trusts. The Assessment Sub-committee has a broad remit as a research hub in assessment and its recent projects have included survey work concerning WPBAs among trainers and trainees. The results will help to improve both the content and deliverability of WPBAs, in close cooperation with the Curriculum Committee.

With the aim of making the Membership examination more accessible to international candidates, the Examination and Assessment Committee initiated a debate on the merits of an alternative Part 2 MRCOG examination, with its content modified to take account of international clinical conditions and practice. However, the concept of a modified examination garnered very little support internationally. Much more favoured was the provision of a small number of optional questions in the Part 2 papers, from which candidates could make their own selection. All parties were agreed that there should be no suggestion of introducing a second-class examination. However, the College will endeavour to increase the number of international centres at which candidates may take the Part 2 Oral Assessment, thus reducing the cost of travel to London.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To develop the MRCOG examination to better reflect international practice.
- ▶ To validate workplace-based assessments to confirm continued approval and local deliverability.
- ▶ To continue to progress the cardiotocography training package.
- ▶ To develop an ePortfolio for CPD to support lifelong learning.
- ▶ To continue periodic review of curriculum modules to ensure that changes are anticipated and managed in a structured way.
- ▶ To integrate Scotland into the national recruitment system and to explore the feasibility of Northern Ireland joining for 2010.
- ▶ To develop an accelerated Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration application process for doctors who have completed less than 24 months of non-approved Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB) training.
- ▶ To develop the Conference Department and Education Directorate marketing strategy to include franchising, videoconferencing, webcasting and other Education projects.
- ▶ To develop a sponsorship and exhibitor sales strategy.
- ▶ To develop effective systems to support applications under Article 14 'equivalence' and to process them within seven weeks.

The concept of an International Diploma in Women's Health was first mooted by the DRCOG Working Party set up in 2004. Its gestation was delayed by the establishment of the new-format DRCOG examination in 2007 but now the idea has gained momentum for a set of educational modules to be made available both online and on CD-ROM. Their aim will be to improve the knowledge and practice of doctors and other providers of health care to women in under-resourced countries. This work is due to be piloted in 2009.

During 2008, the new-format DRCOG examination consolidated its popularity, with candidate numbers rising from 889 in April 2008 to 931 in October 2008. This compares

very favourably with the 537 candidates who sat the last examination in the old format in April 2007. Similarly, with the establishment of major new Membership examination centres in Pakistan and Sudan in 2008, the numbers of candidates for the Parts 1 and 2 MRCOG examinations have remained buoyant.

NUMBERS OF CANDIDATES EXAMINED AND PASSING THE PART 1 AND PART 2 MRCOG EXAMINATIONS DURING 2008

MRCOG	Examined	Passed
Part 1	2167	814
Part 2	1753	332

The College has digitised the postgraduate training portfolio this year and, in August 2008, the College began a 12-month pilot to introduce a customised version of the NHS Education Scotland (NES) ePortfolio to obstetrics and gynaecology specialty training. Over 380 specialty trainees are now using the ePortfolio to record inductions, appraisals, workplace-based assessments and reflective learning. The ePortfolio Short Life Working Group worked with NES leading up to the pilot and the ePortfolio Virtual Management Group will continue to monitor feedback from trainees, educational supervisors, training programme directors and deanery and school leads. The success of the pilot is dependent upon the College providing continuing support. We are very grateful to clinical and administrative leads in deaneries and schools who organised for the Education Projects Team to provide over 30 local training sessions throughout the UK during the summer. The Education Projects Team continues to offer support and aims to identify and train local ePortfolio leads to provide support in the future.

The aim now is to introduce all new ST1 trainees to the ePortfolio. The RCOG continues to be guided by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges in planning the implementation of an ePortfolio for CPD as part of recertification and to ensure that, where possible, doctors have an ePortfolio from foundation training to retirement.

