The University of Western Australia

SCHOOL OF PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE

The Minutes of a meeting of the UWA/PathWest Teaching Committee held in the ten Seldam Seminar Room 1.6, First Floor, M Block, The Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre on Thursday, 8 January 2009 at 8.00am.

MINUTES

PRESENT

Clinical Professor Martyn French (Chair), Dr Patty Martinez, Professor Jennet Harvey, Professor Paul Waring, Dr Jill Finlayson, Dr Bastiaan DeBoer, Dr Liam O’Connor, Mr Brett Tizard, Associate Professor Patricia Price, Clinical Associate Professor Priyanthi Kumarasinghe

APOLOGIES

Professor J Hamdorf, Associate Professor F M van Bockxmeer, Clinical Associate Professor S D Vasikaran.

DECLARATIONS OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Teaching Committee meeting held on 12 November 2008 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

2 BUSINESS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Report of the Teaching Planning Retreat held on 12 December 2008

The Chair reported on the recently held Teaching Planning Retreat and a copy of the meetings notes are attached

2.2 Co-ordination of Path2201 Introduction to Human Disease

Associate Professor Price reported on the changes to the assessment of Path2201.

2.3 Proposed Changes to Pathology Units in the Bachelor of Science

The proposal tabled by Associate Professor Patricia Price at the last meeting was discussed.

| ACTION | Frank Van Bockxmeer (Science Coordinator) to conduct a review of the Science Units and to develop a proposal for change taking into account the needs of the students and the Course Structure Review. |

3 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE MASTER OF LABORATORY MEDICINE

Professor Paul Waring spoke about the proposal to up-date the Master of Laboratory Medicine so that it could provide a framework for the career progression for Medical Laboratory Scientists.

| ACTION | Paul Waring to host a meeting of PathWest Principle Scientists from all of the major teaching hospitals to discuss industry needs for profession degrees and how PaLM can help address them. |
4 **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Meetings will be held on the second Thursday of the month commencing at 8.00am and will be held in the ten Seldam Seminar Room 1.6, First Floor, M Block, QEIIMC.

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5 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Access to M Block by Committee Members

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<td>Brett Tizard to arrange for card access for all PaLM Committee Members.</td>
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Meeting closed 9:30am
Conclusions from PALM/PathWest teaching retreat.

Medical course:

Strategic imperatives:
The School needs to re-focus its teaching of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine to medical students to align with UWA’s new Course Framework and students’ expectations.

Operational principles:
Any proposed significant changes to the course structure need to be made as part of our overall preparation for the new B. Health and graduate MD degrees.

We need to work with FLAPs to determine which aspects of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine should be learned in the B. Health and MD degrees and which Faculty is responsible for which aspects.

There is clearly a need to improve the teaching of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine between now and 2015, when the first students will be enrolled in the MD degree, and to make this more interesting and clinically relevant to students and better integrated with the existing course structure.

There needs to be closer integration of the teaching of microbiology and infectious diseases with other disciplines of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.

Need to expand the pool of teaching staff to include more PathWest pathologists and scientists.

Need to consider the expectations of today’s students who learn in a variety of ways, most preferring small group case-based tutorials guided by well organized and enthusiastic teachers with stand-alone lectures becoming increasingly irrelevant.

Need to attempt horizontal and vertical integration of the teaching of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine within existing medical curriculum (break down barriers between disciplines) in anticipation of complete integration in the new graduate medical curriculum eg:
  Integrate teaching of disease mechanisms with biochemistry, physiology, microbiology, immunology, genetics in years 1-3.
  Integrate teaching of pathological processes and morphological changes with clinical, physical and radiological manifestations in years 3 & 4.
  Integrate learning of systemic pathology with clinical teaching, emphasizing differential diagnoses, diagnostic approaches, natural history and management during years 4-6.
  Development of skills in the use and interpretation of laboratory tests (esp clinical pathology) in years 5 & 6 and internship.

Aims:

Changes to be made for 2009/10
3rd year:
  Need to further thin out the lecture content.
Work with Liam O'Connor to see whether more Pathology can be incorporated into microbiology teaching.

4th year:
- Consider progressively replacing current 4th year lectures with a series of integrated case-based tutorials.
- Obtain student feedback and modify content and delivery accordingly.
- Ensure assessment tests knowledge integration and understanding rather than rote learning of lectures.

5th and 6th year:
- Teach students how to use laboratory tests for the diagnosis of disease, staging of disease, selection for treatment, monitoring of treatment etc
- Develop a 'bedside to laboratory' approach for clinical teaching in Medicine, Surgery, Paediatrics and Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Increase exposure of students to the role of Pathologists and Laboratory Scientists perhaps by arranging laboratory visits.

Preparation for new Course Structure:
- Complete a learning matrix covering what we believe students need to know about Pathology and Laboratory Medicine to become competent doctors.
- Use new 4th year case studies to road-test approach for the new MD degree.
- Start collecting teaching materials (eg gross and microscopic photographic images, clinical photos, videos of clinical examinations and procedures, lab test results etc) from real cases.
- Reduce dependency on teaching methods that require students to be in attendance.
- Increase the use of information technology, eg televised delivery of CPCs at multiple campuses (RPH, SCGH, FMH, Joondalup, country centres)
- Recruit widely throughout PathWest for medical and scientific staff who are able and willing to teach PaLM
- Provide teachers clearer expectations of what and how to teach.
- Develop clear learning objectives and expectations regarding scope and level of learning.
- Develop assessment methods that test learning objectives
Science course:

Strategic imperatives:
The School needs to re-focus its teaching of Pathology to BSc students to align with UWA’s new Course Framework and students’ aspirations.

