

FRIDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2016

Welcome to the FOM Newsletter.

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## Professional Briefing Day – Planes, Trains & Automobiles: Fitness to Operate Vehicles

In the wake of the 2014 Glasgow bin lorry tragedy, much discussion has taken place about the medical standards used to assess our fitness to drive. What can be done to prevent similar events happening again? What symptoms and diagnoses might affect a patient's ability to hold a license? And how can GPs and occupational physicians help ensure their patients are fit to drive?

During **Planes, Trains & Automobiles: Fitness to Operate Vehicles**, we'll be considering the questions around our fitness to operate not just road vehicles, but also locomotives and airoplanes. Accompanied by an expert from each field we will explore what constitutes being 'fit'; the implications of health conditions; diagnosis, monitoring and appraisal processes; and wrestle with exactly what is meant by 'best practice'.

We'll also look at where approaches intersect and diverge across these three industries, seeking to place our own practice within a wider context, and ultimately take away invaluable lessons from the experiences of our peers.

The day will be run jointly by **Dr Wyn Parry**, Senior Medical Advisor to the DVLA; **Dr Sally Roblin**, Occupational Health Physician at Eurotunnel; and **Wg Cdr David Mallett**, an Occupational Physician with the RAF. Drawing on this tripartite of experience, the day will feature introductions to each specialist area, followed by lively case discussions and Q&As. Collaboration is the watchword: Briefing Days are informal events aimed at getting everyone in attendance talking and teaching one another new skills. Because of this, places are limited to 20 to ensure all delegates can fully participate. Signup is now live, so grab a ticket from the **Faculty website** now to avoid disappointment.

The event is CPD approved to the tune of 4.5 points, will run from 09:30–16:30, and is to be held at the Faculty office in Central London. Tickets are priced at **£125 for Members**, **£75 for concessions** and **£150 for Non-Members**, and include a buffet lunch.

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## Health for Health Professionals Core Competency Day Schedule for 2016

The 'Health for Health Professionals' initiative continues into its sixth successful year in 2016, offering enhanced competencies for occupational physicians who see doctors as patients. The training was developed in collaboration with the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Psychiatrists, both of whom have been working with the Faculty to develop better working practices.

The day-long Core Competency workshop features interactive group sessions alongside expert advice from members of the Faculty's HHP steering group, including the HHP Lead Dr Debbie Cohen. Delegates can expect to be briefed in a wide array of subjects, including diagnosis of health problems and behavioural issues, good communication skills, regulatory issues, and clinical assessment and management.

There will be Core Competency days taking place on **June 1**, **October 10**, and **November 5**. For more information and booking please visit the **Faculty website**.

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## SEQOHS Appoints New Chair

The SEQOHS accreditation scheme recently announced the appointment of Dr Robert Hardman as its new chair. As chair, Dr Hardman will have a strategic role in the SEQOHS accreditation scheme, provide leadership and direction and chair the SEQOHS steering group.

Dr Hardman is an experienced occupational medicine consultant. He is also the deputy lead of the Faculty's Quality Improvement Working Group that drives quality improvement initiatives. During his career he has worked in the NHS, the army and the private sector.

On the appointment Robert said:

**“I am delighted to accept the role of SEQOHS chair. The SEQOHS accreditation scheme has become the definition of quality for occupational health delivery. I now aim to position SEQOHS as the industry standard- for all UK occupational health services and providers.”**

Dr Hardman brings a wealth of experience, and his vision and enthusiasm to his new role as chair will benefit all SEQOHS stakeholders, including occupational health services, the SEQOHS steering group and assessors. Please join me in congratulating Dr Hardman on his appointment.

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## Dr Bill Gunnyeon CBE appointed IOSH Chair of Board of Trustees

Faculty President from 2002–05, Bill Gunnyeon, has been appointed Chair of Board of Trustees for the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). In his new role, Dr Gunnyeon will be instrumental in shaping the future of the safety and health profession, working with IOSH members to deliver a new strategy for the leading professional body.

He said: **“The health and wellbeing of working age people has never been more important to economic success than it is today and health and safety professionals have a key role to play in protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of all those at work. For those professionals the quality of education, training, on-going professional development and support available to them is critical to fulfilling their roles and IOSH provides the robust framework on which this all depends.”**

Again, please join me in congratulating Dr Gunnyeon on this exciting new chapter in his life. You can read more on his appointment on the [IOSH website](#).

