

# RCGP *International*

## RCGP International 2004 International Development and Programmes

**Dr Garth Manning, FRCGP**  
**Medical Director, International Family**  
**Medicine Development Programme (IDP)**

With over 21,000 members we are the leading academic body for general practice/family medicine in Europe, developing and setting the standards for postgraduate medical education and continuing professional development (CPD). We are committed to fostering the development of primary health care worldwide and have already established partnerships with a number of institutions internationally, through Memoranda of Understanding and other agreements.

We have expertise in a wide range of activities including:


- Curriculum development at under- and post-graduate levels, as well as in the development of CME/CPD programmes
- Medical education courses – including Training of Trainers (TOT) and the “Excellence in General Practice” Course, detailed elsewhere in this brochure.
- Accreditation and assessment – providing expert advice on accreditation of courses and appointments, and for assessing training and educational programmes at all levels up to the MRCGP[INT] standard
- Short courses and seminars including:
  - Communication skills training
  - Minor surgery courses
  - Adolescent health issues
  - Emergencies in primary health care



*Dr Garth Manning and overseas visitors at the Wonca 2002 conference*

- General practice research – RCGP has always recognised the importance of research to general practice and, through our Research Network, we are keen to develop joint research activities with overseas partners, including the research master class programme.
- Primary care team development and accreditation through the quality team development programme

Please do contact us if you would like any further information on our skills or services.



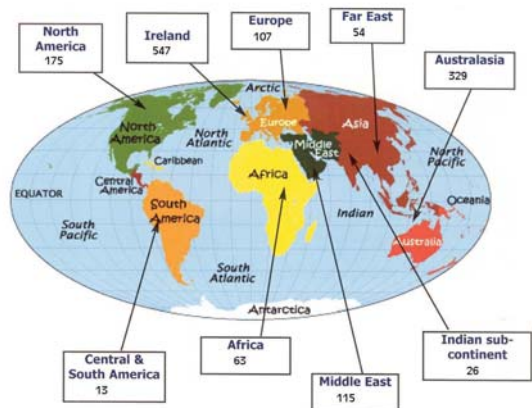
**WHO ARE WE?**  
 The International Department, RCGP

**WHAT WE DO**  
**International Family Medicine Development Programmes**  
 Curriculum Development  
 Courses and Seminars  
 Quality Assurance Programmes  
 Accreditation and Assessment Visits  
 Research and Study Visits  
 Travel Scholarships  
 Develop Educational Materials  
 Aid educational exchange

**WHO WE WORK WITH**  
 Bangladesh Brazil Brunei Cyprus India Kazakhstan Kenya Kosovo Kuwait Malta Pakistan  
 Palestine Singapore Thailand Qatar and many more places

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### Members around the world



## International Visits and Exchanges

One of the roles of the International Department of the College is to facilitate educational exchanges and visits. The aims of these are to promote international understanding, education, and friendship with a view to promoting high standards of general practice and family medicine.



*The Lingoring Gardens, Suzhou, China*

An example of such a visit is that of Dr Zhigang Pan from Shanghai, China. The following is an excerpt from his trip:

**Dr Zhigang Pan,  
Shanghai, China**

"Primary care is the basis of the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK. A team of various health professionals provide primary health care for the public, and patients need to have a written referral from their GPs to see specialists in a hospital. As a result GPs are seen as the "gatekeepers" of health. Secondary care, in the middle of the NHS is provided in a hospital environment and at the top of the NHS is the tertiary care which provides care for complicated, serious diseases. Thus, the framework of the UK health service is like a pyramid. This system is cost-effective and in proper order and the spirit of cooperation passes through the whole system.

GP training in the UK is very practical and highly interesting. The assessment of GPs is fair and monitored by a GP trainer.

Conversely, the government of China applies a competition policy for health service. This policy wastes a lot of limited medical resources and results in less cooperation between primary, secondary and tertiary care. The education or the training for GPs in China is based on the old specialty training experience that tends to overemphasis hospital-based clinical training and lacks national criteria for assessment.

Following my NHS experience, I believe that if we can set up a valid, high-quality group of GPs in China, Chinese people would acquire a fairer, more convenient and cost-effective health service."

## World Organisation Of Family Doctors (WONCA)

**Dr Philip R Evans, FRCGP,  
President of WONCA Europe**

The RCGP is the largest member organisation within the European region. The college has been a strong supporter of WONCA as a world organisation since its development 30 years ago and was particularly involved in the development of the European region of WONCA in 1995. At that time the then College President Dr Lotte Newman was Regional Vice President for Europe and with others helped to bring together all the disparate academic organisations throughout Europe to form one body. WONCA Europe now includes network organisations for:

**Education** – The European Academy Of General Practice Teachers (EURACT)

**Quality assurance** – The European Working Party on Quality in Practice (EQuIP)

**Research** – The European General Practice Research Network (EGPRN)

It also has close collaborative relations with the rural practice network (EURIPA) and the network group for health promotion and preventive activities (EUROPREV). All these organisations hold regular twice yearly meetings at different venues in Europe. Full details of how to make contact with them can be obtained from the International Department at the College.

