

December 2010

This has been a truly exceptional year for the Academy and we were delighted that so many Fellows were able to come together and celebrate our achievements at the Soirée in our new headquarters on 18 November. It was a lively evening with much debate about the future opportunities for UK medical science.

The Academy played an important role in helping to protect the UK science and health research budgets. We informed the Government's preparation of the Comprehensive Spending Review and, at its request, prepared a briefing on 'Biomedical research – a platform for increasing health and wealth in the UK' Mr David Willetts MP, Minister of State for Universities and Science, publically identified this document as having provided invaluable information that helped to convince the Treasury to provide a better than expected settlement for science.

The Academy's increased profile and influence will enable us to inform the Government's agenda for medical research over the coming years and ensure the UK maximises its potential as a global leader in medical research. Over the course of this year,

we have also strengthened our international links; we were delighted to host a visit from Dr Peggy Hamburg, FDA Commissioner in the US as part of our FORUM activities. A video of Dr Hamburg's lecture can be viewed at www.acmedsci.ac.uk/index.php?pid=238

The Fellowship's authority, expertise and commitment is at the core of our success. This year has seen an increase in nominations to the Fellowship and we would be very grateful for your help in the selection process by providing peer reviews for nominees. The new Fellows will be welcomed into the Academy on 29 June 2011.

As the year draws to a close, may I thank all the Fellows, colleagues, and friends who have supported our work during the past twelve months and wish you all every success and happiness in 2011.

Suzanne Candy

Putting health at the heart of climate change mitigation



Following our statement on climate change and health last year the Academy has recently worked with the Inter-Academy Medical Panel (IAMP), a global network of medical academies of which we are a member, to coordinate an international statement on the health benefits of policies to tackle climate change. These health co-benefits — which are additional to the global-health benefits that come from mitigation — show that climate change mitigation strategies need not be socially and economically demanding.

For example, introducing low-emission cookstoves in India could prevent premature deaths caused by exposure to household pollutants, as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, reducing the use of private cars in urban areas and an increased proportion of more active alternatives

in urban transport, such as cycling or walking, could lower emissions and reduce the burden of heart disease, diabetes, some cancers, and depression.

The Academy worked with colleagues at IAMP and the German Academy of Sciences, the Leopoldina, to develop and publicise the statement ahead of the latest round of UN climate talks in Cancún, Mexico. Over forty five of the world's academies have now signed up to the statement, including the Institute of Medicine at the US National Academies of Science, the Chinese Academy of Engineering, the French Academy of Sciences and the Science Council of Japan, demonstrating the level of global agreement on the issue. The World Health Organisation (WHO) also gave their support to the statement, a key endorsement ahead of the Cancún talks.

Maria Neira, WHO Director for Public Health and Environment, said, *'WHO has long argued that embracing 'health-enhancing' low-carbon strategies can allow policy-makers to demonstrate positive health and wealth generating results within a period of years – while averting devastating long-term impacts to the planet. I welcome the IAMP statement which shows the engagement of the health community on this critical issue.'*

The full statement can be read at www.iamp-online.org/statements

Celebrating our new headquarters



Over 200 Fellows attended the Soirée on 18 November to celebrate the opening of Academy's new headquarters. Speeches were given by the President Professor Sir John Bell FRS HonFREng PMedSci and Sir Mark Walport FMedSci. Guests included former Academy Presidents Sir Peter Lachmann FRS FMedSci and Sir Keith Peters FRS FMedSci as well as current and former Officers and members of the Academy's Council.

Guests took the opportunity to explore the new headquarters while enjoying the excellent hospitality on offer from our in-house caterers Harbour & Jones. The opening of our own headquarters marks an exciting new chapter in the Academy's history. We are certain that our 'new hub for medical science' will help generate even more ideas and opportunities, for us to take forward as an Academy.

Using the Fellows' room

The Fellows' room is the heart of our new headquarters. Located in the Jean Shanks Library, it provides hot-desks with free Wi-Fi for private working as well as comfortable seating for small meetings and informal get togethers.

It is open from 08.00 to 20.00 Monday to Friday. Use of the Fellows' room is free for all Fellows and complimentary hot drinks are available for you and your guests. A cloakroom, changing rooms, showers and a secure bicycle park are also available for Fellows' use.

Host your event at 41 Portland Place

The Academy now operates a contemporary conference venue in the heart of medical London that provides modern meeting facilities within the period elegance and grandeur of a Grade II* listed London townhouse.

All Fellows and registered charities receive a 20% discount on room hire. Any profits generated through the hire of rooms will provide important revenue to support the Academy's projects and activities. Spaces available to hire include:

- Period rooms suitable for formal meetings, receptions and private dining.
- Modern rooms for board meetings, round table discussions and strategy sessions.
- A purpose built conference room ideal for discussion meetings, press conferences and presentations.
- A terrace for summer parties and outdoor entertaining.

Further information on the rooms can be viewed at www.41portlandplace.com

Or Fellows can speak to Lucy Clayton, our Events & Sales Coordinator, on 020 7520 5444 or enquiries@41portlandplace.com



ACADEMY OF
MEDICAL SCIENCES

41 Portland Place



Supporting clinical academics to pursue research

Nearly 10 years ago, the Academy of Medical Sciences launched 'The National Clinician Scientist Award Scheme' with the aim of addressing longstanding concerns surrounding the pursuit and development of a career in academic medicine. This scheme has been a resounding success, providing much needed support for research-led clinical academics to develop their academic careers and establish themselves as independent researchers.