The College has applied to work with e-Learning for Healthcare (from 2009–11) to develop a freely available online learning and assessment programme to progress knowledge and awareness in the interpretation of cardiotocographs (CTGs).



Ultrasound scan of twins

By reducing the incorrect interpretation of CTGs, and with improved education, we aim to ensure that obstetricians and midwives identify fetuses in distress, thereby reducing harm to fetuses, emotional damage to families and huge annual litigation costs to the NHS.

The Curriculum Committee continues to respond to constructive feedback concerning the deliverability of the core curriculum, Advanced Training Skills Modules and subspecialty training modules. Where amendments and additions to the curriculum are agreed, the Committee consults trainees and supervisors and reports to PMETB to obtain approval prospectively or retrospectively, as part of the PMETB protocol for the annual review of curriculum changes. In 2008, the College was commended for its comprehensive review and for successfully meeting the requirements of the PMETB Framework for Curricula and Assessment.

PMETB has identified that standards for the training of trainers are as important as the training of trainees. The College Training the Trainers Faculty and Assessment Sub-committee is developing programmes to educate trainers to conduct workplace-based assessment to the highest standard.

Following on from the success of the RCOG-led round-2 recruitment process in 2007, the Department of Health confirmed that coordination of the application process into obstetrics and gynaecology for 2008 onwards would be delegated to the RCOG. All deaneries in England and Wales participated. The outcome in 2008 was very positive. Nearly 3000 applications were submitted to the website:



approximately seven applications for each available post. There was a 99% fill rate for run-through posts and a fill rate of around 85% overall when fixed-term posts were taken into consideration; 96% of candidates who obtained a post did so in either their first- or second-choice deanery. ObsJobs was used again in September 2008 for round 2, involving just two deaneries, to fill posts that had become available since the earlier recruitment round; 18 run-through posts were offered and there was a 100% fill rate. The ObsJobs website is an essential resource for those interested in a position in obstetrics and gynaecology. Full details of the application process can be found there and it is used by both candidates and deaneries to facilitate the recruitment process. Such is the success of the system that it will also be used by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2009.

The Specialty Education and Advisory Committee (SEAC) is responsible for overseeing the continued development of national harmonised recruitment and submitting regular progress reports to PMETB on curriculum development and implementation of training standards. The Working Party on the Future Workforce in Obstetrics and Gynaecology for England and Wales completed its work towards the end of 2008 and the final draft was presented to Council in March 2009. It is hoped that the outcome of this work will link training opportunities with service needs more closely. The annual staffing census continues to be a rich source of information and is now in an electronic format.

This will hasten analysis and reporting. Monitoring of training opportunities, Certificate of Completion of Training numbers and consultant appointments continues to be a major component of the Workforce Adviser's work. This demonstrates the College's commitment to workforce planning and facilitates debate at a local, national and government level. The Department of Health and the Workforce Review Team, recognising the increasing demands of the obstetric service, remain positive about increasing resources at trust level for improving consultant presence on delivery suites in a timely fashion.

A very successful College Tutors' meeting was held in October 2008, with excellent attendance and very positive feedback. This has raised several issues that SEAC will work on during 2009, in particular, the introduction of training packages for trainers to facilitate familiarity with workplace-based assessment training tools. The role of the College Tutor and formal educational supervision is another important area which SEAC will be reviewing in 2009.

The Subspecialty Committee has undertaken a review of the impact of the European Working Time Directive on the length of subspecialty training and this continues to be closely monitored. The entry criteria for subspecialty training posts has been clarified and updated guidance posted on the website.

The past year has been extremely busy for the Equivalence of Training Committee, which, to date, has assessed a record number of nearly 200 applications for equivalence entry on to the Specialist Register. The Committee's proficiency in assessing complex and extensive applications is commended and continues to evolve.

