

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNAECOLOGISTS
Minutes of a Meeting of Council held at the RCOG and virtually on
Friday, 5 July 2024

PRESENT

President	Miss Raneer Thakar (Chair)
Senior Vice President, Global Health	Professor Hassan Shehata
Vice President, Clinical Quality	Mrs Geeta Kumar
Vice President, Membership & Workforce	Dr Laura Hipple
Vice President, Academia and Strategy	Professor Asma Khalil
Vice President, Education	Mr Ian Scudamore

ELECTED FELLOWS

Mr Sherif Abdel-Fattah
Dr Jyotsna Acharya
Professor Dilly Anumba
Professor Alastair Campbell
Professor Justin Clark
Professor Peter von Dadelszen
Miss Mausumi Das
Professor Stergios Doumouchtsis
Professor Colin Duncan
Miss Fatima Husain
Mr Joseph Iskaros
Professor Swati Jha
Mr Andrew Leather
Dr Hans Nagar
Dr Suzanne O'Sullivan
Mr Andrew Pickersgill
Mr Dudley Robinson
Mr Philip Rolland
Miss Melanie Tipples

ELECTED MEMBERS

Dr Jenny Barber
Dr Hlupekile Chipeta
Dr William Dudill
Dr Angharad Jones
Dr Chimwemwe Kalumbi
Dr Javaid Muglu
Dr Hanan Mustafa
Dr William Parry-Smith
Dr Claire Thompson
Dr Alison Wiggans

MEMBERS

Dr Janet Barter FRCOG, FSRH President
Dr Kat Barton MRCOG, Trainees' Committee Chair
Dr Abigail Hyland MRCOG, Trainees' Committee Vice Chair for Strategy
Ms Jane Plumb FRCOG, Women's Voices Lead
Dr Eman Toeima FRCOG, Specialty and Associate Specialist and Locally Employed Doctors Lead

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Ms Kate Lancaster
Executive Director, Education and Quality	Ms Carly Edwards
Executive Director, Global, Membership & Governance	Ms Kristen Morgan
Executive Director, Finance & Commercial	Ms Ashley Wang
Head of Corporate Governance and Risk	Mr Christopher Smith
Business Administrator	Ms Natasha Sullivan

1	Welcome The President welcomed all to the meeting, including the new Trainees' Committee Vice Chair for Strategy, Dr Abigail Hyland. The President thanked those Council members who would be demitting after this meeting for their contributions during their term: Hlupekile Chipeta Angharad Jones Vanitha Kumar Claire Thompson
2	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from: Sujeewa Fernando Peter Harris Vanitha Kumar
3	RCOG Confidentiality Agreement and Declaration of Interest and Good Standing RCOG Confidentiality Agreement and Declaration of Interest and Good Standing had been circulated. Council was asked to complete and return the form if they had not done so within the last year.
4	Minutes and Matters Arising
4.1	Minutes from the last meeting The minutes from the meeting held on 26 April 2024 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
4.2	Actions record The actions from the 26 April 2024 meeting of Council were noted.
5.1	Obituaries Resolved: That the sympathy of Council be extended to the relatives of the following: Mrs Shona Hamilton Towers – Fellow of England Dr Bhavin Raval – Member of England Professor Vimala Isaac – Fellow Mr Martin McDougall Usherwood – Fellow of England Dr Hugh Thelwall-Jones – Fellow of England Dr Richard Norman Porter – Fellow of Australia
5.2	The President gave the tribute to Professor Stuart Stanton.
6	Regional presentations
6.1	Sub-Saharan Africa The International Representative for Sub-Saharan Africa presented an update from the region. The high-need for care across much of Sub-Saharan Africa was highlighted with particular attention drawn to the maternal mortality ratios.

The importance of addressing healthcare inequalities across the region to improve quality was emphasised. This included work to increase the workforce, the availability of essential medicine and access, particularly for women.

In terms of the College, it was noted that Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest number of active members internationally. It was suggested that this was a consequence of several factors, including the fact that the MRCOG is not recognised for consultant positions. Pass rates for College exams are also below average across the region.

The Council noted the work taking place across the five International Representative Committees (IRCs) and noted that three of these, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa, are increasingly active. Particular attention was drawn to the College's Making Abortion Safe programme and the Sims Black Travelling Professorship.

