



# RCoA: President's News

May 2016

THE ROYAL COLLEGE  
OF ANAESTHETISTS



## Come Together

(The Beatles, 1969)

Recent negotiations between the BMA and the Government have resulted in a way forward that is acceptable to both parties in the junior doctors' dispute in England. All leaders of the Royal Colleges and Faculties have been working throughout to encourage meaningful talks as the way to end the damaging impasse and we are pleased that the recent initiative, led by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, has resulted in progress. We must now be patient, allow time for consideration of the detailed proposals, and await the outcome of the referendum of our trainee colleagues in early July.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the NHS is under extreme pressure. The [Kings Fund Quarterly Monitoring Report](#) confirms the scale of the problem across the provider sector. Sixty seven percent of all providers in England say they ended 2015/16 in deficit – including 87 percent of acute Trusts. While the government's aspiration of a 7-day NHS is laudable, it cannot be delivered simply by making existing staff work more at the weekends without employing additional personnel to fill the gaps during the week that already exist and which would inevitably be made worse. Attempting to do so will further demoralise the already over-stretched workforce and risk an increased exodus from the profession.

The recently published [Nuffield Trust report](#) offers some alternative solutions to the workforce challenges. All should be considered and carefully analysed to assess the most effective use of resources and the implications for patient care. Equipping the existing non-medical workforce – nursing, community and support staff – with additional skills may be one way to develop the capacity of the health service workforce, but this sort of reshaping is not without challenges. New or extended roles could lead to an increase in demand, more rather than less cost, fragment care and compromise quality. For our own specialty we have already [commented on the lack of statutory regulation of PA\(A\)s](#) as a major obstacle to new ways of working. Also the shortage of nursing provision is an additional limiting factor. The removal of nursing bursaries and the failure of the system to recruit and train nurses locally make the challenge even greater.

These are some of the many challenges and opportunities facing us, but on a happier note as summer approaches, I look forward to seeing many of you at our [Summer Symposium](#) and [College Tutors Meeting](#) in Brighton where I hope that the weather is kind so that we can all enjoy an informative but also fun time beside the seaside!



## The future is bright

It was a privilege for Council and I to welcome the next generation of 250 new Fellows of the College and associated Faculties at the recent 2016 Diplomates Ceremony. It was a wonderful occasion, with our new Diplomates joined by their families at the impressive venue of Central Hall, Westminster, against the backdrop of a cloudless sky and unbroken sunshine. For the first time, the ceremony was streamed live online, and I would like to thank staff at the College who worked tirelessly to ensure that the event ran smoothly and was a fitting and memorable celebration for all who attended.

Besides our new Diplomates, we also made various awards to distinguished individuals who have made exceptional contributions to our College and its activities as well as to our examination prizewinners. Of particular note is our Deputy Chief Executive, Charlie McLaughlan, who received an Honorary Fellowship. Charlie will be leaving the College after 13 years service to pursue new ventures. Congratulations to all our award recipients and prizewinners on their well deserved success.



## Invictus Games glory for Dr Jen Warren

Like many of you, I avidly followed the fortunes of the UK Armed Forces Team competing in the 2016 Invictus Games. Of the 110 athletes chosen to represent the UK, I was delighted to see anaesthetic trainee, and former army Major, Jen competing in athletics, swimming and road cycling. Jen is currently an ST4 and based at University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust.

Having suffered major lower limb injuries in 2008, Jen competed in her racing wheelchair on the track, hand bike for road cycling and in the outdoor pool for the swimming events. Jen finished with an impressive haul of nine medals in as many races across three sports, including Gold in the women's hand bike time trial and eight Silver medals. On behalf of Council, College staff and all Fellows and Members I would like to offer our congratulations to Jen on her incredible achievements.



## CEACCP Collections online

I was reflecting at Diplomates Day on how useful CEACCP is for FRCA revision and as a CPD resource. So I am pleased to announce that this month sees the publication of all past *CEACCP* (now *BJA Education*) articles available in a collection format, categorised by sub-specialty areas of interest. A joint venture of the *BJA* and RCoA, *BJA Education* (*CEACCP*) has a monthly print circulation of over 16,000 and enjoys broad international appeal, accessed online in 181 countries with over two million downloads annually.

It is hoped that the move to categorise past articles by sub-specialty and subcategory will aid user navigation and be of particular benefit to trainees preparing for examinations, and to Fellows and Members wishing to enhance their CPD in particular areas. The CEACCP Collection can be [accessed online here](#). More recent *BJA Education* articles will be available in a similar collection format in the near future.