The aims and goals of WONCA Europe are:

- To provide a forum for exchange of knowledge and information between member organisations in general practice/family medicine.
- To initiate activities to foster general practice as a scientific discipline.
- To encourage and support the development of academic organisations of general practice in Europe.
- To represent with other European general practice organisations the academic aspects of general practice in European forums concerned with health and medical care.

The WONCA Europe Annual Conference will be held in Amsterdam (June 1–4 2004) on 'Quality in Practice'.

The Wonca World Conference will be held in Orlando (October 13–17) on 'Family Medicine – Caring for the World'.



## International Development Programmes

**Dr Garth Manning, FRCGP  
Medical Director, (IDP)**

The Royal College of General Practitioners has long had a commitment to foster the development of general practice/family medicine internationally. For many years it has responded to numerous requests for collaboration and assistance, and in 1998 this led to the creation of a dedicated International Department, which reports to the College's International Committee.

Interest in primary health care (PHC) has blossomed in recent years, as governments struggle to manage increasing medical demands and technologies within limited budgets. A health care system based on PHC is often seen as providing the answer to the enigma, offering a more cost-effective way of delivering health care within the funding constraints faced by most countries.

With over 21,000 members the College has been able to provide advice and expertise on: development of undergraduate and postgraduate curricula and training programmes; examination methodologies and assessment mechanisms; accreditation processes; educational programmes and training courses; and has provided a whole range of technical assistance to a host of overseas countries. More recently we have exported our International Teachers Course to a number of countries, and are working with many others to develop local examinations for MRCGP[INT] accreditation.

### Where in the World are We?

#### Latin America

Many Latin American countries are moving away from their more secondary based systems to ones based on primary health care. The College has already close links with **Argentina** and **Brazil**, and has held discussions with many other countries including **Mexico**, **Colombia** and **Panama**.

#### Asia

Long-term associations continue with Aga Khan University Karachi (**Pakistan**) and Tribhuvan University Katmandu (**Nepal**). A newer association has been with the Apollo Hospitals Group in Hyderabad, Chennai and Delhi (**India**), whilst **Brunei** is a pioneer site for MRCGP[INT]. We have increasing collaboration with colleagues in **Bangladesh** and **Sri Lanka** and are working closely with Thammasat University in Bangkok (**Thailand**).

#### Europe

College representatives have provided training input and accreditation advice in **Kosovo** and we have held International Teachers Programmes in both **Malta** and **Cyprus**. We look forward to longer-term collaborations with all these countries. Previous very successful programmes in **Ukraine**, **Karelia** and **Kazakhstan** have now concluded, but work continues in **Russia**, as does a long-term



*Festival procession in Bundi, India*

exchange programme with **Portugal**, and in a trainer exchange programme with **Lyon, France**.

#### Middle East

Apart from Oman, the first MRCGP[INT] pioneer site, the college has been working with **Qatar**, **Saudi Arabia**, **Dubai**, and has long-term links with **Kuwait**. In addition we have provided input into GP training programmes in

**Palestine** (Gaza and West Bank), **Lebanon** and **Egypt**.

#### Africa

Regrettably our inputs into Africa have been very few to date, mainly because of difficulties in funding, but we are pursuing links with a number of countries, including **Kenya** and **Tanzania**, and hope to develop further links over time.

## RCGP International course for teachers of general practice "Promoting excellence in teaching general practice"

**Dr John Howard, FRCGP  
Chairman, International Committee**

Drawing on the College's experience of helping colleagues in many countries and cultures, the course demonstrates that there are common themes that underpin all good teaching across culture, health systems, and medical education.

The programme structure is modular, with the first residential block "Learning and Teaching Across Cultures", which provides an introduction to the principles that underpin modern medical education at all levels and cultures. This provides an opportunity for participants to experience the educational style and ethos of the course and the commitment and responsibility required to formally enrol in the continuing modules.

The next modules address the educational strands of "The Learning Process; Planning to Teach; Appraisal, Assessment and Evaluation; and Developing a Teacher Identity", undertaken in two intensive residential blocks with workplace assignments before, during and after these.

Following further teaching experience and appropriate assignments, there is a final module "Educational Leadership" which addresses the participants teaching experiences, emerging needs, and the academic strategies required to progress the educational agendas of their organisations and community.

The course promotes an "open" model of teaching, where participants are encouraged to gain an insight into the educational concepts and their practical application in teaching General Practice and Family Medicine. Through the process of reflection, experimentation, and rehearsal, the participants are encouraged to develop their identity as a GP teacher, underpinned by sound educational principles. What is more the course is enjoyable and participants benefit greatly from fellowship and mutual support, building networks of like minded teachers who may be working in isolation.