Professor Anna Gilmore, Professor of Public Health, University of Bath is one such clinical academic who received a fellowship award in 2006. She describes her research below, made possible through the receipt of a Health Foundation and Academy of Medical Sciences Clinician Scientist Fellowship Award.

The need to understand the impact of corporations on health

Health is increasingly determined by major corporations, both directly through their sale and promotion of products that are injurious to health (tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy food products being the best examples) and indirectly through their influence on science and policy. For this reason, it is incumbent upon us to understand how corporations influence health and policy. This, and the need for public health policies to be properly evaluated, are the foundation for my Clinician Scientist Fellowship. The fellowship has enabled me to pursue this area of research, to establish a small but growing team of talented researchers and to make significant steps in what I believe will be an important field in the future of public health research.

My work falls into three main areas: evaluating the impact of policies on health; understanding industry influence on health; and developing evidence for future policies. Work on the first has concentrated on evaluating the impacts of smokefree legislation; work that was recently published in the *BMJ* and *Addiction* and presented at the All Party Parliamentary Group on Medical Research Summer Reception.

In terms of industry's influence on policy, work has progressed in a number of areas, but our most important finding has been to show that corporations are not just influencing policy in their immediate areas of interest but have collectively influenced 'upstream' policy issues, making it essential that public health groups now engage in these agendas.

In terms of ensuring this research reaches policy makers, considerable progress has been made with the work having been presented in the European Parliament, European Commission, House of Lords and House of Commons.

An example of success is that at one point we released our research in advance of publication to key European policy makers and understand that this played a key part in ensuring European Union support for Article 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The Framework Convention is the first global public health treaty to be developed by the World Health Organization and has now been ratified by 166 countries. Article 5.3 is its most novel aspect and specifically requires Parties to the treaty to protect their public health policies from the 'commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry'.

This and other achievements in tobacco control policy (not least the reduction in adult smoking prevalence rates from 28% in 1998 to 21% in 2008) contrasts with progress in alcohol and obesity. This is further underlined by the Secretary of State for Health's recent announcement of a new 'responsibility deal', bringing government and business together to promote innovation in public health which looks set to include alcohol and food (but not tobacco) companies. This approach both raises concerns about further progress and highlights the need for further research on the influence of corporations on public health and policy, effectively expanding research that is most advanced in tobacco control to other areas.

'My Clinician Scientist Fellowship award has provided me with the time and support to enable me to establish a research team and drive forward a new area of research. This opportunity is unique and without it, I would certainly not have made the progress I have.'

Professor Anna Gilmore, Professor of Public Health, Tobacco Control Research Group, University of Bath

Individuals supported by a Clinician Scientist Fellowships are eligible to join the Academy's mentoring scheme. Awardees supported by the Health Foundation also benefit from their expertise in leadership training and strategies to define and deliver better health and healthcare outcomes. The Clinician Scientist Fellowships and mentoring scheme are part of the Academy's portfolio of programmes to support the next generation of medical research leaders.

See www.acmedsci.co.uk/national for information about the scheme or visit www.health.org.uk for details on The Health Foundation.



Public dialogue: animals containing human material

One of the Academy's aims is to engage with the public to build confidence in the practice of medical research and to address public concerns. Recognising the strength of public opinion around the use of mixed animal/human ('inter-species') entities, earlier this year the Academy commissioned a public dialogue to inform our current study on 'animals containing human material'.

An independent evaluation of the programme is now available. It indicates that public participants found the workshops interesting, informative, and thought-provoking, and particularly valued the opportunity to exchange their views with the scientists who took part.

The evaluation report by Laura Grant Associates is available at www.acmedsci.ac.uk/p240.html For further details on the dialogue and working group study see www.acmedsci.ac.uk/p215.html

Applications for the Daniel Turnberg UK/Middle East Travel Fellowship Scheme

This distinctive scheme offers short-term travel fellowships to early and mid-career clinical academics and biomedical scientists, providing them with the opportunity to gain additional research experience, learn new techniques and to develop international collaborations.

The third round of funding is now open for applications. The deadline for receipt of applications is 17 January 2011. The fellowships are open to individuals from Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, The Palestinian Territory and the UK, providing airfare and a subsistence allowance for a period of up to four weeks.

Please pass on details of this scheme to any colleagues who would be interested in applying.

Visit www.acmedsci.ac.uk/turnberg for full details.



2011 dates for your diaries

12 January – Clinical Academic Pathways - opportunities and future directions

An opportunity for clinical academic trainees to discuss key issues with research funders, policy makers and industry leaders. Speakers include Professor Dame Sally Davies FMedSci, Professor Sir John Savill FRSE FMedSci and Sir Mark Walport FMedSci

11 February – Deadline for 2011 Fellows election referee reports

29 June – New Fellows Admission Day

23 September – Deadline for nominations to 2012 Fellowship election

24 November – AGM and Jean Shanks Lecture

Coming soon...

A new pathway for the regulation and governance of clinical health research

Report of a working group chaired by Professor Sir Michael Rawlins FMedSci

Diabetes and obesity: getting to the heart of the matter

Report of a symposium held jointly with the Royal Society of Edinburgh

Supporting the next generation: an evaluation of the Academy's mentoring and outreach scheme 2002-2010

Report of an evaluation carried out by People Science Policy

Animals containing human material

Report of a working group chaired by Professor Martin Bobrow CBE FRS FMedSci