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Lessons must be learned from serious failings in care

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow fully supports the recommendations published today by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties in Scotland, aimed at addressing systemic failings in NHS care in Scotland.

Following a review of three previous reports into serious failings of care within the NHS in Scotland, including in Lanarkshire, the Vale of Leven Hospital and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, the Scottish Academy has published a new report titled 'Learning from serious failings in care' which details their findings and recommendations.

Having examined the reports to determine any common themes and issues and how best to address them, the Academy report has identified the key issues which have contributed to serious failings of care, predominantly the failure of clinical staff and NHS management's ability to work together to deliver improved healthcare.

The President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and one of the co-authors of the report, Professor Frank Dunn, said "The report's recommendations rightly bring back into focus the key requirements for excellence in patient care. The building blocks for this are strong leadership driven by quality of care, teamwork between management and clinicians, appropriate levels of valued staff based on patient needs and ensuring that financial and other targets are not the sole barometers of excellence. "

Professor Dunn added "It is clear that we need to learn more from previous reports into hospital failings. There is insufficient reference in each report to previous reports. Clear points of action must not only be enunciated, they must be put into practice both in the failing hospitals and in those apparently performing satisfactorily. Preventing future failings by applying the recommendations throughout the NHS is a key message in the report."

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Notes to editors:

Copies of 'Learning from Serious Failings in Care' report are available on request.

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow is the only multidisciplinary Royal College in the UK. Its membership, which exceeds 11,000, includes physicians, surgeons, dental practitioners, travel medicine and podiatric medicine professionals. The College provides career support to the membership through education, training, professional development, examinations and assessment whilst acting as a charity and leading voice on health issues in order to set the highest possible standards of healthcare.