

Society For Acute Medicine Autumn Meeting

3rd – 4th October 2002

The backdrop of Captain Scott's Antarctic vessel The Discovery was the setting for the Sixth Meeting of the Society for Acute Medicine in Dundee. Hosted by Dr Mike Jones and Dr Liz Myers, delegates were led on an intrepid adventure exploring developments in Acute Medicine.

Day 1

Professor Ray Rowden, NHS Plan Taskforce on Quality commenced proceedings on the subject of change, highlighting the main issues from the NHS in 1999 with a shift in responsibility for care to more accountability on the Trusts and Chief Executives. The increasing role of The Commission for Health Improvements in ensuring quality was emphasized.

The role of the multidisciplinary team in Acute Medicine was underlined in two presentations. Nikki Mearns and Alison Millar described how the early introduction of defined Occupational Therapy protocols reduced length of admission. Dr Peter Slane, Ken Greig and Wendy Reid explained how the involvement of General Practitioners can help address some of the nursing and social issues arising in more complex patients through Early Supported Discharge Schemes, Primary Care Link Nurses and by providing liaison with community GP's.

Training in Acute Medicine is now a reality. Dr Steven Close, SpR in Aberdeen, one of the first trainees in an Acute Medicine related programme shared some of his experiences to date.

The Society President, Dr Derek Bell and Dr Alistair Crosswaite kicked off the next session on Reforming Acute Care and discussed the role of the Emergency Care Collaborative.

The theme of change was continued by both Dr Alistair Ireland from Glasgow on how rearranging medical staff within the Acute Medicine / A&E

interface can reduce waiting times in an A&E department and Dr Martin Culshaw on how he has made a large impact on the way acute admissions are handled in Nottingham.

Day 2

Sir Alan Langlands a native of Dundee and now Principal of the University described what he felt were five important concepts in NHS. The swing from dealing with a "collective" to individual, new innovations in science, the influence of the media and politics, imbalance between supply and demand and changes in the burden of disease.

There followed presentations on projects involving a more team-based approach.

Dr David Pedley, Aberdeen on how involving Paramedics in Community Thrombolysis can reduce that all-important call to needle time.

Mr John Morrison, Dundee on how Out Patient Intravenous Antibiotic Therapy pioneered in Tayside by nurses had been very successful and now established practice in a number of centres round the country.

Ms Helene Morrison talked through the Alcohol Withdrawal Policy used in Edinburgh.

Ms Rowena Green gave us an update on her experiences as Nurse Consultant in Bournemouth and how she has helped in developing pathways of care.

To conclude Dr Peter Mills, London introduced how with these changes might be measured, with the importance of Competency based Assessment and Appraisal in the development of Acute medicine as a Speciality.

The Spring meeting 2003 will take place in Birmingham, 11th - 12th April.