The Trainees' Committee undertook the fourth *Survey of Training* and for the first time this was managed online. One thousand and one trainees completed the survey, which accounts for approximately 66% of trainees in obstetrics and gynaecology. The report makes a number of recommendations to which the College responded and the complete document was published and sent to all trainees in early 2009. The Committee was particularly pleased to note that the percentage of trainees who thought that the RCOG represented their views had risen dramatically from 49% in 2002 to 72% in 2008. This, we believe, has been achieved through the superb involvement of trainee representation within College committees. The College has also improved communication with trainees through the Trainees' Register, which, in 2007,

became a mandatory requirement for trainees in a type-1 training programme. Subscription to the Trainees' Register has risen dramatically and subscribers now receive an electronic triannual update from the College, named *TROG News*. This provides a comprehensive update on educational developments, training regulations and courses and has been well received.

Also, of particular note was the report produced by the National Undergraduate Curriculum Working Group. The report, together with the proposed undergraduate curriculum for obstetrics and gynaecology, was approved by Council and was distributed to all Fellows and Members in early 2009. This was very timely, with the General Medical Council subsequently consulting on the new version of *Tomorrow's Doctors*.

Workforce issues have been an important part of the Academic Committee's business. The body of academic clinical fellows and lecturers in the specialty continues to grow and there is now a real optimism about the academic career pathway. This was highlighted by a very successful symposium for academic trainees and those interested in academic training in June 2008.

Attracting the best and brightest of young doctors into a career in obstetrics and gynaecology remains a key area of focus within the College. The Recruitment Implementation Group works to ensure that there is a comprehensive mechanism to provide information and support to students and young doctors who are considering obstetrics and gynaecology as a career option. The dedicated website area for students and junior doctors contains an online prospectus, information on elective opportunities and prizes and e-newsletters for registered affiliates. Two annual events: the Student and Young Doctors Prize Evening and the RCOG Careers Fair continue to be hugely popular opportunities for face-to-face discussion with doctors working within the specialty. Focusing on provision of foundation-year opportunities remains an area of development, alongside support for our RCOG Recruitment Champions, who undertake to provide careers advice and support in local and regional units. The Careers Officers for the RCOG additionally provide direct contact points for students, foundation-year trainees and obstetrics and gynaecology trainees throughout their training, as well as doctors from outside the UK and those in more senior positions who are in need of careers advice.



Visitors at the RCOG stand at the International Congress in Montreal



An audience attending a lecture at the College

Finally, the group works to maintain a strong presence at regional and other national careers fairs to maintain the profile of obstetrics and gynaecology to our potential trainees of the future.

The RCOG's 7th International Scientific Meeting took place in Montreal in September, in collaboration with the Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. This proved to be a successful meeting, despite difficulties posed by the strike of the hotel staff where the conference was held. The meeting brought together over 931 delegates from 57 countries to discuss issues of common interest.

A total of 78 conferences, courses and workshops were held during the year. 2008 was an exciting year for the Conference Department with the launch of a number of new initiatives to disseminate conference material to a wider audience. The Diabetes in Pregnancy conference in April was successfully broadcasted via videoconference to Qatar and we plan to expand opportunities for videoconferencing more meetings in 2009 and beyond.

A programme of franchised Basic Practical Skills courses was launched in 2008 and work will continue in this area in 2009. In addition, franchised MRCOG Part 2 Revision Courses were run in Jordan and India and we will be working with our International Representative Committees to organise more revision courses overseas.



A bedroom in the new Domus

DEVELOPMENT OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND SERVICES

The Services Board has overseen capital expenditure projects and has responsibility for recommending priorities to the Finance and Executive Committee.

During the year, many improvements to the building were undertaken. Part of the proceeds from the sale of President's House was used to provide the Domus. This now consists of 11 bedrooms on the second and third floors, finished to a high specification, which provides good-quality hotel-style accommodation. The Domus opened its doors in August and is proving to be very popular and an asset to the membership.

