The University of Western Australia

SCHOOL OF PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TEACHING COMMITTEE OF THE
SCHOOL OF PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE AND PATHWEST
HELD IN THE TEN SELDAM SEMINAR ROOM 1.6, FIRST FLOOR, M BLOCK, QEII
MEDICAL CENTRE ON THURSDAY, 11 JUNE 2009

PRESENT
Clinical Professor Martyn French (Chair), Dr Jill Finlayson, Winthrop Professor
Jeff Hamdorf, Winthrop Professor Jennet Harvey, Clinical Associate Professor
Richard Herrmann, Associate Professor Patricia Martinez, Associate
Professor Liam O’Connor, Professor Patricia Price, Winthrop Professor David
Ravine, Clinical Professor Greg Sterrett, Professor Frank van Bockxmeer,
Winthrop Professor Paul Waring.

Ms Cora D’Souza (Minutes)

APOLOGIES
Dr Cyril Mamotte (Representative, Curtin University), Clinical Associate
Professor Sam Vasikaran.

DECLARATIONS OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF
INTEREST
The Chair invited members to declare potential for conflict or perceived conflicts of interest with
regard to items on the agenda. None were declared.

1 MINUTES
The minutes of the meeting of the Teaching Committee held on 14 May were confirmed.

2 BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Update on Improving Current Third and Fourth Years of MBBS Course

- Associate Professor O’Connor reported that Professor Harvey had identified
a breast case suitable for the case-based teaching method and that he had
commenced work on its development as a pilot case. He was working
towards defining six cases, one for each discipline. The Chair noted that it
was the consensus view that in the initial stage, Associate Professor
O’Connor should develop a pilot case for each discipline and that there
should be ongoing contact with the discipline groups.

- Professor Harvey noted the need for cases to cross disciplines, and that the
breast case identified was one such example. It is hoped that it would be
presented in the new format in second semester.

- Professor Price suggested that it would be desirable for some case-based
sessions to be held in a computer laboratory with a tutor present to answer
questions from students.

- Professor Hamdorf advised that the opportunity existed in Fourth Year
campus weeks for the introduction and evaluation of new teaching
methodologies.

- At Associate Professor O’Connor’s request, Professor Hamdorf undertook to
arrange for him to be provided with access to the web-based teaching site for
Surgery.

Action: Professor Hamdorf
Associate Professor O’Connor advised that he had requested Year 3-6 students to provide their views with regard to ways of improving the teaching of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.

Professor Price highlighted the need for adequate IT resources to facilitate the use of web-based case presentations. The Chair advised that this requirement would be included in the School’s strategic plan.

**Action:** Clinical Professor French

### 2.2 Update on Improving Pathology Teaching in Fifth and Sixth Years of MBBS Course

The Chair referred to the discussion document “Laboratory Exposure for Medical Students” prepared by Clinical Associate Professor Vasikaran and himself and which had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chair recalled the advice received at the last meeting from Associate Professor Sandra Carr of the Faculty’s Education Centre that there would be time available for some coverage of laboratory practice in the two week course on clinical skills presented at the commencement of Fourth Year.

Professor Hamdorf suggested that Sixth Year would also provide an opportunity for this initiative as student placements in that year brought them into close proximity with hospital laboratories.

The Chair requested members to consider the proposals included in the discussion paper and to forward their comments to Professor Vasikaran and himself.

**Action:** Committee Members

### 2.3 Proposed Changes to the Third Year of the BSc Degree

The Chair referred to the discussion document “Redesign of the Pathology Major in the Undergraduate BSc Course at UWA” prepared by Associate Professor Richard Alcock and Professor van Bockxmeer and which had been circulated with the agenda. The School is required to formulate a model for the Pathology major and to submit this to the Board of Studies by November. An important issue concerned the determination of where the Pathology major should be offered, i.e. in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (FMDHS), or Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences (FLAPS). During discussion, the following points were made:

- It is important to take this opportunity of course re-structure to reduce any duplication that may be occurring in various courses.
- Degrees are owned by the University whereas majors are owned by the faculties.
- Professor Price noted that the current Honours programme is the route for students wishing to undertake a PhD.
- FLAPS is considering the offering of thematic majors rather than discipline based majors.
- Should the School be offering a major in Biomedical Science rather than in Pathology?
- Professor van Bockxmeer advised that the School needs to give careful consideration to First and Second Year units which should be included in the Pathology major.