## Hearing your views

It was heartening to see that so many of you (more than 5,000) took the time to share your views and experiences of College services in our recent first ever members' survey. We are now analysing your feedback to identify themes that will inform the College's future work streams. Understanding how we can develop our services, improve training support, provide educational content in the most convenient and relevant format and your views on key strategic work areas will help us to support you through all stages of your career. We will keep you up to date with future developments via this newsletter, *Bulletin* articles and the website.

I was particularly pleased at the high level of interest in our new online engagement panel with more than 1,700 of you indicating your willingness to participate. We will be using the panel to consult on future aspects of the College's work. In the meantime if you have any questions or would like to express an interest in joining the online panel, please email [engage@rcoa.ac.uk](mailto:engage@rcoa.ac.uk).



## Anaesthesia Team of the Year 2016

Congratulations to the SW Anaesthesia Research Matrix (SWARM) team who were recognised as the Anaesthesia Team of the Year at the BMJ Awards 2016 – the first anaesthetic trainee collaborative to receive such a prestigious national commendation.

Set up four years ago SWARM is a trainee-led audit and research collaboration between six NHS organisations in the region: Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust, Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust and Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust.

Gary Minto, consultant anaesthetist at Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, and member of SWARM explained: “We are still poor in the UK at analysing patient outcomes. Key quality indicators such as complication rates, patient experience, and finding out a year down the line if the patient feels better or worse off for the operation are all important.” He cites the example of a SWARM telephone follow-up survey of 159 women conducted one week after Caesarean section that found pain relief had been inadequate, with 64 percent of them buying additional over-the-counter painkillers following discharge home.

Recognising SWARM’s work and dedication, the judging panel commented: “This enthusiastic team should be congratulated for spearheading an important, highly original, highly generalisable project and achieving a great deal in a relatively short space of time.” The award was presented by RCoA Vice-President, Jeremy Langton, who was also a member of the judging panel.

My congratulations also go to the runners up:

- » Improving Tracheostomy Care - University Hospital South Manchester NHS Trust
- » Comprehensive QI in the ICU – Glasgow Royal Infirmary
- » Day Case Shoulder Surgery Initiative – Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust



## Promoting safety

Our latest Safety Project of the Month features Dr Queenie Lo and colleagues from the Royal London Hospital, who are using universally approved standards to design new emergency signage in perioperative care areas. To date, they have developed a bank of 13 emergency signs including: major trauma trolley, resuscitation trolley, thoracotomy trolley and tracheostomy set – all in accordance with ISO regulations. Feedback on the project has been positive and it was awarded third place in the patient safety category at the AAGBI Congress in 2015. There will be further testing before launching a nationally recognised set of emergency signs for perioperative areas, although many of the signs will also be applicable to other areas such as Emergency Departments and Labour Wards. Further information can be found on the [SALG website](#).



## College supports Lifebox

In keeping with the safety theme, I am looking forward to hearing from the experts at 'Patient Safety in Perioperative Practice', which is being held at the College on July 20th.

This one-day meeting will discuss patient safety, including the barriers to delivering safe perioperative care, and strategies on how to overcome them. Its aims are to build upon existing knowledge and clinical practice to make systems, processes and organisations safer. There will be a focus on the WHO checklist, which has been demonstrated to reduce the complications and mortality associated with a variety of surgical procedures by more than 30 percent.

For each delegate attending the event, the RCoA will be making a donation of £25 to Lifebox, a charitable organisation devoted to safer surgery in low-resource countries. You can find further information on the event and register [here](#). If you would like to make a personal donation to Lifebox then you can do so [here](#).

## And finally...

### GPAS

Guidelines for the Provision of Anaesthetic Services (GPAS) is the College's blueprint for the provision of high quality anaesthetic services throughout the UK. The College is currently recruiting for anaesthetists of all levels to be involved in the development of several chapters for GPAS. Revised annually, the College will for the first time include chapters that are developed using a new, evidence-based process that fulfil the standard criteria for accreditation by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

For further information on GPAS and ways you can get involved, please visit the [website](#) or contact [gpas@rcoa.ac.uk](mailto:gpas@rcoa.ac.uk).

If you have any comments on any of the issues highlighted in this e-newsletter or would like to express your views on any other matters, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me via [presidentnews@rcoa.ac.uk](mailto:presidentnews@rcoa.ac.uk).

Best wishes,  
*Liam*

**Liam Brennan**  
President