

13 August 2021

Dear Colleague representative,

Annual Representative Meeting 2021

Welcome to your BMA Annual Representative Meeting (ARM) 2021.

Your ARM is our main policy-forming meeting, where you, as a member of the Representative Body (RB), discuss, debate and vote on motions which form the policy that guides our association in the year ahead.

This year's ARM will again be virtual due to the ongoing risk of the pandemic. The safety of our members, our staff and the public we serve remains our priority. It will also be shorter; however, we are confident that despite these changes we will be able to support you in forming policy and directing your BMA.

Our agenda this year – *Build back together: supporting our members, supporting our NHS* recognises the challenges faced by our profession, our society and our members and looks ahead for solutions.

This year, like all years, our membership submitted a wealth of motions to help guide our association's work. Unfortunately, it will not be possible to debate every motion submitted. Your ARM agenda committee had the very difficult task to prioritise your motions. They have tried their best to serve the length and breadth of our diverse membership when prioritising the agenda. Of course, you will also have an opportunity to further influence the agenda by completing the chosen motions ballot. Please do take this opportunity to have your say.

In addition, you will have the opportunity to submit emergency motions for consideration. We will consider any motions submitted on new matters arising following our motion deadline (25 June 2021). Submissions should be sent to ARMmotions@bma.org.uk.

We will be debating our association's policy on physician-assisted dying. This follows the 2020 survey of members' views on physician-assisted dying. Briefing documents on the survey results and the broader context have been drafted to support your decision making and participation in these debates and I encourage you to read them.

For many, this will be a very difficult subject that goes to the core of our professional responsibilities as a doctor. Please do seek support should you need it. Our well-being services are here for both members and non-members: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/your-wellbeing>

There are various virtual fringe events taking place around your ARM 2021, including our renown Victor Horsley sessions and our annual GMC meeting where you will hear directly from Charlie Massey (GMC Chief Executive and Registrar) whilst also having an opportunity to ask him questions. Dame Clare Gerada (Chair of BMA's Professional Regulation Committee) will host the meeting.

You will also have the opportunity to sign up for active bystander training. There are a limited number of places so do consider signing up early.

#ARM2021

The agenda and papers

I am pleased to enclose the agenda and papers for your ARM.

- **Part 1** contains motions which your agenda committee have prioritised for debate within the time available.
- **Part 2** contains the motions we are unfortunately unlikely to reach, unless they are chosen by the RB

Also enclosed are the following:

- ARM 1A – Appendices to the agenda
- ARM 9 – Nomination information for elections to all committees and boards at the ARM

Any changes to the agenda will be published in the supplementary agenda which is available online.

All ARM documents will be available to view and download from the **ARM website** www.bma.org.uk/arm and via the App (which will be online week commencing 16 August).

The following documents are available now on the ARM website:

- ARM 2 – Guidance notes
- ARM 5 – Timetable of ARM sessions and appendix to elections
- ARM 6 – Report of action taken on 2020 ARM resolutions
- ARM 10 – Lapsed polices
- ARM 12 – Minutes of the 2020 ARM

The following documents will be available over the next few weeks in the run up to the ARM:

- Branch of practice reports
- Chosen motion ballot – to be emailed out to representatives directly

Campaigning and circulation of documents

The rules of the meeting preclude the circulating of unofficial documents in order to keep the meeting fair and balanced. Please do not circulate unofficial materials on our Listservs or the ARM App.

How the meeting works

The guidance notes (which is available on the ARM website) includes details specific to this year's 2-day virtual ARM. Please do make yourself familiar with this prior to your ARM.

ARM elections: online nomination and voting

Each year the RB elects to many of the key BMA committees and boards during ARM. Our greatest asset as an association is our membership. And the best place for our members to hear and be heard is on our committees. New committee members are incredibly important in our work, particularly those from less well-represented groups. Please do consider standing for election. You will be offered induction and mentoring programmes, as well as visitors' schemes for anyone who would like an insight into what our committees do and how they work. If you would like more information, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

ARM elections for our BMA committees and boards will be conducted through our online system. For more information about the system please refer to ARM 9, enclosed within this mailing. This includes some key information to ensure you are ready to use the new system. You can also visit bma.org.uk/elections where you will find a training video and quick reference guides to help you navigate this system. We have also included a hard copy of these quick reference guides in this mailing.

Representing your profession

As representatives, you will participate in, discuss and listen to debate before coming to a decision on behalf of our profession. We value honesty and fair debate. Please note that our meeting will be broadcast to the public and recorded, and you may be extensively quoted. Please be sure to avoid misrepresentation or defamation – and to declare particular interests or conflicts when contributing to debate.

Admittance and attendance

Details on how to use the online platform are outlined in the guidance document. Should you have any further questions, please get in touch at: ARMseats@bma.org.uk

We understand that 2 days in front of a screen can be tiring however, we would be very grateful if you could ensure that you are engaged and present for the entire duration, to enable you to represent the wider membership on behalf of whom we are making decisions and informing policy.

Your ARM is a place for meaningful debate and free exchange of ideas and we are committed to creating a culture that is inclusive of all our members. I want every member of the RB to feel able to contribute, knowing that their points of view will be valued and differences of opinion will be respected.

Your BMA's behaviour principles – *Be professional; Be accountable; Be kind; Be representative; Respect others* – are fundamental to this and I ask that you follow our principles, in debates and throughout the ARM.

Thank you for taking the time to represent yourself and your colleagues and helping your BMA to shape our priorities for the next year. Your contribution is invaluable.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible online. Thank you.

Yours sincerely



Dr Latifa Patel

BMA acting representative body chair

@DrLatifaPatel