



1 What does SOM offer International members?

SOM aim to support the working environment of its international members by keeping them in touch with the latest occupational and health developments, linking with SOM services such as appraisal, peer support and CPD services and promoting the specialty internationally. Its chair is Dr Will Ponsonby.

2 Background

The SOM International Strategy is intrinsically woven into SOMs wider strategic themes. There are two key themes though that characterise our international strategy:

- **Proactive engagement on behalf of SOM international members:** in relation to other occupational health bodies and regulators for the overall good of SOM members and for OH. The approach will primarily be collaborative and in particular with the International Occupational Medicine Society Collaborative (IOMSC).
- **Member benefits that are equivalent to other SOM members:** member services, regardless of where members are based. The SOM will make opportunities for CPD and educational support widely available for members based internationally and across the UK. We will deliver the equivalence and accessibility agenda through fostering appraisal services and peer support for members around the world and encourage research and participation in the *Occupational Medicine* journal.

3 Geographic prioritisation

While we are a UK based organisation, we must be realistic in our international ambitions. To this end we have prioritised the following international areas in which to allocate our additional resources:

- China and South-east Asia
- South Asia
- English-speaking Africa
- The Middle East

The reason for prioritising China and South-East Asia is their likely position in the future of global OH. South Asia is an area of historic links and has good potential future development in areas of interest to our members. Similarly we have historic links and are experiencing growth in the number of members in Africa and the Middle East, and as such, the area should be regarded as of strategic importance for us.

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All of these regions are seeing growth in the demand for OH as their economies develop, and demand for OH grow.

We will work in partnership with OH local associations in these regions to help them develop and grow into mature associations. We will continue to maintain our productive historic links with other geographic areas where our members live and work using our current level of resource so that all areas benefit from the 'equivalence and accessibility' aspects of the strategy.

4 Our aims in 2017/8 are to:

4a Membership growth – informing potential new members of the group

4b Member benefits – in particular

-**CPD** - year on year improvements in the quantity and quality of international CPD events accessible to our international members. We will work in partnership with academic institutions, corporates and local associations to provide high quality CPD e.g. via webinars. We will actively partner with national and regional societies to provide speakers at CPD events where our members most need them.

-advice on **research** and encouraging links with the Yellow Journal, Occupational Medicine. Highlighting funding opportunities e.g. for travelling fellowships or partnership projects

- **Connection** - we will encourage and support the SOM international regional group, bringing in representatives from key hubs (most likely from new local Member Interest Groups e.g. in the Middle East), who will keep the SOM informed about their member support and education requirements and share knowledge of local markets. We will develop local communities that feel part of the wider SOM family and aim to publish specific international briefs on key issues. We have close relationships with a number of associations around the world. We will continue to strengthen these relationships through bilateral contact

5 Public affairs and promotion

There is a myriad of opportunities for SOM and its members to represent the profession's views on the international stage. We will work to move occupational health and medicine up the agenda, in other specialities and other countries, in particular with NGOs, the WHO, the IOMSC, the ILO and other professional organisations. In the UK, this involves influencing UK government departments such as DfiD or arms - length bodies such as Public Health England. We will increase the effectiveness of our engagement with supranational bodies such as the IOMSC, ensuring our representatives are linked in to the core of our thinking. Our approach is to acknowledge the good work being done within the SOM membership, and advocate OH worldwide.

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Annex 1 Planned future events for SOM international members

E Learning via CPD webinars and appraisals – next one on drugs and alcohol - March

Face to face meeting of international members at:

- Royal Society of Medicine / Society of Medicine meeting– 10th May 2017 – London.
- SOM/FOM Occupational Health 2017 – Leeds – 26-8th June. Suggested afternoon meeting <http://occupationalhealthconferences.co.uk/>
- ICOH 2018 – Dublin <http://icoh2018.org/> tbc

Annex 2 List of courses for studying occupational health and medicine if you are working internationally

- Birmingham University in the UK offers a diploma in occupational medicine <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/cpd/med/occupational-medicine.aspx>
- Cardiff University in the UK offers a 3 year online MSC course <http://courses.cardiff.ac.uk/postgraduate/course/detail/p222.html>
- Manchester University in the UK offer variety of occupational medicine courses at <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/masters/courses/list/07886/msc-occupational-medicine/>
There is also an occupational hygiene course at https://www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/media/mhs/mhswebteam/documents/course-files/07884/Guide_for_Applicants_Hygiene.pdf
- Otago University in New Zealand also provides a diploma in occupational medicine at <http://www.otago.ac.nz/courses/qualifications/pgdipocmed.html>
- James Cook University. As part of the MPH or MPHTM student can pick up a subject called Public Health in the Workplace which addresses a range of WHS issue including those around occupational medicine. This subject is undertaken via distance learning and the assessment include 2 exams and an assignment. A full list of the subject can be found in the handbook (https://www.jcu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/306510/Postgraduate-Handbook-2016.pdf) which can be found at <https://www.jcu.edu.au/college-of-public-health-medical-and-veterinary-sciences/public-health-and-tropical-medicine>.
- Harvard Chan Occupational & Environmental Medicine Residency (OEMR) <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/oemr/> Environmental & Occupational Medicine & Epidemiology Program <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/eome/>

There is also a free online resource, backed up by the Open University and with tutors from the University of Bergen, for health professionals wishing to get an understanding of occupational health issues in developing countries – <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/occupational-health-developing-countries>

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