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Junior doctor contract: we must negotiate

The junior doctor contract dispute has continued to be the focus of considerable public and media attention over the last months.

A new wave of strikes was announced by the BMA in September, following the rejection by members of the negotiated contract, and the statement by the health secretary that it will be imposed nonetheless. A dispute is always best resolved through mature and honest discussion. I have called upon both parties to withdraw from entrenched positions and resume negotiations.

In this difficult time it might help to remember that paediatrics is and will always be a wonderful and

rewarding profession. Trainees can count on consultants, other senior staff, colleagues, family and friends to provide support. Consultants were once trainees, although in a very different era, and trainees will one day be seniors. I hope today's trainees will use the experiences and reflections of this turbulent period to help them take ownership of shaping a future health service in which they will be proud to work, and where patient health and wellbeing will be placed first and foremost.

PROFESSOR NEENA MODI
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Members are invited to submit ideas for content (for planning purposes, please send proposals only) to focus@rcpch.ac.uk

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From the President

I've had a more than usually busy time recently with trips to lecture in Washington, Shanghai, Amsterdam, Lisbon, Brussels, Sydney, and Colombo, and a very enjoyable visit to Vancouver to represent the RCPCH at the 28th Congress of the International Paediatric Association (IPA), with CEO Judith Ellis and VP Education, Andrew Long.



The Congress visit included bidding successfully against Amsterdam, Delhi, Rome, and Taiwan, to host the 30th IPA Congress in Glasgow in 2021.

We won the final round by a 2:1 majority, supported by colleagues from the City of Glasgow, and the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre to say nothing of tartan, bagpipes, kilts, shortbread and whisky, and received a resounding burst of applause for the response "We are European" when quizzed about the impact of Brexit on a UK Royal College.

While away, events back home continued to demand attention despite some large time differences. I've joined research discussions at 3am, Skyped and FaceTimed with broadsheet correspondents, and taken phone calls from the Department of Health at other strange hours. The accidental death of Simon Newell, immediate past

RCPCH Vice-President for Training and Assessment was a tragedy that made my heart go out to his family. You can read our tribute to Simon on the following page.

We launched our consultation, during my travels, on interactions with infant formula companies. This is a timely moment as RCPCH actively supports actions that improve breast-feeding, and we are in discussion with WHO to extend these activities. We oppose the promotion of formula for healthy babies, but do wish to see high quality products developed for babies with special needs and those whose mothers cannot or choose not to breast feed. We want accurate, unbiased information made available to help women make informed choices, and healthcare professionals to counsel accurately. To assist in reaching a decision on any changes to the existing RCPCH code, Council asked to obtain the views of members



His Excellency the Honourable Maithripala Sirisena President of Sri Lanka, Professor Neena Modi, President of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, and Dr Ramya de Silva, President of the Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians at their 19th Annual Scientific Meeting, Colombo August 2016.