Operational principles:
Any significant proposed changes to the course structure need to be made as part of our overall preparation for the new Course Structure and should allow a smooth transition to, and unit sharing across, the new B.Sc, B.Health and B.Phil streams.

Significant changes to the course structure should be made with long-term, (>3 year) rather than short-term, (<3 year) objectives. In the meantime, we still need to accommodate students trying to get into Medicine & Dentistry or a career in laboratory diagnostics.

Aim:
1. Ensure that the Pathology component of the BSc degree meets its primary purpose of preparing students for a career in biomedical research.
2. Promote flexibility so that students can maximize their career choices and make informed decisions as soon as possible, should they be contemplating careers other than biomedical research.
3. Cooperate more closely with the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences to ensure clear definition of roles and responsibilities with minimal timetabling overlap and content duplication.
4. Cooperate more closely with Curtin University to facilitate cross-recognition of units to allow students to more easily switch courses.
5. Ensure that the course content and learning environment is relevant and interesting to today’s students.
6. Ensure that units offered are economically viable.

Specific proposals:
2ND year:
Short term (by 2nd semester 2009) Re-arrange lectures and practical classes into 4 three week modules, 2 run by surgery and 2 by PaLM. Changes assessment to 10% per module and 60% final assessment and cease mid-semeter test and student seminar.
Long-term: PaLM needs to regain control of PATH2201 with the cooperation of the School of Surgery and without overloading our teaching staff.

3RD year:
Delay any significant changes until 2010 to allow us to completely re-think our teaching of third year. Issues to consider:
- How to best align with the new Course Structure.
- Re-structure existing 12 point units into 6 point units.
- Reduce the number of units offered.
- Increase the number of students per unit by removing quotas, where possible.
- Ensure content addresses what students need to know rather than reflecting the interests and expertise of the academic staff.
- Need to broaden our teaching base to include more PathWest scientists.
- Need more small group-based learning and opportunities for students to develop relationships with teaching staff.
- Need technical support to relieve teaching staff of need to prepare laboratory practical classes.
- Need to work more closely with FLAPS to ensure tighter integration, flexible timetabling and cross-recognition of units, with other relevant disciplines.
- Need to re-think the unit coordinators, keeping in mind that the School is likely to hire two new PhD scientists over the next 2 years.

Incorporate vocational guidance to assist and prepare students with their career choices ie:

- Students thinking about a career in research - offer units with practical classes, vacation research projects, scientific mentor.
- Students aiming to gain graduate entry to Medicine or Dentistry – mentor to help prepare for the GAMSAT exam.
- Students considering retraining as a laboratory medical scientist – offer placements or vacation scholarships within PathWest diagnostic labs, facilitate cross-recognition of units with Curtin Uni, offer bridging course for Curtin B. Appl Sci degree or prepare for UWA MLM course.
- Students contemplating entry into the biopharmaceutical or biotechnology industry - mentor to help arrange industry placements and vacation scholarships.
- Students considering becoming a patent attorney – mentor to help arrange placement in IP firm.
Master of Laboratory Medicine:

**Strategic imperative:** The MLM course needs to be re-focused and expanded to address the forecast shortage of, and limited career options for, senior medical laboratory scientists.

**Aim:** (a) provide up-skilling and higher qualifications for medical laboratory scientists who wish to pursue a more academic/technical career track.  
(b) provide a vehicle for further personal development for junior medical laboratory scientists, including fulfilling requirements for membership of professional organizations, leadership training, overseas studies.

**Operating principles:**
Need to expand the number of students to at least 10 per annum.

Need to offer single discipline options for students who have already decided their preferred discipline (eg clinical biochem, haematology, genetics) while retaining flexibility to undertake combined units.

The course would be partially theoretical (more advanced understanding of disease mechanisms and diagnostic technology) and partially practical (diagnostic assay development, validation and accreditation) with less emphasis on original research and research methodology.

For PathWest medical laboratory scientists, training would need to occur, when possible, on-the-job within the students’ existing workplace with minimal attendance at UWA campus.

Course needs to be owned and run by PathWest Principal Scientists with adjunct appointments within PALM and overseen by an academic coordinator.

PathWest could offer scholarships including payment of UWA fees (the PaLM infrastructure could be returned, after recouping administrative expenses, to the host PathWest lab).

Pre-requisite: BSc (Laboratory Medicine) and AIMS accreditation. BSc graduates without Honours would require at least 2 years industry experience (eg being employed in a routine diagnostic pathology laboratory). MLM could be converted into a PhD.

**Proposed organizers:**

Academic coordinator: Professor John Masaeri
Histopathology and cytology coordinator: ?
Clinical biochemistry coordinator: Paul Sheehan
Haematology coordinator: John Ivey
Medical microbiology coordinator: Professor Tom Riley
Immunology coordinator: Campbell Witt
Molecular genetics coordinator: Assoc. Prof. John Beilby