



Association of Health Professions in Ophthalmology

Newsletter No. 2 May 2004

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

*Association of British
Dispensing Opticians*

*Association of
Ophthalmic Science
Practitioners*

*British and Irish
Orthoptic Society*

College of Optometrists

*International Society for
Clinical
Electrophysiology of
Vision*

*Ophthalmic Nursing
Forum of Royal College
of Nursing*

*Ocular Imaging
Association
(formerly BOPA)*

*Royal College of
Ophthalmologists*

*UK and Ireland Society
of Cataract and
Refractive Surgeons*

*UK Ophthalmic
Pharmacists Group*

Correspondence

Please contact:

AHPO Administrator
PO Box 598
Stockton-on-Tees
TS20 1WY

Telephone or Fax:
01642 651208

E-mail:
omg@onyxnet.co.uk

NHSU support development of Ophthalmic Course

At a meeting with NHSU on 22nd April AHPO presented a proposal for the development of a course in Ophthalmic Science, Technology and Care. AHPO has now been asked to present a business plan, and have been advised that there will be little or no difficulty with the development of the course.

This is excellent news for the many ophthalmic staff who have been seeking to develop their knowledge and skills and improve the care that they can give to their patients. It will

also mean that ophthalmic staff will receive academic credit for the training and education that they have undertaken over the years. This is particularly important with the implementation of Agenda for Change in August this year.

A structured and accredited ophthalmic course undoubtedly will improve recruitment and retention – a timely development with the rapid increase in the workload of many ophthalmic departments throughout the United Kingdom.

What will the Ophthalmic Science, Technology and Care Course (OSTC) look like?

The proposed OSTC course is designed to meet the needs of staff for whom there are no current programmes, but modules can be utilised by other ophthalmic in existing professional programmes.

Students will need to meet standards for Numeracy, Chemistry, Physics and Human Biology. Access courses may be developed. The course will be work-based and course materials will be delivered in electronic format.

Principles of Course Development

The OSTC course will be developed on the following principles:

The course will equip ophthalmic staff with the knowledge and skills required to perform competently. This definition is broad, and includes professional development, research, leadership skills and reflective practice.

The course will be tailored to the

learning needs of students. There will be adequate allocation of learning time and facilities, and access to mentors and tutors.

The course will meet both vocational and academic requirements, and knowledge and understanding acquired for a vocational qualification will be accredited towards the academic qualification.

As appropriate, the skills of staff will be developed before they are required to perform in the clinical setting i.e. students should be provided with an environment outside the clinical setting where they can learn and practice skills.

The primary purpose of assessment is to ensure acceptable standards for safe practice. This will include assessment of knowledge, and of the application of knowledge and skills in the workplace. Assessment will be standardised across the UK.

Continued...



AHPO Faculty

There is a lot of work to be done!!!

If you can

- Write and/or review course materials and textbooks
- Organise courses and training programmes

You may want to join the AHPO Faculty

Please contact AHPO at the address overleaf

COMING EVENTS

Inaugural Scientific Symposium of Association of Ophthalmic Science Practitioners

Saturday 24th July

Medical Education Centre
Queen's Hospital
Burton-on-Trent

For further details see www.aosp.org.uk or contact susan.anderton@ntlworld.com

OSTC Course continued.....

There are three proposed levels for the OSTC course:

Level 1 Higher Professional Diploma / Year 1 BSc Honours

Ophthalmic knowledge: basic ophthalmic anatomy, physiology, pathology and ocular and systemic disease, optics, pharmacology.

Ophthalmic skills: assessment of visual acuity, visual field assessment, focimetry and autorefraction, instillation of eye drops, basic ocular imaging, ophthalmic history and examination.

Level 2 Foundation Degree / Year 2 BSc Honours

Ophthalmic knowledge: as for level 1 plus intermediate ophthalmic sciences relevant to cataract, glaucoma and retinal vascular disease; ophthalmic instrumentation; epidemiology, public health and health informatics; vision impairment and rehabilitation.

Ophthalmic skills: (optional depending on areas of practice) as for level 1 plus advanced visual field assessment, biometry, intermediate ocular photography and imaging, ophthalmic surgical assisting and perioperative care, visual rehabilitation.

Modules may be developed for ophthalmic surgery and perioperative care.

Level 3 Year 3 BSc Honours

Options available at this level would include electrodiagnosis, ophthalmic ultrasonography, ocular angiography and advanced ocular imaging, advanced glaucoma practice, advanced biometry, health informatics, management and leadership.

LAUNCH OF HEALTHCARE SCIENCE CAREER PATHWAY

At the Healthcare Science Shaping Careers Event, 9th –10th December 2003, the Chief Scientific Officer, Dr Sue Hill, outlined the new integrated career pathway for all staff who work in the Healthcare Science sector of the NHS.

In ophthalmology this includes clinical scientists, ophthalmic photographers and ocular imagers, ophthalmic technical staff / MTOs and ophthalmic research staff.

Further details can be found on the AHPO website at www.ahpo.org.

In summary the career pathway levels relevant to ophthalmic and vision science are as follows:

Level 3 Senior Assistant Ophthalmic Science Practitioner

Level 4 Junior and Senior Associate Ophthalmic Science Practitioner

Level 5 Qualified Ophthalmic Science Practitioner

Level 6 Specialist Ophthalmic Science Practitioner

Ophthalmic and Vision Science NOS piloted

Twenty Ophthalmic and Vision Science National Occupational Standards have been written and are currently being

piloted. They will become available later in the year

About AHPO...

In 1999 the Royal College of Ophthalmologists established a multiprofessional sub-committee to consider education and training programmes for ophthalmic support staff. The sub-committee was included in the Healthcare Science Project to develop National Occupational Standards and career pathways for the Healthcare Science sector of the NHS. It was agreed that the standards should apply to all professionals doing the same work and that a representative multiprofessional organisation was needed. Initially formed as the Ophthalmic Multiprofessional Group, AHPO was established in 2002.

AHPO is a registered limited company No 5001958, Bretby House, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs, DE15 0PT

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.ahpo.org