Council discussed how membership numbers might be increased across the region. The commencement of the Gynaecological Health Matters programme in Nigeria was noted as a positive development.

Council thanked the International Representative for Sub-Saharan Africa for their presentation.

7 President

7.1 President's Report

The President updated Council on progress towards the delivery of the Presidential Priorities.

Council discussed the Birth Trauma APPG report, for which the College provided written evidence and which RCOG President, Ranee Thakar, gave evidence in-person. It was noted that the College is working hard to be public facing with significant communications activity including the publication of a statement and letter from the President have been published.

Improving Surgical Training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Council noted that President attended the Surgical Training Summit on 11 April 2024. Work is now taking place to review the outcomes of the Summit, and the findings will be presented at a Surgical Training Webinar on 8 August.

Levelling the playing field: Race equity in the O&G workforce in the UK

The findings of the first phase of the RCOG's race equity work will be presented at the RCOG's Race Equity Advisory Group on 26 June. The work completed to date includes a systematic review of equality, diversity and inclusion interventions, data from across RCOG exams and training, and a review of the work of other Royal Medical Colleges.

In the project's second phase, a package will be developed with input from the advisory group, promoting psychological safety and diverse and inclusive teams.

Driving the College's response to climate change and the need for improved environmental sustainability in the O&G profession

Council were made aware that the College, working with the Royal College of Midwives, the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare and the Sustainable Healthcare Coalition, has been awarded funding from the Small Business Research Initiative Healthcare Programme competition to deliver a project to identify carbon and inequity hotspots in the maternity care pathway.

The first meeting of an Expert Advisory Group convened to support the College's focus on sustainability will take place on 6 June. Stakeholders have expressed significant enthusiasm for this.

Council noted that work will begin in July for the Green Maternity Challenge. This challenge is exploring how frontline staff can reduce the carbon footprint within maternity services.

	<p>Maternity Safety</p> <p>The first meeting of the Maternity Safety Independent Advisory group took place on 23 May 2024. Two areas of focus for future work have been identified: Implementation and Good Practice guidance on restorative approaches after harmful events.</p> <p>Council noted the President’s Report.</p>
7.2	<p>Tommy’s Centre Pathway</p> <p>Tommy’s decision-pathway support tool was the subject of a confidential discussion.</p> <p>It was agreed that an update on the Tommy’s Centre Pathway would be brought to the next Council meeting.</p>
8	<p>Global Health</p>
8.1	<p>Report on Global Health Activities</p> <p>The Senior Vice President for Global Health presented the Report on Global Health activities.</p> <p>Council noted that the Gynaecological Health Matters programme in Bangladesh concluded at the end of May 2024. The project successfully developed a pool of 26 highly-skilled Expert Trainers from within the OGSB membership, who have now provided Essential Gynaecological Skills training to 78 healthcare professionals from the Kushtia and Dinajpur districts.</p> <p>Building on this legacy, a new Gynaecological Health Matters programme, funded by the UK Department of Health and Social Care and managed by THET, has commenced in Nigeria. This partnership is between the RCOG, Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in Nigeria and the African Centre of Excellence for Population Health and Policy.</p> <p>Council noted the work that the College has been undertaking to combat FGM in Egypt, with plans now in place to scale this up. The work has been well received by the Egyptian government, and the College is working towards a possible workshop in December 2024.</p> <p>The Council was informed that work is underway to examine IRC and Liaison Group (LG) engagement, with a paper to be presented at a future Council meeting for approval.</p> <p>An Events Courses Review Project was established to review the RCOG’s 47 courses and webinars. The project will include a review of content and feedback received and is due to report at the end of July 2024.</p> <p>Council noted that 69 countries will be represented at the 2024 Congress and 1,662 abstracts had been accepted for inclusion in the programme. The Council was reminded of the dates for the 2025 Congress (23-25 June), and volunteers from the Council were requested to join the Programme Committee, lead the Scientific Committee, and have one member act as workshop chair. Council members were encourage to contact the Senior Vice President, Global Health directly to express their interest.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Global Health Activities.</p>
9	<p>Clinical Quality</p>
9.1	<p>Report on Clinical Quality Activities</p> <p>The Vice President for Clinical Quality presented the Report on Clinical Quality Activities.</p> <p>The Council was informed that a new Green Top Guideline focusing on the Investigation and Care of a Small-for-Gestational-Age Fetus and a Growth Restricted Fetus had been published on 14 May 2024. In</p>

addition, a Good Practice Paper on “Prevention and Treatment of Work-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms in the Maternity and Gynaecology Workforce” had been published, as well as patient information on “Having a small baby” and a SIP on the “The Use of Expanded Carrier Screening in Reproductive Medicine.”

