



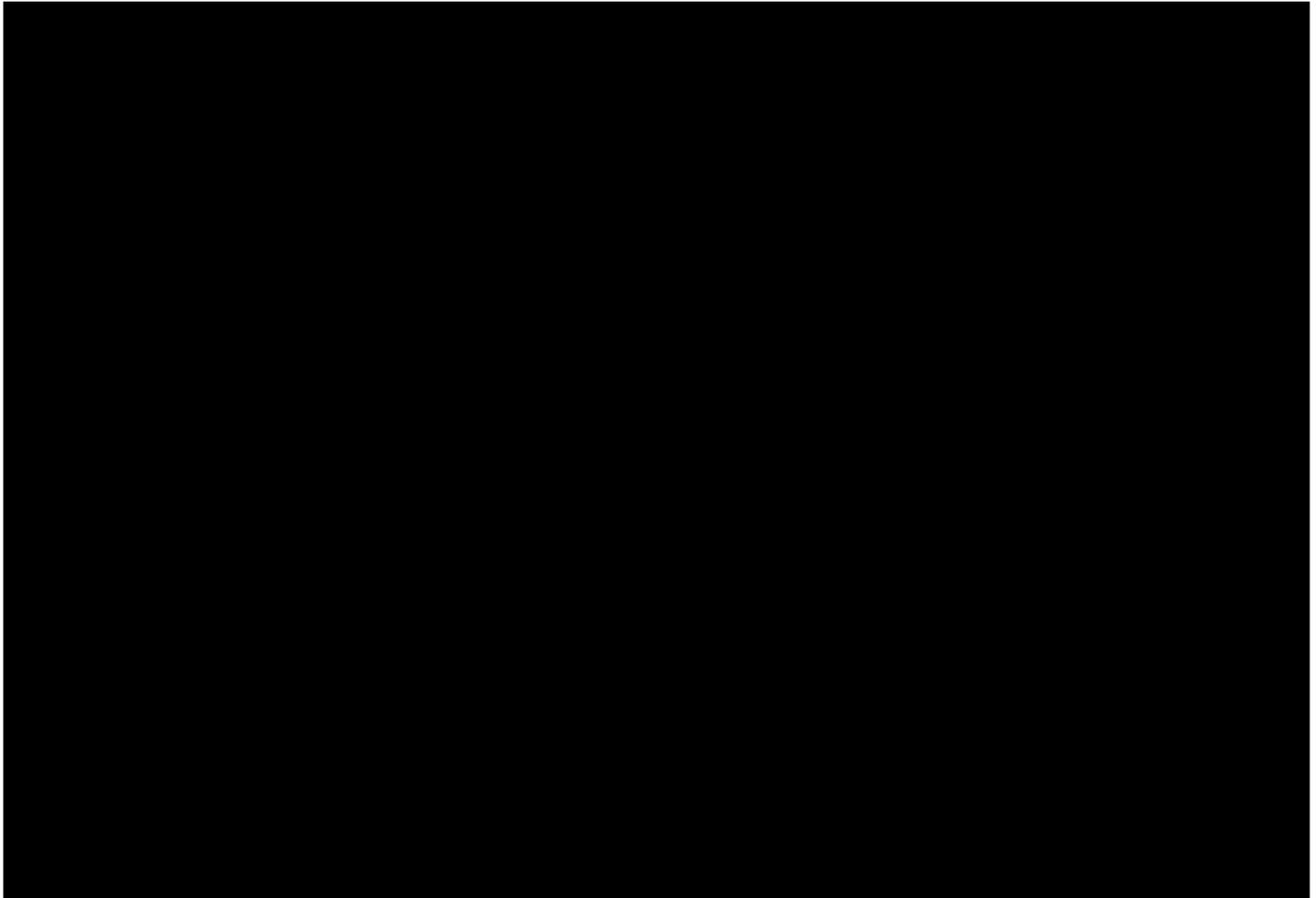
MEDICAL DIRECTORS

Minutes of Meeting

Date: Thursday, April 14, 2005
Time: 8:30 am
Place: Hotel St. John's, NL

In Attendance:

Larry Alteen	Ken Jenkins
Peter Blackie	Paul Gardner
Robert Williams	Gary Baker
Kweku Dankwa	Michael Jong (via telephone at 9:00 a.m.)
Ed Hunt	Blair Fleming
Jim Rourke	Cathi Bradbury
Scarlet Hann	Jeannie House



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10, 11, 12:

Representation from the system on PSLC and SCC; Salaried Physician Annual Leave Approval Policy; Pathology Services in NL

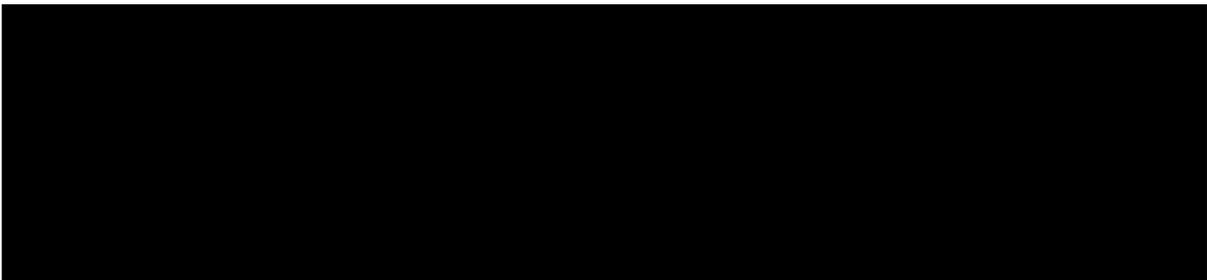
In the Salaried Physician Annual Leave Approval Policy,

