

President's Christmas letter 2009

Dear Colleague

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to send Christmas greetings to Faculty members and to be able to thank members who have worked for the Faculty, in various ways, throughout 2009.

Like all areas of postgraduate medical education, occupational medicine depends entirely on the good will of doctors to give something back to the specialty, so that the next generation of specialists can be supported through their four year training period. The Faculty owes a considerable debt of gratitude to trainers, regional specialty advisers and examiners, who ensure that our trainees receive the right training and assessment, on their way to becoming a specialist. I know that you are all doing this on top of busy day jobs and I would like to express my appreciation for all your hard work.

The last two years have been a time of great change in the curriculum, and so I would also like to thank those many members who have worked tirelessly to develop new examinations and assessment systems and to ensure that the new training programme is being introduced according to plan and on time.

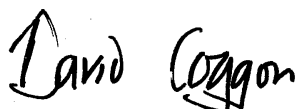
As well as our core work of training doctors, we also aim to exert influence where we can, and to develop new policies and new advice on practice, in order to improve health in the workplace. We have therefore been active on many policy fronts, including the development of standards for occupational health services, talking to Government about the implications of the Fit Note and the need for evaluation of Fitness for Work services and working with the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Society of Occupational Medicine on creating educational tools for general practitioners. All these projects have involved many members, as well as colleagues from other organisations, and our thanks are also due to these groups.

Of course, the development of revalidation systems for occupational medicine has been taking an increasing amount of our time during 2009. This too has demanded a significant amount of work from a small band of members and I am grateful to them for their work to ensure that we have a revalidation structure which is fit for purpose in our specialty.

The Board has recently been considering in some depth the current state of occupational medicine and the need to grow the specialty. There will be further news of this for members in the New Year but please be assured that the Board is very much aware of concerns about the need for more specialists and more trainees in occupational medicine.

That having been said, I hope that you can put aside work concerns over the forthcoming Christmas season and enjoy a well deserved rest.

With thanks and all good wishes



David Coggon