Towards the end of the year, planning permission for an extension to the South Wing (next to the Library and Bookshop) was submitted to the Crown Estate and Westminster Council. The plans include an enhanced modern library and bookshop facility, development of the archives and historical books collection area and the provision of an obstetric skills laboratory. A fundraising group has been established and a strategy for raising the capital for this project is being developed. During this time, two portakabins have been leased and placed in the rear car park to house displaced staff. Council is grateful to all staff involved for their cooperation.

The Services Board has responsibility for the provision of services to members. An extensive survey to our international members was commenced towards the end of the year, seeking their views on relevant and appropriate benefits and what else the College might provide to support them in their professional life. The results of this survey will be considered in 2009.

The Integrated Systems Project commenced in January, with the formation of a small team to enable the implementation of a new back-office application called Integra. This product will act as the core database for the College and will interface with not only the new website launched in early 2009 but the financial and examination systems. It is intended that these measures will improve efficiency across the College at the same time improve data quality. The Information Services Department is diligently working on plans for an electronic records

KEY OBJECTIVES

Corporate Affairs Directorate***Publications***

- ▶ To ensure that all College publications, print and electronic, maintain the highest standards of accuracy, design and compliance with house style, and are published in the most cost effective manner.
- ▶ To continue to publish in *BJOG* high-quality research in women's health and thus improve the journal's reputation and increase readership.
- ▶ To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of *The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist* (TOG) and to look to the future, continuing to keep obstetricians and gynaecologists informed of new developments in clinical areas and in cutting-edge science and to develop the CPD component.
- ▶ To maintain and develop StratOG.net in accordance with the core curriculum.

Administration / Member Records

- ▶ To build on the success of the new sponsorship scheme for international medical graduates introduced in 2008 and to promote new opportunities created for subspecialty training posts in 2009.
- ▶ To undertake a survey of international Fellows and Members to gain a better understanding of their needs.

Bookshop

- ▶ To enhance the online shopping experience for all, but particularly MRCOG trainees, by exploiting the increased flexibility of the new website.

Communications and External Affairs

- ▶ To develop the College's podcasting and webcasting capacity to complement RCOG communications and policy activities.
- ▶ To develop the College's communication strategy for the International Office.

- ▶ To ensure that Members of Parliament and civil servants are briefed on the RCOG's views in maternity and gynaecological care.

Services Directorate***Estates***

- ▶ To manage Building for the Future 2010 projects through sound project management.
- ▶ To work with the Staff Committee on improving health and safety planning and reporting.

Facilities

- ▶ To continue to grow the revenue-generating business, together with Convex Leisure.

Information Services

- ▶ To continue improving the College website, adding additional functionality to improve the user experience.
- ▶ To incorporate a data management function into the department and to act as champion in data quality for the College.

Information Technology

- ▶ To implement Office 2007 College-wide and to incorporate full training.

Personnel

- ▶ To continue to review, develop and implement first-class human resources policy, ensuring best-practice delivery by all relevant managers.
- ▶ To continue to evaluate the learning and development needs of the College and to further consolidate the programme of training opportunities that is accessible and relevant to all staff.



Dodoma public library, Tanzania

management system for implementation in late 2009, with the aim of improving upon our data management capabilities.

In July 2008, the Information Services Department was successful in winning funding from the Department for International Development for a three-year partnership project with the Tanzania Library Service Board, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) in Dar es Salaam and a UK charity called Partnerships in Health Information. The project aims to develop links between the organisations, which will help to build capacity among the staff of the MUHAS library by rolling out training in modern health information skills.

During 2008, a number of updates were made to the College's bibliographic database provision through Ovid, which make the service easier for users. These include a facility to email document delivery requests straight from article references to the library staff for processing, as well as an option to send questions to an RCOG librarian from within the system. These innovations have proved to be extremely popular with Fellows and Members.