Council was updated on the progress of Phase 3 of the ABC programme, which is now in its 3-month scoping phase preparing for the 6-9 month pilot. A Clinical Team and Project Management Team have been appointed and a whole collaboration planning meeting took place in person on 12 June to clarify scope, timeline and responsibilities.

The College was part of a successful bid, led by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for National Institute for Health and Care Research Patient Reported Experience Measure. The work is expected to begin in September/October 2024, with the College’s Clinical Quality team supporting this, in particular in areas relating to recruitment and liaison with NHS sites involved in the research. The NMPA was discussed and Council noted that the publication of NMPA data is expected in December 2024.

Council was informed of the rationale behind the recent decision of the Guideline Committee to pause the collaboration on guidance development with EAPM. The decision was taken to ensure that there was adequate capacity within the College to focus on its own guidance work. Council enquired whether there would be any reputational or cost impact resulting from this decision. It was confirmed that none were expected.

Council members enquired about the publication of the report on gynaecological waiting lists. It was confirmed that a preliminary dashboard would be shared with Council members in September.

Council noted the Report on Clinical Quality Activities.

10 Membership and Workforce

10.1 Report on Membership and Workforce Activities

The Vice President for Membership and Workforce presented the Report on Membership and Workforce Activities.

Council noted that the workforce and membership engagement teams hosted a virtual Careers Day on Saturday 22 June aimed at medical students and foundation stage doctors. Almost 400 delegates registered for the event, which was hosted by the British Undergraduate Society of O&G and the National Trainee Committee.

Council were informed that the College had updated the website content on O&G careers. This includes information for medical students or foundation doctors considering a career in O&G, information on the specialty, and information for international medical graduates. Council members were requested to familiarise themselves with these and signpost to colleagues as necessary.

Council noted that the workforce and events teams are working with Dr Ted Adams and faculty on the #Nextstage webinar scheduled for 10 July 2024. This will focus on doctors transitioning into a consultant or a specialist (senior SAS) role.

The 2024 membership survey is now live and Council members were encouraged to complete the survey and to encourage their constituents to do the same.

Council noted the Report on Membership and Workforce Activities.

10.2	<p>Elevation to Fellowship Review: Report and Recommendations</p> <p>The Vice President for Membership and Workforce presented the Elevation to Fellowship Review.</p> <p>Council noted that, amongst other recommendations, the College was proposing not to increase the elevation to Fellowship fee, to reduce the eligibility period for Fellowship from 12 to 10 years post MRCOG, and to remove the requirement for candidates to be on the College’s CPD programme.</p> <p>Council approved the recommended changes to the elevation to Fellowship criteria, application and assessment processes.</p>
10.3	<p>Retired Fellows and Members – Subscription Model, Fee and Benefits Package</p> <p>The Vice President for Membership and Workforce presented the retired Fellows and Members paper, which outlined a proposal for introducing an optional subscription model and benefits package for retired Fellows and Members.</p> <p>The Council approved the proposed optional subscription model which includes an annual or life-time membership fee and benefits package for retired Fellows and Members.</p>
11	<p>Academia and Strategy</p>
11.1	<p>Report on Academia and Strategy Activities</p> <p>The Vice President for Academia and Strategy presented the Report on Academia and Strategy Activities.</p> <p>Council noted that the College received 233 applications for 18 different RCOG awards, ranging from travel, case studies, guest lectures and research fellowships. The results will be brought to the next Council meeting for approval.</p> <p>The Equality in Research survey, conducted between March and April 2024, was highlighted. Among the key findings was that 41% of respondents would like to be involved in medical research but currently are not and that only 25% of respondents were aware of any access to research-focused mentoring for their career stage within their specialty. The RCOG’s role in ensuring that research is accessible was emphasised.</p> <p>The clinical quality team has been progressing a proposal for the College to conduct a research prioritisation exercise with the James Lind Alliance. The Finance and General Purposes Committee has discussed the proposal and it has the support of Academic Board and RCOG Research Committee.</p> <p>Council enquired about the method of prioritisation for the James Lind Alliance research. It was confirmed that the College would adopt the James Lind Alliance methodology, which is considered the most robust methodology to determine research priorities. The research priorities will be UK focused, rather than globally.</p> <p>Council noted that all vacant positions on the Genomics Committee have now been recruited to.</p> <p>Council noted the report on Academia and Strategy Activities.</p>
12	<p>NHS Outpatient Transformation Programme</p> <p>Ms Stella Vig, NHSE Medical Director for Secondary Care and Quality, joined the meeting to discuss the NHS Outpatient Transformation Programme confidentially. Council thanked Ms Vig for their presentation and agree that there may be merit in a future workshop focusing on outpatient transformation.</p>
13	<p>Education</p>
13.1	<p>Report on Education and Exams Activities</p> <p>The Vice President for Education presented the Report on Education and Exams activities.</p>

