

THE PARLIAMENTARY AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
AN ASSOCIATE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

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A Registered Associate Parliamentary Group of members of both Houses of Parliament and British members of the European Parliament, representatives of scientific and technical institutions, science-based companies and universities

PRESIDENT
The Lord Soulsby of Swaffham Prior

CHAIRMAN
Dr Douglas Naysmith MP

24th January 2006

PRESS RELEASE

A meeting of the Committee was held on Monday, 23rd January 2006 in the Grimond Room, Portcullis House

HOSPITALS OF THE FUTURE

The invited speakers were:

Sir Richard Sykes FRS FREng, Rector, Imperial College;
Professor Sir Ara Darzi, Head, Department of Surgical Oncology and Technology, Division of Surgery, Anaesthesia and Intensive Care, Imperial College;
Professor Richard Kitney FREng, Professor of Bioengineering, Imperial College;
Susan Grant, Architect & Hospital Specialist, Projects Director, Atkins Design & Engineering Solutions

Hospitals of the future will revolutionise the way in which hospital care is delivered. New healthcare technologies, including robotic surgery, wearable and implantable monitors exploiting wireless communication and new IT systems will require multi-skilling of staff and purpose-designed buildings which will be funded by the Private Finance Initiative.

As this meeting is about the future, more questions were asked than answers provided. There is no doubt that there will be an enormous increase in the amount of digital data of every type generated, circulated and ultimately approved for storage and later use. The question is how is this to be stored and how quickly will it be retrieved when required? The ownership of the data should be decided on the basis that if the NHS generate the data, then it is their data and they can re-use it in future research when studying the underlying causes of disease which is essential if medical science is to progress. Indeed patients to whom this has been explained have raised no objection to data concerning them being re-used in this way. Standard storage media are now widely used which increases the flexibility and availability of the data to those with a need to know such as the A and E department for example.

Wards will be replaced by single bedrooms which can be individually ventilated and managed to greatly reduce the potential cross-infections such as SARS and hospital-generated diseases such as MRSA. Their usefulness in dealing with a pandemic however was questioned as they would be swamped by the large numbers of people requiring treatment.

The training of hospital managers, or lack of it, was perceived as being the primary cause of differences in the utilisation of hospital resources between the independent sector and the NHS. Indeed much more attention should be paid in future to the specific needs of top quality management by the NHS, which should be streamlined, so that it can achieve its full potential and deliver the service that it is already equipped to do from the staffing, technical and intellectual points of view. The physicians themselves are the best people to communicate this change as they understand what is proposed, know the importance of it and have the authority to carry it through.

Sir Richard Sykes concluded that,

"Hospitals in the future will develop new procedures and processes as some existing ones shift to primary care. Within the Hospital Sector, the roles of general hospitals and the national, often university-linked, hospitals can further differentiate. The latter will often become the points of adoption and development of potentially revolutionary new technologies and systems. The adoption of technologies in the future will become more solution-based with academia, industry and the NHS working together on aligned objectives."

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A full report of the meeting will be published in *Science in Parliament* – Whit Issue 2006