In July 2008, the College archive benefited from a regional cataloguing project run by AIM25, the online catalogue for over 100 educational institutions, learned societies, cultural organisations and livery companies in the London area. Assistance was secured to catalogue over 30 special collections, which the College had acquired over a long period of time, and these are now available to members and other researchers.

Surprisingly, perhaps, given the current financial climate, 2008 was a year of growth for the Bookshop. Income grew by £41,000 to £578,000 in total, a 3% increase after RPI is taken into consideration. Almost all of this growth came from sales of RCOG Press titles, with course manuals and MRCOG



The College Bookshop

revision guides proving increasingly popular. The launch of an improved Online Bookshop in February 2009 will help continue this growth and counter what could otherwise be a difficult trading year.

The RCOG Communications and External Affairs Department had another successful year. Forty-two press releases were issued on new *BLOG* research, articles in *The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist* and other College activities and reports. Thirty-three statements were released providing comment on a range of healthcare issues from single-embryo transfer during fertility treatment to prevent multiple births to advice on what to do if a woman has measles during pregnancy. Media coverage continues to grow, with College spokespeople providing expert comment on a wide range of subjects.

The College's public affairs agenda has been occupied with the passage of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill through Parliament, first in the House of Lords and then the House of Commons. A joint Parliamentary briefing with the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Nursing and the British Association of Perinatal Medicine, on the available scientific information was held before the Third Reading; in



The new College website



Contributors to the second BJOG video podcast: 'Telemedicine for termination of pregnancy': (l to r) Mariana Romero (an expert on reproductive health in South America), Marge Berer (Editor of *Reproductive Health Matters*), Martin Lupton, (an obstetrician and ethicist who works in London), Rebecca Comperts (Women on Web) and Philip Steer (BJOG Editor in Chief)

addition, briefing documents were circulated to all Members of Parliament. Individual briefings took place between the President with selected MPs on a range of issues including litigation costs in maternity services and the impact of the European Working Time Directive on junior doctors' training.

In 2008, *The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist* (TOG) continued its role as an important provider of up-to-date peer-reviewed articles for all who are actively engaged in obstetrics and gynaecology. TOG continues to be a source of CPD-creditable questions; this function will become even more important in the future as changes are made to the process of consultant appraisal and revalidation.

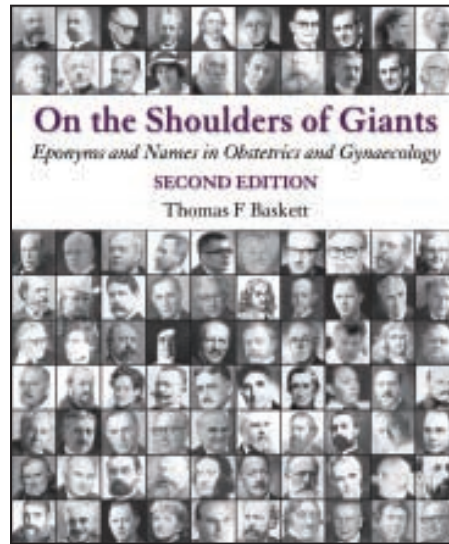
StratOG.net (www.stratog.net), the RCOG's online learning resource, was completed in 2008. The 94 e-tutorials are designed to facilitate, complement and support core specialty training in obstetrics and gynaecology. A recent feedback survey was positive, with over 90% of respondents indicating that they were likely or very likely to use StratOG.net in the future and 98% considering that StratOG.net had helped them in their clinical training and learning. Respondents were particularly positive about the format, interactivity and content. A number of UK deaneries now use StratOG.net in their training and uptake by international examination candidates has also been strong.

Another busy and innovative year for *BJOG* saw the introduction of journal club attachments to selected papers. These sections are designed to provide a ready structure for use in journal club discussions. The first *BJOG* video podcast entitled: 'The changing landscape of IVF: how to

reduce multiple pregnancy without reducing pregnancy rates' was released in February 2008. Later in the year, a video discussion on: 'Telemedicine for termination of pregnancy' went online, with participants from The Netherlands and Argentina, as well as the UK.