	<p>Council was updated on the MRCOG Part 1, 2 and 3 exam results. With regards to Part 1 performance, it was noted that candidate numbers had increased and were now consistent with those pre-pandemic. The overall pass rate of 71% is considered appropriate and it was highlighted that there was little difference between UK and overseas candidates. In terms of Part 2 performance, it was noted that candidate numbers were also higher and appeared to have stabilised, largely driven by overseas students. The increase in the UK pass rate (57%) and overseas pass rate (33%) is regarded as positive. Part 3 numbers have also increased and appear to be stabilising. A limiting factor for Part 3 exams is capacity as it is a face-to-face assessment.</p> <p>Work is continuing to prepare for the Curriculum 2024 launch on 7th August 2024. A number of webinars have been organised to support this.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Education and Exams Activities.</p>
13.2	<p>MRCOG Part 3 Examiner Regulations The Vice President for Education presented the MRCOG Part 3 Examiner Regulations.</p> <p>It was noted that the Examination and Assessment Committee has been working on developing a formal set of examiner regulations, which have been designed to ensure that the College has a robust framework in place to ensure consistency in examiner standards and expectations across all global examination centres.</p> <p>Council approved the MRCOG Part 3 Examiner Regulations.</p>
13.3	<p>Education Supervisors Toolkit The Vice President for Education and the Recruitment Lead presented the Education Supervisors Toolkit, which has been developed to define the Education Supervisor role in obstetrics and gynaecology, signpost resources to support initial and ongoing training for the role, and provide support to Education Supervisors who are supervising trainees with specific needs.</p> <p>It was noted that the toolkit is available to all RCOG members and is accessible via the College learning platform. Council members were requested to review the toolkit and signpost it to colleagues.</p>
14	CEO
14.1	<p>CEO Report The Chief Executive presented the report on the latest activity across the College.</p> <p>Council members were asked to promote attendance at RCOG World Congress 2024 among their constituents, with the early bird deadline date of 15 July highlighted.</p> <p>Council noted the CEO's report.</p>
14.2	<p>Board of Trustees Annual Report 2022-2023 Council noted that the Board of Trustees approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022/23 at its meeting of 7 June 2024.</p>
15	<p>Report from Women's Voices Lead The Women's Voices Lead noted the written update on recent activities of the Women's Network and Voices Panel.</p> <p>Council noted the appointment of Sian Mitchell as the Women's Network Trainee Representative Member.</p> <p>The College was commended for the quality of the South Asian Maternal Health Conference held at the end of June. The Women's Voices Lead, the RCOG President and former Women's Voices Lead, Shai Gohir, spoke at this conference.</p>

