

was produced by the Honorary Secretary, Professor Chris Thompson, in 1987, in which a revision of the Quarterly meetings format was suggested, although no further action was taken at that time.

Preliminary soundings seem to suggest that with higher numbers more economical packages can be obtained from conference venues, particularly if conferences are held over weekends. For instance, the Metropole group of hotels (London, Blackpool, Birmingham, Brighton) have agreed to a reduced rate for members if meetings are rotated to these four centres over two years. There are other hotel chains who might be able to offer similar packages.

The College Bye-Laws state that, in addition to the Annual General Meeting "not less than three Quarterly General Meetings shall be held in each College year. The date and place of each Quarterly General Meeting shall be fixed by the President or by the Council". This means that four Business Meetings for the membership need to be held each year. It would be possible to change the Bye-Laws and to suggest to the Privy Council that there should be two General Meetings per year. Alternatively, two meetings could be held in conjunction with the two scientific meetings and the other two could be held at the College. They could be held on the same day as Council, possibly in the afternoon followed by an evening reception or a special lecture. A notice would need to appear in the *Bulletin* informing members of the dates of these meetings. Important motions, as at present, could always be deferred to the Annual General Meeting.

Recommendations

1. Two 3–4 day meetings would be held – the summer meeting (Annual Meeting) in July and the winter meeting in January/February.
2. One meeting per year might be held in London, the other one might be held in appropriate conference locations outside London.
3. Workshops, CME courses and satellite meetings would be incorporated into the programme. There would be a greater emphasis on these activities.
4. Named lectures, previously held at Autumn and Spring Meetings (Maudsley Lecture, Mental Health Care Delivery), would be moved to the Summer Meeting.
5. The Maudsley Bequest Lectures could be held the day before the Winter Meeting which could make this a four-day event. These lectures would retain their original remit of being aimed primarily at trainees.
6. The exhibition area could be increased because sponsors would only be exhibiting twice a year. The format used at the recent Brighton meeting was very successful. Both members and exhibiting companies seemed to prefer this more professional approach.
7. The increase in sponsorship would enable the Programmes and Meetings Committee to invite eminent speakers from overseas.

Members are invited to submit any comments to the Registrar, Professor Ann Gath.

*Approved by Council
January 1992*

Information Technology working group

An Information Technology working group has been established by the Research Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and is chaired by Professor McClelland of Queen's University Belfast. It is hoped that the group will act as focal point

for exchange of ideas on information technology and mental illness. Members of the College who are interested are invited to contact Professor McClelland.