In September, we held the second BJOG Author Workshop 'How to get your paper published' at the International Congress in Montreal. These workshops provide essential information to new authors and give an insight into what editors look for in a paper. In November 2008, we began a monthly international women's health column, written by representatives of the Women's Health Specialist Library. This column signposts readers to clinical trials that are still recruiting patients, introduces new patents, provides legal news in obstetrics and gynaecology and keeps readers up-to-date by providing links to any new guidelines and reports that have been published worldwide. The team of scientific and international editors was increased by five including a Trainee Editor from the UK, three International Editors based in the USA and one in Italy. 2008 saw an increase in the number of articles and reviews submitted with a decrease in the number of case reports and short communications. The length of time from submission of a main article to a final decision has decreased and 50 days is now the average length of time.

On the books front, the highlight of the year was the publication of the long-awaited second edition of *On the Shoulders of Giants: Eponyms and Names in Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, by Tom Baskett FRCOG. The book was launched to great acclaim at the International Congress in Montreal.



Professor Tom Baskett (**left**) signing copies of *On The Shoulders of Giants* (**right**) at the Montreal International Congress

The *PROMPT: Practical Obstetric MultiProfessional Training* 'Course in a Box', consisting of a Course Manual, Trainers' Manual and CD-ROM that includes all the materials necessary to enable trainers to run the course in their local hospital was published and is proving to be very popular. The high quality of content of RCOG Press books was again recognised in the British Medical Association's Medical Book Competition Awards, where *Teenage Pregnancy and Reproductive Health*, edited by Philip Baker and colleagues, won a 'Highly Commended' certificate in the 2008 awards, against strong competition.

In addition to these printed books, 2008 saw the launch of the RCOG Press e-books collection. Most titles are now available for purchase as electronic books, via our publishing partners, MyiLibrary, Ingram Digital's online e-book and e-content resource for academic, public and professional content at www.myilibrary.com. This will allow our content to be readily accessed by librarians, who are increasingly moving to electronic book purchase. We hope to increase our visibility electronically during 2009 by participation in the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers e-Book Collection.

College staff

The main role and objective of the Personnel Department is to provide a first-class, proactive HR service to all members of staff, College Officers and Heads of Department as well as other associated bodies such as FIGO, the NCC-WCH, WellBeing of Women and CEMACH.

2008 was a busy year for the Personnel Department. Learning and development has been a high priority throughout the year and the entire College staff has engaged in equality and diversity training. In the latter part of the year, the training opportunities available for staff have been

further developed and a comprehensive programme has been developed, which is accessible to all. Work will continue in this area in 2009, ensuring that learning and development needs are continually evaluated and that the programme remains relevant to the work of the College.

The College is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity and diversity in its employment practices. The aim of the College is to ensure that its workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.

FINANCE

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the systems applied to the processing of financial transactions by reviewing current systems and investigating and applying amenable appropriate applications.

The College ended the year with a positive operational surplus. This position was achieved by a combination of maximising income and minimising expenditure, led by the Chief Executive, Helen Moffatt, and her Senior Management team, supported by the College Officers.

The reported net consolidated position for the group, before investment losses and transfers was £3,455,079 (2007: £1,073,723 loss). Income for the year totalled £17,169,668 (2007: £12,306,558) with expenditure of £13,714,589 (2007: £13,380,281). This information has been extracted from the consolidated financial statements which are available in full on the College website.