The academic rigour of the course is ensured a UK University validation, and with further work, it can achieve a professional teaching qualification, the Postgraduate Certificate in Education and then on to higher qualifications.

Successful courses have been held in England, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and are currently taught in Malta and Cyprus.



*The theatre of Kourion, Cyprus*

## International Travel Scholarships

The following is a reflection on a travel scholarship from Argentina to England.

**Dr Sergio A di Laudadio,  
Buenos Aires, Argentina**

My experiences of visits to different cities, and meeting GPs of various backgrounds and experience was most valuable. Health management in the UK is far better organised compared to my country. Even if someone can study management of primary care and the way the NHS works from books, first hand experience is necessary and by far more important. At present, I am a second year student completing a Masters in Economy and Health Management at Buenos Aires. The visit to the UK gave me a kind of knowledge you cannot learn from books or a Masters. I also want to underline the importance of the International Department of the RCGP who arranged in just a few days all my visit of eight weeks, taking me to Cardiff, Liverpool, Northern Ireland, Northumbria, Scotland and London, visiting 11 practices, a health Authority and 5 universities (Liverpool, Northumbria, Newcastle and one in Coleraine in Northern Ireland). I was also lucky enough to be present during the discussion about the new GP Contract.

The purpose of my visit was to learn how the NHS is organised, the prescription policy, audit in Primary Care and how the programme of residence for the GPs is organised. By far all the aims of my visit were achieved and I would not change any part of my visit. However, my advice to others would be to firstly, organise the journey before you arrive in UK in order to find accommodation in the different cities and arrange a specific program; secondly, have a clear aim and tell it to the International team. One and a half years have passed since I enjoyed my visit and as I am in contact with doctors of Family Medicine, I encourage them to visit UK to see how the NHS is organized and how a GP works each day.



Royal College of GPs, Princes Gate, London

## RCGP International Travel Scholarships

- Fully qualified and trained GP or Family Physician?
- Interested in conducting research into an aspect of primary healthcare?
- Looking to travel overseas?

**The International Travel Scholarships assist** any general practitioner or family doctor in the world to undertake personal study of an aspect of primary health care in an international context.

**The awards are open to** members and non-members from the UK and overseas. They enable GPs travelling to or from the UK to study an aspect of primary health care internationally which is relevant to their country's needs, or to help develop systems of primary care.

**Application forms** can be downloaded from the RCGP website at [http://www.rcgp.org.uk/rcgp/international/its\\_info.asp](http://www.rcgp.org.uk/rcgp/international/its_info.asp) or by contacting the International Department (see contact details on page 1).

### Closing dates

Friday 13 August 2004  
Friday 14 January 2005

### The Royal College of General Practitioners

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of The Royal College of General Practitioners or its International Committee. While the latter has taken every care with regard to the accuracy of the material, it cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained therein.

## MRCGP INTERNATIONAL: MRCGP[INT]

**Dr John Howard, FRCGP  
Chairman RCGP International  
Committee  
Chairman MRCGP[INT] Board**

What does this mean to Family Doctors worldwide?

Until recently, it has proved difficult to identify the principles that could provide the academic rigour to develop and accredit examinations of competence for Family Doctors / General Practitioners across the diversity of culture, language, geography, epidemiology and health systems. Following a worldwide consultation exercise and implementation in different pioneer sites, the RCGP has developed a programme of academic support. It identifies the principles of a sound assessment framework, and has developed a roadmap to enable practitioners in countries throughout the world to attain the MRCGP[INT].

The standard of the MRCGP[INT] is set at the same level of academic rigour as the MRCGP examination in the UK, which the RCGP has developed over a thirty-year period and is recognised as a leading standard for the assessment of the competence of GPs working in the UK. The designation MRCGP[INT] will be in addition to, rather than replace, any qualification awarded by the relevant national body.

Development of a local MRCGP[INT] is intended to provide a helpful impetus to the education and training programmes and a focus to the aspirations of family doctors and their organisations. Success demonstrates a standard on a par with their colleagues in other specialties.

The development of the assessment framework is directly relevant to the culture, health systems and health issues of the countries concerned, through the national family medicine examination body in that country. The role of the RCGP is to support the development of assessments within the local curriculum, which can be accredited to the standard of the MRCGP[INT]. Success also achieves Membership to the RCGP and access to its academic clinical, educational, research and quality assurance developments.

Oman was the first pioneer country to achieve MRCGP[INT] accreditation in November 2001 followed by Brunei in 2003. It is intended that the family medicine programmes for Kuwait and Hong Kong will be ready for accreditation in the near future; the RCGP is also working with colleagues in Cyprus, Egypt, Kosovo, Malta, South Asia, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar to support their similar work. The diversity reflects the very different perspectives and challenges working across ethnicity, culture, geography and health systems.

