

Academy of Medical Sciences MB PhD Working Group

Call for Evidence

Overview

The future of academic medicine in the UK depends on the next generation of outstanding young researchers and clinicians who will be tomorrow's leaders in the field.

In order to safeguard the number and quality of clinical academics, recent work has been undertaken by a subcommittee of the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC) and Modernising Medical Careers (MMC)¹ to create and implement new dedicated academic training programmes which are both attractive and appropriate. The Academy of Medical Sciences welcomes these developments.

Amidst the changing landscape of academic clinical training and career pathways, it should be recognised that a prestigious integrated clinical academic training programme has been in existence for over 15 years. The MB PhD programme allows a selected group of students to develop their basic science skills from BSc to PhD whilst completing their undergraduate medical education. There are currently only two UK universities with formally established MB PhD programmes, however, this model is well developed in the USA and is believed to have assisted in the emergence of US leadership in clinical science.

Given the current assimilation of new and old clinical academic training schemes, the Clinical Academic Careers Committee of the Academy of Medical Sciences considered it timely to convene a MB PhD Working Group to consider the merit and compatibility of the scheme. The working group is chaired by Professor Mike Spyer, FMedSci.

The Terms of Reference:

To evaluate the MB PhD schemes that currently exist within the UK. To determine where the MB PhD fits within the portfolio of Academic Career pathways and to recommend how the scheme should be organized and sustained in the UK.

In order to achieve this goal the Working Group will:

- Undertake a succinct, high-quality review of the existing MB PhD schemes in the UK
- Identify what currently does and does not work within UK programmes
- Make comparisons with the MB PhD programmes of other countries
- Consider appropriate ways of organizing and funding the scheme
- Identify the potential for developing the programme within the new Academic Career pathways
- Advise the UK Clinical Research Collaboration and other stakeholders of the findings of the report and, where appropriate, recommend action.

¹ Medically and dentally-qualified academic staff: recommendations for training the researchers and educators of the future (The Walport Report). A report of the Academic Careers Sub-Committee of Modernising Medical Careers and the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (March 2005).

As part of the activities of the working group, the Academy now invites evidence and views on any of the issues covered within the aims of the group and its Terms of Reference. We are particularly interested in submitted evidence that covers the following areas:

1. Details of any informal MB PhD schemes within UK universities.
2. Details of any past or future plans to run such a scheme.
3. Perspectives on the value of the MB PhD scheme compared to alternative routes of research training.
4. How the UK scheme compares to the US or European schemes.
5. Thoughts on whether the MB PhD programme should be better funded and supported in the UK.

Submission of evidence

Please provide your evidence, preferably in electronic format, to Dr Suzanne Candy, Senior Officer, Academic Careers at the Academy of Medical Sciences (email: suzanne.candy@acmedsci.ac.uk, telephone 020 7969 5226) **by Thursday 31 August.**

Whether you have ever worked in (or with) the pharmaceutical industry. The Academy may publish evidence received; please indicate if you do not wish your submission to be made public.

Membership of the Working Group:

Professor Mike Spyer FMedSci (Chair)

Vice-Provost (Biomedicine) & Dean, University College London

Professor Tim Cox FMedSci

Professor of Medicine, University of Cambridge

Professor Ian Lauder FMedSci

Dean, Leicester Warwick Medical School

Professor Robert Lechler FMedSci

Dean of School of Medicine Guy's, King's & St Thomas', London

Professor Paul Morgan FMedSci

Professor in Medical Biochemistry and Immunology, University of Cardiff

Professor Patrick Vallance FMedSci

Senior Vice President, Drug Discovery, GlaxoSmithKline R&D

Dr Sarah Tabrizi

Clinician Scientist Fellow, Institute of Neurology, London

Dr Katie Petty-Saphon

Executive Director, Council of Heads of Medical Schools

Dr Robin Fears

Policy Consultant to the Academy of Medical Sciences

Dr Rhys Roberts

Past MB PhD student, University of Cambridge

Mr Jonathan Roos

Current MB PhD student, University of Cambridge

Mr Daniel Marks

Current MB PhD student, University College London

Ms Emma Bennett (Secretariat) - Mentoring Officer, AMS

Dr Suzanne Candy (Secretariat) - Senior Officer, Academic Careers, AMS

Notes:

The independent Academy of Medical Sciences promotes advances in medical science and campaigns to ensure these are translated as quickly as possible into benefits for society. The Academy's 800 Fellows are the United Kingdom's leading medical scientists from hospitals, academia, industry and the public service. The Academy's Officers are: Sir Keith Peters, FRS, PMedSci (President); Sir John Skehel, FRS, FMedSci (Vice-President); Sir Michael Rutter, FMedSci (Vice-President); Sir Colin Dollery, FMedSci (Treasurer) and Professor Patrick Vallance, FMedSci (Registrar).

The Academy of Medical Sciences' Forum is an active network of scientists from industry, the healthcare sector and research funders. The Forum promotes interaction between industrial and academic biomedical scientists and engineers, and other groups committed to improvements in healthcare through research.

The Academy's two Academic Careers committees (clinical and non-clinical) work to ensure the long-term viability of world-class research by campaigning for the protection, development and promotion of academic training and career structures.

The Academy of Medical Sciences
10 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 5AH, UK