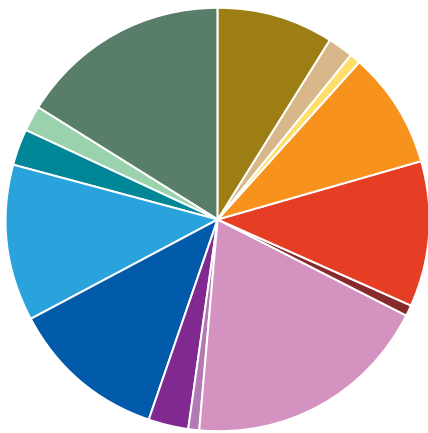
2008 was a successful year in many respects. Following the sale of the President's House, £1.2 million was put into the RCOG staff pension fund, with a further £1 million to follow in early 2009. These additional payments will ensure security for our staff and have meant that the Pensions Regulator no longer considers the College to be a high-risk employer. The remaining proceeds from the sale were put into the creation of the Domus within the College building, while at the same time that part of the building was generally improved.

Our courses and meetings have been successful both academically and financially. We have started to franchise some of our courses, primarily to provide uniformly high standards wherever the course is held but also to protect the College from unauthorised or unapproved courses run in its name. The franchising arrangement has been a great success and will be expanded over the coming years.

Towards the end of 2007, we identified a need to expand the College building to accommodate enhanced library and archive facilities, more small meeting and videoconferencing rooms and, most importantly, to provide an obstetric skills suite to complement the exciting surgical skills suite. Plans for this South Wing extension were drawn up and approved – coincidentally – at around the time that the world economy slumped and the value of equities and securities was dramatically reduced. Fortunately, although our reserves were significantly reduced, we still have sufficient to meet our essential costs. With advice from our investment advisors, we have decided that the best course of action is to 'ride out' the crisis. This has meant that we need to raise additional funding for the South Wing build and in 2009 we will be actively considering means of doing so. Notwithstanding the global financial situation, our core business continues to remain stable and we anticipate that there will be growth in a number of areas, including examinations, courses and meetings and leasing out surplus space within the College on those days when they are not required for College matters.

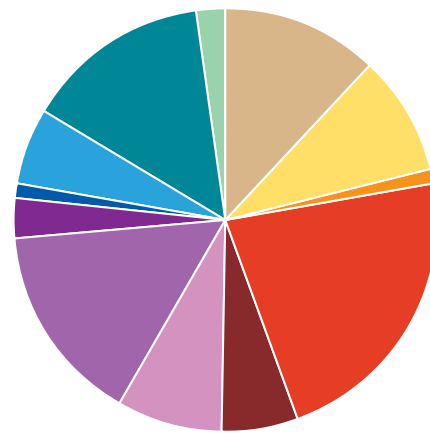
The results of the trading arm of the College, RCOG Trading Limited, whose principle activities include the hire of and provision of catering facilities, generated a surplus of £614,069 (2007: £398,293). These results are consolidated into the accounts of the College.

2008 CONSOLIDATED INCOME



RCOG Trading Ltd	9%
Investment Income	2%
Donations & Legacies	1%
Conferences & Meetings	9%
Examinations	11%
International Initiatives	1%
Fellows & Members	19%
Standards & Clinical Governance	1%
Education & Training Initiatives	3%
NCC	12%
CEMACH	12%
BJOG	3%
Accommodation & Service Charges	2%
Proceeds on Fixed Asset Sale	16%

2008 CONSOLIDATED EXPENDITURE



Conferences and Meetings	12%
Examinations	9%
International Initiatives	1%
Fellows & Members	22%
Standards & Clinical Governance	6%
Education & Training Initiatives	8%
NCC	15%
Special Funds	3%
Accommodation & Service Charges	1%
Activities for Generating Funds (trading)	6%
CEMACH	14%
South Wing Project	2%
Governance	0%

ADVISERS

Auditors	Buzzacott LLP, Chartered Accountants, 12 New Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1AG
Bankers	Barclays Bank plc, Hanover Square Corporate Banking Group PO Box 15163H, 50 Pall Mall, London SW1A 1QD
Solicitors	Hempsons 40 Villiers Street, London WC2N 6NJ



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