



Ahead of World Anaesthesia Day, I am pleased to report the findings from our first ever full membership survey, the majority of which were very positive. Over 5,000 of you completed the survey earlier this year and in this special issue of the *President's News*, I wanted to highlight some of the findings and what we are doing in response.

As we approach the 25th Anniversary of gaining our Royal Charter, we are refreshing the way we operate, how we interact with you and how we communicate. I was pleased to see that a very high majority of you were aware of our membership benefits and found them to be important. Consistently you rated us as 'good'; as a membership organisation, for our value for money and for our engagement with members. The details of the survey findings will shape the development of the College's [Strategic Plan for 2016–2021](#), which defines our values and purpose and will help to provide a solid, coherent and focused foundation upon which to build our shared future.

I was particularly pleased with the level of interest in our new online engagement panel, with more than 1,700 of you saying you would like to participate. We will be making contact with this panel shortly to assist in the development of our public policy strategy. If you have any questions or would like to join the panel to assist the College in strategy development, please email engage@rcoa.ac.uk.

I have highlighted below some of your key comments together with our plans on what we are doing.

Raising awareness of and interaction with College activities

Three quarters of you rated your awareness of College activities as 'quite' or 'very good'. Eighty-seven percent of you read [RCoA publications](#) and 84% visit the [RCoA website](#). We are taking a more proactive stance in promoting ourselves across new and multiple channels. We have developed and launched a new College brand, redesigned the member magazine (the [Bulletin](#)) and are improving our digital content and web presence.

Improving our regional engagement

The survey highlighted widespread variation in engagement across the regions and devolved nations. To address this, we are implementing a broader range of work across the country, by delivering more education and events outside London. We are working hard to ensure our events continue to be of the highest possible quality and remain relevant to you, wherever you are based. We will ensure they maintain a strong educational focus and are reviewing extra provision for examination preparation, simulation skills and leadership and management content. We are working to maximise the use of technology in the delivery of events and to increase delegate participation and engagement in the learning process. We are increasing our presence in hospitals throughout the UK through quality improvement initiatives such as [Anaesthesia Clinical Services Accreditation](#) (ACSA) and through our work on Advisory Appointment Committees. We are also

looking to increase the number of local visits, as well as holding regional 'listening events' for various member groups. More details will be announced soon.

Maintaining the importance of RCoA membership benefits

Awareness of the majority of membership benefits is very high, with 9 in 10 of you being familiar with our available benefits. Having access to RCoA publications was rated very highly with 94% of you rating this as 'very important'. Other benefits you rated as 'important' include: being the voice of the speciality (87%), having access to quality and safety guidelines (85%) and the support the College provides to you to enable and develop your careers (81%). The College will continue to maintain and improve membership benefits.

Delivering safe and effective patient care

We also asked about the issues you are facing in your workplace. One-third of you indicated that you are restricted in the delivery of safe and effective patient care listing issues such as a demoralised and fatigued workforce, inadequate facilities, a lack of co-operation by management and a lack of qualified staff. The College takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that you are able to deliver the highest level of patient care in a safe and modern work environment. We raise these issues regularly at the highest levels of government and with healthcare leaders. Safe and supportive working conditions are vital. From our [GPAS Guidelines](#) and [ACSA](#) accreditation scheme, to [careers guidance](#),

[educational events](#), [examinations](#) and [online training videos](#), we are dedicated to ensuring that you are provided the skills and knowledge to effectively deliver safe and up-to-date patient care. We are also committed to supporting you in the workplace. In collaboration with the AAGBI and the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine, we have developed a joint [welfare statement](#) to signpost colleagues to support services. The College's Anaesthesia Trainee Representative Group is also currently working on a programme to enhance the support we provide within your workplace – more news of this will be made available in the coming months.

Enhancing our services

I'm pleased to report that you rated a significant proportion of our services as 'excellent', with RCoA publications achieving the highest rating at 83%. Other services achieving a significantly high proportion of 'excellent' ratings include: the RCoA website (73%), our educational events (64%), our work in developing guidelines and standards in good anaesthesia practice (62%) and the support received from College Tutors (57%). To address the lower ratings for our technology platforms, we have carried out a review of the College's technology systems. A cross-cutting technology strategy programme started earlier this year. It will introduce system upgrades, new technologies and improved business processes, offering better and personalised content and mobile friendly platforms. We plan to give you the best possible technology user experience to support you at every stage of your career.

Developing a perioperative medicine service and promoting our quality improvement standards

Three-quarters of you stated that you supported the College's perioperative medicine programme (POM). In addition to new units of training in perioperative medicine having been introduced at core, intermediate, higher and advanced levels, we now have [101 POM local leads](#) in place within hospitals across the UK. We will contact them shortly to understand more about their local services, which services they want to establish and how the College can support them. We will be doing more to promote the benefits of the College's quality improvement peer review scheme (ACSA) in a bid to extend its influence and reach throughout the UK.

Increasing international engagement

In response to 78% of you supporting a programme of international development, a [Global Partnership Strategy](#) is now being devised. This strategy will enable the College to share its skills and experience internationally in the design and delivery of anaesthesia education and training. It is being developed specifically to assist international partners in low-and-middle-income countries to develop standards and improve patient safety. We will also look at how we can better engage with the 8% of you who are based outside of the UK.

Your membership feedback on the College's services and offerings is greatly appreciated. We are determined to continue improving our services and enhancing the benefits of your membership of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

As ever, if you have any comments on any of the issues highlighted in this newsletter, or thoughts on any other matter, please let me know using presidentnews@rcoa.ac.uk. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes, Liam

Liam Brennan, President