The Chair requested members to consider the proposals included in the discussion paper and to forward to him their comments.
2.4 Proposed Changes to the MLM Degree

- Clinical Associate Professor Herrmann reported that he had had discussions with Mr John Ivey and Ms Dianne Grey with regard to introducing an MLM stream in Transfusion.
- He would also be approaching Microbiology with regard to its continued participation in the Clinical Immunology/Clinical Microbiology stream.
- Professor Ravine is keen to run a stream for Genetics.
- Professor French advised that Mr Neill Hodgen is prepared to be involved in an advisory role in the Clinical Immunology stream.
- Professor Price advised that she had had some discussions with Professor David Joyce and Mr Paul Sheehan with regard to the Clinical Biochemistry/Toxicology stream. She suggested that it would be useful for Associate Professor Herrmann, as co-ordinator of the new MLM course, to discuss with Professor Joyce the continued contribution to be made by Pharmacology in this stream.
- Professor Waring reported that ten Commonwealth supported places had been obtained for the degree. Although students would still be required to pay HECS, the School and PathWest would jointly fund scholarships for up to ten PathWest employees per year.
- In terms of industrial issues, Professor Waring reported that discussions with the Health Department had determined that it would not be possible to link the MLM qualification with a higher degree award. He noted, however, that a change in career structure had been proposed which would result in distinct management and scientific streams. Those interested in the scientific stream would be required to have a higher qualification, e.g. the MLM.
- Professor Waring flagged the need to resolve the transition from the existing MLM to the new course structure. He noted that the School should avoid having to run both courses concurrently.

Professor Price reported that approximately twenty applications had been received from prospective international students wishing to undertake the course in 2010. Of these, approximately half had been offered places.

The Chair requested that he, Associate Professor Herrmann, Professors Price and Waring meet to determine the way forward in the transition process.

Action: Clinical Professor French
         Clinical Associate Professor Herrmann
         Professor Price
         Professor Waring

3 UPDATE FROM DISCIPLINE GROUPS

3.1 Update on Formation of Discipline Teaching Groups and their Activities (including MBBS, BSc and MLM)

- Genetics
  Professor Ravine advised that the Genetics Discipline Advisory Committee had been provided with an update on developments and remains supportive.

- Clinical Biochemistry
Refer to above discussion concerning Pathology teaching in Fifth and Sixth Years.

- **Anatomical Pathology**
  Professor Harvey reported that the Anatomical Pathology Discipline Teaching Group had met in the past week. She noted that a decision in principle would need to be made with regard to whether lectures should be replaced by case-based material next year. The Teaching Group would await student feedback in relation to the presentation of the breast case in the new format in second semester.

- **Clinical Immunology**
  Associate Professor Martinez reported that she had met with Associate Professor O’Connor to discuss the introduction of case-based teaching in Clinical Immunology.

- **Haematology**
  Dr Finlayson reported that she had met with Associate Professor O’Connor to discuss the introduction of case-based teaching in Haematology.

- **Clinical Microbiology**
  Associate Professor O’Connor noted that there was nothing to report for Clinical Microbiology.

4 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

4.1 **Committee Membership – Director, Faculty Education Centre**

Members agreed to Professor Waring’s suggestion that Associate Professor Sandra Carr, Interim Director, Faculty Education Centre, be invited to join the Teaching Committee in an ex-officio capacity.

Professor Hamdorf would also continue as an ex-officio member in his capacity as Director of the Clinical Training and Evaluation Centre.

**Action:** Professor Waring

5 **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on 9 July 2009 at 8.00am in the ten Seldam Seminar Room 1.6, First Floor, M Block, QEIIIMC.

The meeting closed at 9.10 am.