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## Obituary – Dr Rodney Alpin

Dr Rodney Alpin MBE, who was also a Fellow of the Faculty and Honourary Member of the Society, passed away peacefully 26 January 2016. His obituary in the Yorkshire Post succinctly read: 'Much loved Husband, Dad, Grandad and Great Grandad'. His funeral was held Friday 5 February at Stonefall Crematorium near Harrogate.

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## Media Spokesperson Database

The Faculty and Society often get asked for comment and opinion by the media across a range of occupational health issues. It's great that we are seen as the go to place for expert clinical advice.

But finding an appropriate spokesperson isn't always easy. So we'd like a list of members who'd be happy to speak to the media on behalf of us and what their areas of clinical expertise are. For example, this week we've been trying to find an expert on ultrasonic sickness.

If you haven't done media work before but would like to build your confidence,

just let us know and we'll give you some one to one training.

Just email Jane at [Jane.Edbrooke@FOM.ac.uk](mailto:Jane.Edbrooke@FOM.ac.uk) if you're interested.

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## NICE Seeking New Standing Committee Chair

An exciting opportunity has arisen within NICE, who are currently advertising for the position of **Standing Chair for the Clinical Guideline Updates Standing Committee**. The chair of the committee will work in collaboration with NICE's Clinical Guideline Update Team and other committee members to rapidly update areas of clinical guidelines where it has been agreed, through a reviews process, that updating is necessary.

NICE are looking for a skilled and experienced professional with experience of chairing health related multi-professional committees or working groups at a national or regional level. Strong interpersonal skills and excellent verbal and written skills are required, along with an ability to communicate complex issues to differing audiences. Applicants will have a good understanding of the principles of evidence based medicine and the development of clinical guidelines as well as knowledge of the wider health system.

I'm sure this describes a good number of our members and officers, and I'd urge anyone interested to head over to the [NICE website](#) for further details on the role. Applications should be submitted by **5pm, 25 February**.

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## IIAC Call for Evidence

The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council (IIAC) provides advice to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in Great Britain and the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland about the Industrial Injuries scheme – the scheme by which employed earners in the UK receive benefits for industrial accidents or certain scheduled occupational diseases (prescribed diseases).

IIAC is currently seeking evidence about Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)/Vibration White Finger (VWF) and the use of jack hammers to underpin foundations in building, construction or subsidence engineering work. This review will consider whether current scientific and medical evidence justifies extending the prescription for Prescribed Disease A11 (HAVS) to include the use of these percussive hand powered tools in these type of occupational circumstances.

Evidence should be submitted to IICA no later than **7th March**, and more information can be found on the [Faculty website](#).

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## That Was The ~~Week~~ Fortnight That Was

**A few stories from the world of occupational health and medicine you may or may not have missed since last we spoke.**

### **Why employers should recognise the scale of mental wellbeing**

- Mental health poses a massive threat to businesses and organisations in every sector

across the UK.

### **How to help workers with seasonal affective disorder**

- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is one of the reasons for increased workplace absenteeism in the winter months.
- SAD not understood and often dismissed as excuse for not wanting to leave the house on cold and dark winter mornings—it but is a recognised medical disorder.

### **Four in five NHS staff thought about leaving**

- “Half the respondents said stress had damaged their family and/or personal life while almost a quarter said they had received counselling or medical treatment as a result of work stress.”

### **The hidden workplace skills of those with dyspraxia**

- Unlocking the potential within staff is beneficial to both employer and employee. Simple adjustments to the workplace environment are often simple and cost-effective, with costs quickly offset by their positive results.

### **Injuries at work may increase risk of losing one’s job**

- Reuters Health reports on US study featured in Occupational and Environmental Health.
- Study of nursing home workers finds that within six months of an injury, workers are more than twice as likely to lose their jobs.
- Workers injured multiple times were also twice as likely to quit their jobs in the next six months as colleagues with no injuries, the study also found.

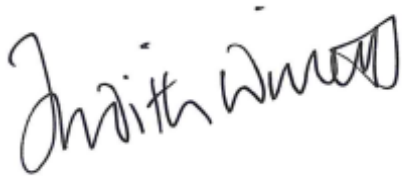
### **Disruption to women's lives caused by periods needs more research**

- Millions of girls and women avoid school and work while they are menstruating because of stigma and inadequate hygiene, yet too little research has been done to assess the effectiveness of programmes designed to address the problem, says an Oxford University study.

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With best wishes



Judith Willetts  
Chief Executive

