**INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS**

**Hong Kong**

**Hong Kong Academy of Medicine to Host 25th Anniversary Congress**

Sessions on trends in medical regulation will be included at the 25th Anniversary Congress of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, to be held December 7–9, 2018, at the Academy’s headquarters in Hong Kong. Theme for the Congress is “Beyond 25: New Paradigms in Healthcare.”

Topics of interest being planned for the Congress, of interest to medical regulators, include “Leadership and Ethical Challenges in Medical Practice” and “Medical Regulation: Supporting Technology, Protecting Patients” on December 7; “Medicine in the Digital Era” on December 8; and “Looking after the Mental Health of Our Own Profession” on December 9. Sessions will be held in the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Jockey Club Building, 99 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong.

Details about the program can be found at the Congress website, at www.hkamonline.hk/25congress/.

Source: Hong Kong Academy of Medicine website announcement

**IAMRA**

**Two New Members Join IAMRA**

The International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA) has announced the addition of two new organizations to its membership roster: the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council and the National Center for Independent Examination in Kazakhstan.

IAMRA currently has 115 members from 48 countries.

To learn more about IAMRA, visit www.iamra.com.

Source: IAMRA website announcement

**New Zealand**

**Medical Council Seeks Input of New Zealand Physicians on Sexual and Professional Boundaries in Medical Practice**

The Medical Council of New Zealand is seeking input from New Zealand’s physician workforce on updated guidelines to help define sexual and professional boundaries in New Zealand medical practice.

The updated guidelines reiterate the principle that physicians are responsible for maintaining professional and sexual boundaries in the patient-physician relationship and offer advice on how physicians can appropriately manage their interactions with patients.

Among topics covered in the draft guidelines for sexual boundaries are the importance of trust and open, clear communication with patients; how breaches of sexual boundaries and power imbalances occur in the patient-physician relationship; and examples of sexual boundary violations. Also included are best practices for office interactions and advice on how to recognize potential boundary violations and obligations of physicians in these circumstances.

The draft guidelines for professional boundaries include sections on gifts, bequests and loans, financial transactions, social media and other topics.

New Zealand physicians have been sent the updated guidelines and invited to submit feedback to the Council.

Source: News Zealand Medical Council News Release, August 21, 2018

**United Kingdom**

**UK Medical Organizations Offer New Guidance on ‘Reflective Practice’**

New guidance to help physicians and medical students in the UK adopt the principles of “reflective practice” has been jointly published by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the Conference of
Postgraduate Medical Deans (COPMed), the General Medical Council and the Medical Schools Council.

Reflective practice is a concept that is being promoted in the UK as a means of improving professional competency and patient safety in health care by studying one’s own experiences and using self-assessment to adjust and adapt over time. Medical professionals worldwide are focusing increasingly on the importance of similar concepts as a fundamental key to medical practice improvement.

The new guidance sets out key points and principles on being a “reflective practitioner,” and has been developed in response to requests from UK physicians for clearer information on what is meant by “reflection,” and practical advice on how to reflect.

It outlines the importance of reflection for personal development, as a way of demonstrating insight, to help learning and to identify opportunities to improve patient safety.

The new guidance was developed after the participating organizations sought views and input from a variety of stakeholders, including physicians, medical students, trainers, appraisers and educators across all four countries of the UK.

In addition, the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and COPMed have also published a new “reflective practice toolkit,” which includes templates and examples for use alongside the guidance.

“By reflecting, doctors assess how well they are performing, as well as identifying their learning needs and enabling improvements to be made to their practice,” said Professor Sheona MacLeod, COPMed Chair. “However, for many doctors, documenting or demonstrating their reflective practice is more difficult. This new guidance aims to help medical students and doctors understand the professional requirements for reflective practice.”

To learn more about reflective practice and the new guidance, visit www.gmc-uk.org/education/.

Source: General Medical Council news release, September 12, 2018

First-ever Female Chair to Lead General Medical Council Starting in January 2019

Dame Clare Marx has been appointed as the new Chair of the General Medical Council (GMC), succeeding Professor Sir Terence Stephenson. Dr. Marx becomes the first woman to hold the Chair since the GMC was established 160 years ago. She will start in her new role in January 2019.

Dr. Marx joins a growing body of women leaders in health care in the UK. She is the Immediate Past President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, having been elected in 2014 and serving as the first woman in the history of the College to hold this role. She worked as an orthopedic surgeon at Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust for more than 20 years before becoming Associate Medical Director for Appraisal and Revalidation there in 2013. Dr. Marx also serves as Chair of the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management. In 2008-09, she was President of the British Orthopaedic Association.

“I am delighted that Dame Clare has been appointed as the next Chair,” said GMC Chief Executive Charlie Massey. “She joins the GMC at a critical time, where an ambitious program of work is underway. I am confident that the wealth of experience she brings from her previous roles will be invaluable to seeing this work through successfully as the GMC continues its work to protect patients by maintaining and improving standards in medical practice.”

“In particular, Dame Clare will play a vital role in driving forward our new strategy, which shifts the emphasis of our work from acting when things have gone wrong to continued support for all doctors in the delivery of the highest standards of care,” he said.

“It is a great honor to be appointed as the next Chair of the GMC,” said Dr. Marx. “In the 70th year of the National Health Service and at a watershed moment for a profession under intense pressure, I look forward to leading GMC’s Council and working with health partners across the UK in protecting patients by supporting doctors.”

Source: General Medical Council news release, July 30, 2018