On Link 68: Leadership & Management Program options

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Not all clinicians want to be managers or leaders, supervisors or mentors, trainers or co-ordinators. However, as psychiatry trainees move through to Advanced Training, it is now mandatory for them to adhere to certain regulations which are outlined in RANZCP Link 68: “Skills development in leadership and management in psychiatry during advanced training”. The relevant regulations include the statement: “During advanced training, you must complete approved formal leadership and management training, to prepare you for your role as a consultant psychiatrist”. This regulation signals that appropriate structured training in these areas be both available and accessible to Trainees. However, the Link 68 document also provides some guidelines on how trainees can satisfy these regulations within a chosen sub speciality, without necessarily doing a formal course.

There are at least four types of modules in that have been developed in conjunction with the Victorian Branch Training Committee and approved by the Fellowships Board. One Victorian training region chose to use a format involving a series of lectures, and another leadership and management module has been incorporated into the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Course. For those trainees in neither that training region nor that specific program, it was appropriate to run two half-days of workshops in 2005 with an assessable outcome. Drawing further upon our experience in the Australian Mental Health Leadership Program (ausMHLP), a collaborative program run by the University of Melbourne’s Centre for International Mental Health and Department of Psychiatry; Brain and Mind Research Institute, University of Sydney; Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research, University of Queensland; and Barwon Health, the other initiative developed was as a two day course in April 2006. This involved direct didactic presentations, workshop formats and a hypothetical on the challenges faced by consultants after their fellowship has been entered.

The topics and course content of the latter two courses have been evaluated both prior to development, to ensure that Trainees and consultants had input, and during the initiatives to ascertain if trainees were able to apply useful insights into the concepts and practices of leadership and management.

Competing interests
Mayne Pharma Pty Ltd sponsored the development sessions and meeting arrangements for the two-day course in April 2006.