

## **Retired members committee**

### **Written report to the ARM 2023**

#### **Improvements for retired members passed by the 2022 ARM**

The retired members committee and I have been working throughout the year to push forward with the motion passed by the 2022 ARM and previous motions which called for improvements to the BMA retired member experience. We have been hampered by unexpected key staff changes, but hopefully this work can now move forward with a new urgency and with progress being monitored by BMA Council.

#### **Retired members conference and ARM**

This was the first year of a hybrid retired members conference, allowing members to meet face to face and participate online. The conference was ably chaired by Dr Stephen Millar, in his final year in that role. I must thank Stephen for all his hard work over the last two sessions. I am also indebted to him for proposing to carry forward the conference theme and many of the speakers that I had initially assembled for the 2020 conference which had to be cancelled due to Covid.

The theme was 'productive and healthy ageing' with keynote speaker Professor Anthony Woolf, director, Bone and Joint Research Group, Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust. Professor Woolf was joined by other speakers, including Professor Phil Banfield, BMA council chair, Professor Martin McKee CBE, BMA president and Dr Trudi Edginton, clinical psychologist and reader in psychology at City University of London for really informative presentations and discussions.

At the conference Surjait Singh and Tom Kane were elected unopposed as the new conference chair and deputy chair respectively. I would like to extend my congratulations to them both.

## **Pensions committee and NHS workforce issues**

Throughout the session, Tom Kane, the retired members committee observer on pensions committee, has been very active in ensuring the situation of those already retired or nearing retirement are included in BMA's pensions policy development. With the agreement of pensions committee, we have submitted a proposal that the retired members committee should have a formal representative elected to pensions committee and we hope that this will be agreed at the 2023 ARM.

The committee has also put forward members for the newly formed BMA workforce attrition project, which aims to develop a range of evidence-based retention policies that target specific points of preventable attrition in the medical workforce pipeline. Many thanks to Peter Curry, Stephen Millar, Carole Cairns and Surjait Singh who have worked with me and been involved with this group.

NHS England has recently announced a new scheme for England to be launched in the autumn. They say that newly-retired doctors will be able to sign up to a new digital platform where they will be able to offer their availability to Trusts across England to perform outpatient appointments, either virtually or in person. We have for some time been calling for more flexibility for retired doctors wishing to work, so this scheme may be attractive to some. As more detail emerges the BMA will be hoping to work constructively with the NHS looking closely at remuneration, terms and conditions, pension, appraisal, registration and licensing issues associated with this scheme.

## **Retired members committee**

For the current session, the committee elected myself as chair and Dr Peter Curry as deputy chair. Tom Kane was elected as the committee's representative on the professional regulation committee and observer on the pensions committee. We also have representatives on the mental health reference group, Nicola Mann and Surjait Singh, who continue to advocate for retired doctors playing a key role in improved mentoring and wellbeing support for their working colleagues.

At the retired members conference in March, elections were held for the vacant seats on the retired members committee for the 2023/24 session. Congratulations to those that were elected in addition to myself as below:

- Carole Mary Cairns
- Peter David Curry
- Stephen Westgarth Millar

They will join the other elected members of the committee Tom Kinloch and Nicola Mann, as well as Wendy Savage, the UK council member representing retired members and finally Surjait Singh and Tom Kane, in their ex-officio voting seats as chair and deputy chair of retired members conference respectively.

The secretariat for the retired members committee has recently moved from council secretariat to sit with other branches of practice within the national negotiations and representation team at the BMA. This better alignment with the other major membership groups is something the committee has been calling for to improve our integration into the BMA national structure.

## **Next steps**

The retired members committee has an active programme of work.

- Retired members events were limited during the pandemic and we would like to introduce a schedule of retired member regional symposia with interesting speakers and good opportunities for retired doctors to keep in touch.
- We are working to develop ways of maintaining and expanding retired membership through providing services and events that retired doctors will value.
- With the BMA workforce team, we are working with the GMC and NHS to ensure that lessons are learnt from the first 'return to work', as well as looking at how retired doctors can help the NHS catch up with its considerable backlog.

## **Conclusion and thanks**

To finish, I must thank our support staff, Laura Clark and Sally-Ann Cole who use their wisdom and experience to deal with much of the day to day work associated with the committee and our conference. With the move into the new structure, David Cloke will be taking over from Sally-Ann. I have known David for a number of years and am delighted that he will now be working with us alongside his other responsibilities.

Also, I would like to say thank you to all members of our committee who have worked so well together, resulting in constructive discussions and decisions.

And finally, a message to everybody please - retiring from work gives new opportunities to contribute to BMA activity, whether at division, regional or national level. I would encourage any retired member interested in becoming more involved to get in touch.

Thank you for taking the trouble to read this report.

**Dr Brian Guttridge**

**Retired members committee chair**

[BMA retired members committee overview](#)