

Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

30 October 2020

Statement by Mr John McGregor, JCIE Chair

Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations - November and December 2020

As we approach the series of Section 2 Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations that will run throughout November and early December, the JCIE wishes to reassure all participants that we remain on track and that none of the arrangements previously intimated to you have been altered. We have, however, had a number of queries relating to personal welfare in light of the current status of the coronavirus pandemic. The purpose of this communication is to outline some of the policies that have been agreed between the JCIE, Public Health and the office of the Scotland's National Clinical Director. There are 3 phases to consider.

A. Prior to travel to Glasgow/Edinburgh

Anyone who develops new symptoms that potentially could be associated with Covid-19 (the most important being new cough, new shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, fever) or who cannot satisfactorily complete the Covid-related declaration (previously circulated) **MUST NOT TRAVEL**.

B. Covid-related symptoms developed in transit to Glasgow/Edinburgh

Any such individual **MUST NOT ENTER** the examination venue (other than quickly moving to their reserved hotel bedroom and isolating there if they have already arrived in Glasgow/Edinburgh in which case Section C will apply). The advice is as follows:

- If travelling alone and by private car, you should immediately turn around and head back home (assuming you well enough to do so) where you should isolate and book a Covid test. Comfort breaks are allowed, adhering to wearing of a mask, social distancing and sanitisation.
- If on public transport, the decision will be influenced by the modality of transport. If travelling by train, you should stop at the nearest station, reverse the journey and do the same as listed in the bullet point above (while adhering to mask wearing/sanitisation/distancing etc).
- If travelling by air, once in Glasgow/Edinburgh you should move promptly to your reserved accommodation, self-isolate in your hotel room and inform the relevant Specialty Manager/Board Chair by remote means as outlined below.

C. Symptoms developed during the course of the examination

If symptoms develop overnight, you **MUST NOT APPEAR** at the examination venue the following morning. If symptoms develop during the course of the examination, you **MUST LEAVE** the examination rooms immediately and isolate in your hotel room. The Specialty Manager and Board Chair must be informed by remote means (telephone/text/email). They will provide advice and take the necessary course of action. Options will include:

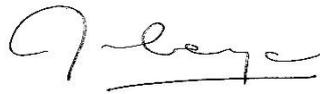
- If clinically well/minimal symptoms and you have travelled alone by private car, the best course of action will be to drive home immediately, isolate there and arrange a Covid test via your own employing Trust/Health Board. As above, comfort breaks en-route are permitted.
- If you have travelled by public transport you **MUST NOT TRAVEL** home without a negative Covid test result. You must remain in self-isolation in your hotel room until that test result is known. Covid testing will be coordinated by the Board Chair/Specialty Manager in conjunction with the JCIE Chair.

We understand that for candidates, non-entry to an examination after many months of preparation and personal sacrifices will be disheartening but as experienced health care professionals we know that you are well aware of our responsibilities. The examination fee will be transferred to the next sitting (minus admin fee) and the current attempt nullified on medical grounds.

I am sorry to trouble you with this but I believe it is important that we are clear and transparent in our guidance. The message is the same for candidates based in Ireland and examiners travelling to RCSI for the remote examinations. Perhaps the most important thing to bear in mind at this stage is that if you have any possible Covid symptoms before leaving home please do not travel.

All of us at the JCIE hope that none of these scenarios need to be implemented and we look forward to seeing you in Glasgow or Edinburgh. To our candidates, many thanks for your patience and understanding over the past six months. We wish you all the best in your forthcoming Section 2 examination.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. McGregor', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

JOHN R MCGREGOR

CHAIR – JOINT COMMITTEE ON INTERCOLLEGIATE EXAMINATIONS