

For immediate release

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Society and Faculty vote to stay as separate organisations

The Society and Faculty of Occupational Medicine announced today that they are to remain as two separate organisations. The announcement follows votes by the two memberships on resolutions to join together to create a single organisation for occupational health. The Faculty voted in favour of the resolution and whilst over 60% of the Society's membership agreed, their resolution was not carried due to the Society constitution requiring a two-thirds majority. The two organisations have however, agreed that they will continue to work closely together to represent the interests of health and the workplace and the occupational health community.

The Society will place a greater emphasis on extending its membership and attracting more nurses and AHPs to become members. It will undertake a review of the services that it provides including considering extending its quality assured appraisal scheme so that it meets the needs of these groups. It will continue to provide excellent education and CPD for all of its members.

A key strategic focus for the Faculty of Occupational Medicine remains working with the National School of Occupational Health, and with other key stakeholders such as Health Education England, with the aim of increasing the number of new trainees entering occupational medicine. It will also continue to work with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, Royal College of Physicians and the General Medical Council to maintain and improve standards of practice.

Dr Richard Heron, President of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine said, "There has been an excellent debate in the run up to the vote. We must build on this decision to listen to our members and refocus our attention. We will redouble our efforts and work together for the benefit of the occupational health community and the working age population."

Dr Alasdair Emslie, President of the Society of Occupational Medicine, agreed, “Whilst not a formal merger, I believe that this marks a new era of cooperation and collaboration between the Society and Faculty. I hope that the Society can also create a natural home for nurses and others working in occupational health.”

Christina Butterworth, chair of the Association of Occupational Health Nurse Practitioners said, “I believe that we can and should continue to work with the Society and Faculty to share and develop good practice in occupational health and work together on setting professional standards of practice and continual professional development. Through the National School of Occupational Health, we can develop training for the profession, liaising with the appropriate regulators. “

Occupational Health nurses should register for the free OH Nurse Connect service to be kept informed of developments: www.som.org.uk/oh-nurses-register/

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