- The Medical Directors all agreed that section 4(d) on the availability of a locum as grounds for not approving a request for leave should definitely remain. Bob Williams added that there should also be some way to provide for the right to have leave each year. The need for physicians to plan ahead for leave and the fact that leave was hardly ever denied was also discussed.
- Draft Recommendations for Psychiatric Service Coverage for St. John's: It was felt that allowing psychiatrists to be exempt from the SPAC process could cause trouble,

in that special circumstances for one group opens up possibilities for others and given that SPAC review is designed to allocate position funding to the disciplines/areas of greatest need. Beyond the psychiatry issue SPAC requirements also complicate the health boards' ability to recruit MUN graduates as many now want a commitment for a salaried position much earlier than the day of graduation. Bob Williams said that a lot of MUN graduates want to start on a salary basis and that we could lose them if that is not available. Concerns were expressed on the type of services that they want to provide, such as no inpatient, oncall etc. There was a general feeling that this was not a consensus document and should not go forward without further discussion.

- There was a discussion on the relationship between the SCC and the PSLC and the role of the Chair, Ken Jenkins, who finds himself in the middle as one of the Medical Directors on the SCC. It seems that issues are coming forward as having been discussed and almost finalized to go to the PSLC before the Medical Directors as a group have had sufficient opportunity to discuss the submission. The Psychiatric Service Coverage Report, for example, was seen as ready to go to the PSLC without reflecting Medical Directors' views. There was a general sense of discomfort that the principles recommended in that report could apply to other regions. There are four Medical Directors on the SCC (including Ken Jenkins) and those Directors have not agreed to the document as written. This is important because their presence on the committee is intended to reflect the needs of the various health boards, a purpose that should be recognized in the discussions at SCC. The final document that goes to PSLC needs to be a consensus document of all committee members, which is not presently the case. The Medical Directors were surprised that the Psychiatric Service Coverage Report was planned to go forward on April 19 to PSLC and they directed that before it is presented to PSLC, all the issues should be reviewed at the April 29 teleconference. Cathi Bradbury added that it was particularly important to resolve the issues before going to the Deputy Minister so that he can rely on the fact that all stakeholders have signed off on the document before making any decisions. It was recommended that SCC should aim at achieving a real consensus and, if that proves to be impossible, develop a process to highlight alternate views.

13. Review of the CRA decision on locums



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16. Other Business

Peter Blackie brought up the debt reduction of graduating students from MUN as an urgent issue, suggesting that more money should be fast-tracked to residents who are now graduating with personal debt loads of \$150,000 to \$190,000. Jim Rourke agreed that some creative solutions should be sought since there is a huge opportunity to make an impact. Signing bonuses could be offered specifically for debt reduction or rewards offered for family practice in rural areas to address the significant recruitment issues. Although the turnover rate for MUN graduates is far lower than for international graduates, it has to be remembered that US recruiters will pay off debts on signing. It was suggested that the paper that was previously prepared for Treasury Board should be updated and discussed at the Medical Directors meeting, bearing in mind that the original document was written when applications for bursaries were diminishing and some of the available funding was unclaimed. This is no longer the case, but the new paper should make recommendations for a debt relief structure that students can rely on when planning their future. Bob Williams and Scarlet Hann will discuss the issue, including the possible re-establishment of the original committee, by the next meeting.

Discussion returned to the pathologist issue and the retirement numbers in the document were reviewed. Bob Williams stressed that this requires serious discussion since a very high level of retirements are predicted (around 10%).

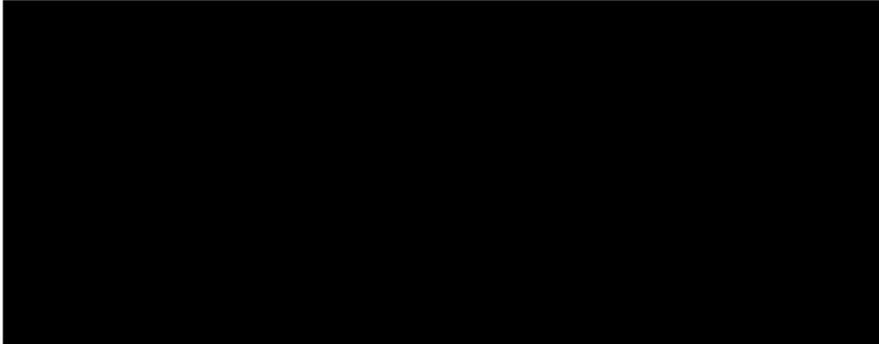
Ed Hunt mentioned the possibility of having an alternate funding package for academic health centres, although the comment was made that Faculty members are a little better off than others, with 80% of the salary scale + their academic salary and 40% fringe benefits. Jim Rourke reported that the second iteration of the CARMs match was exceptionally good and he is currently reviewing all the data to get the full picture. He said that the province needs a more competitive salary for pathologists, saying that the increase in salary had already made a difference for family medicine. Bob Williams stated that they had 6 or 7 applications for the two pathology positions. Physicians applying were comfortable with the diversity of the job available and the equipment available, but were put off by the

compensation package. Only one remains interested, and the Health Care Corporation of St. John's is trying to get a job for the spouse in the I.T. sector.

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Jeannie House
Director of Advocacy and Information