	<p>The RCOG Women’s Network facilitated a webinar in May, hosted by the Women’s Voices Lead. Speakers included Professor Adam Balen, Ms Fatima Husain, Kate Brian (co-founder of new charity Fertility Alliance) and Women’s Network members Laura-Rose Thorogood and Neelam Heera. Over 200 people signed up for the session, with 80 in attendance on the day itself.</p> <p>Council noted the report from the Women’s Voices Lead.</p>
16	<p>Report from FSRH President</p> <p>The FSRH President presented their report on the activities of the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare.</p> <p>Council noted the FSRH report.</p>
17	<p>Report from Trainees’ Committee Chair</p> <p>The National Trainees’ Committee Chair presented a report detailing the committee’s recent activities. The Council was informed that the Report would be circulated following the meeting.</p> <p>Council were informed that the National Trainees’ Conference had been well received by attendees. This was the first Conference since the onset of the pandemic and initial feedback has been positive.</p> <p>The National Trainees’ Committee is currently reviewing its Terms of Reference to ensure that this remains accurate. An update on this will be brought back to a future Council meeting.</p> <p>Council noted the report from the National Trainee’s Committee Chair.</p>
18	<p>Report from SAS/LED Lead</p> <p>The SAS/LED Lead presented their report, which highlighted the breadth of work that the SAS/LED Committee had undertaken since the last meeting.</p> <p>Council noted that the Government has provided an improved offer for SAS doctors in England and also in Wales, both of which have been accepted.</p> <p>The SAS Collective campaign, co-founded by the RCOG’s Vice President for Membership & Workforce, has now been endorsed by Royal College of Physicians and by Royal College of Anaesthetists. It was noted that the RCOG’s endorsement message on its website has been temporarily taken down whilst an issue is resolved with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges’ SAS Committee.</p> <p>Council noted the Report from the SAS/LED Lead.</p>
19	<p>Board of Trustees Report</p> <p>The Council appointed Trustee presented the Board of Trustees Report which provided an overview of the activities of the RCOG Board of Trustees meeting on 7 June 2024.</p> <p>Council noted the Board of Trustees report.</p>
20	<p>Disciplinary, Removals and Reinstatement Committee Report</p> <p>The DRRC Chair presented the Disciplinary, Removals and Reinstatement Committee Report, which provided an update on the removals, reinstatements and sanctions conferred by the Committee.</p> <p>Council noted the Disciplinary, Removals and Reinstatement Committee Report.</p>
21	<p>Council Membership</p>
21.1	<p>Committee and Honorary Appointments and Extensions</p> <p>13 new appointments were ratified.</p>

	<p>It was noted that, as Dr Aditi Miskin had been elected to Council, she would no longer be able to take up her position of the Disciplinary, Removals and Reinstatement Committee. The College will now advertise the vacant position to Members.</p>
21.2	<p>Council representatives on Boards and Committees Council approved the appointment of Dr Alison Wiggans MRCOG as Members’ Representative on the RCOG Finance and General Purposes Committee.</p> <p>Expressions of interest for the Members’ Representative positions on the RCOG Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee were requested. Council members were advised to contact Natasha Sullivan to confirm their interest in the role.</p>
21.3	<p>Council and Board meeting dates 2025 Council noted the 2025 Council and Board meeting dates.</p>
21.4	<p>Council Elections 2024 results Council’s congratulations were noted for the successful candidates in the following constituencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London: North, Central, East and North West – Diane Nzelu MRCOG • Northern, Yorkshire and Humber – Hannah Mistry MRCOG • Thames Valley and Wessex – Ganga Verma MRCOG • Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland – Helen Goodall MRCOG • Wales – Aditi Miskin MRCOG <p>New Council members will be inducted on 5 September prior to their first Council meeting on 13 September.</p> <p>Council noted the Council Elections 2024 results.</p>
22	<p>Reports/minutes Council noted the following minutes: 22.1 Education Board 3 May 2024 minutes 22.2 Academic Board 7 March 2024 minutes 22.3 Membership Board 16 May 2024 minutes 22.4 Global Health Board 30 May 2024 minutes 22.5 Workforce Board 19 April 2024 minutes</p>
23	<p>Any other business A query with regards to the hosting of the 2024 RCOG World Congress in Oman, a country where homosexuality is illegal, was raised. It was confirmed that there was significant discussion on this matter when Council agreed to award Congress to Oman. The importance of the College being able to work in places whose value and legal framework may not be aligned with the UK’s or the College’s was stressed and it was noted that this is borne out in the range of countries that had recently hosted Congress.</p> <p>The President noted recognition for colleagues at Shrewsbury and Telford maternity services, stating that their overall rating by CQC had improved to ‘good’ in their most recent inspection.</p>