



## BRITISH SOCIETY for GYNAECOLOGICAL ENDOSCOPY

Dear member

It is my great pleasure and honor to write to you for the first time as President of the BSGE. Under normal circumstances the hand over would have taken place at the BSGE AGM during our ASM in Manchester but in these unprecedented times it had to be a virtual acceptance of the chain of office from Sanjay via Skype (!).

I would like to start by thanking Sanjay for his fantastic leadership of our ever growing and influential society. His experience, industry and infectious enthusiasm have made his tenure a successful one. He has always been accessible, approachable and collegiate in his outlook and my fellow Officers and Council Members have benefitted from these attributes and learnt a great deal from him. As has been the case with our previous Presidents, he has left the society in an even better place than when he took over. He will be a hard act for me to follow. I would like to thank him on behalf of all our members.

In other news.....

### **Covid-19**

I hope you and your loved ones are well at this difficult time. Like me, I suspect your work patterns have changed dramatically and life seems very different both at work and at home. The BSGE Officers have continued to engage fully with demands placed on us by national bodies such as the RCOG, PHSE and broader NHS organisations. I

hope you have found the laparoscopy statement released jointly with the RCOG and the management of abnormal uterine bleeding statement co-badged with the RCOG and BGCS useful. They are available to download from BSGE website: <https://www.bsge.org.uk/guidelines/>

Led by Andrew Kent, the officers have reviewed and provided rapid feedback to PHE regarding the necessity of appropriate PPE which has led to revision of draft publications for the better. We have also contributed, on behalf of The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and NHSE to formulating guidance about surgical prioritisation (emergency, urgent <72 hours, <4 weeks and < 3 months) during the coronavirus pandemic, which will have implications in the post-lockdown period in order to minimise the impact upon our patients awaiting surgery.

### **Annual Scientific Meetings**

Whilst I think we are all having to get increasingly used to using these “virtual meeting” IT tools - Skype / Zoom / House Party etc. I think you will agree that nothing can beat the energy, enjoyment, science and conviviality of a face to face ASM and we are all sorry that this year it has had to be forgone. I do not underestimate the inconvenience this postponement has caused for both the organisers and you as members. However in better, post lockdown news, we are now going to visit Manchester Central- on **Tuesday 2nd to Wednesday 3rd March 2021** with pre-congress courses taking place on **Monday 1st March**. We look forward to Sujata Gupta and the Local Organising Committee delivering the fantastic meeting that they had planned for us this year. Please put these dates in your diaries as I think a fantastic 100% attendance would be just the tonic for us all.

As always we are keen to receive abstracts once the call becomes open and in particular from those of you who submitted accepted abstracts for the now cancelled

meeting, we would very much encourage you to resubmit these for consideration alongside any completely new work.

For those of you extremely organised diary-wise, I can tell you that the Birmingham-Worcester ASM originally scheduled for May 2021 has now been pushed back to **February 28th -1st March 2022**. I realise that both the Manchester and then Birmingham -Worcester ASMs are earlier than our usual April / May timing but the convention centres would only reschedule, without incurring huge financial penalties, in the same financial year, hence the need to agree to earlier dates.

### **Council meeting and BSGE AGM**

Our Council Meeting scheduled for April 2020 has had to be cancelled for obvious reasons. The officers will make a decision about a suitable date for the next meeting as the Covid-19 emergency improves. As this will almost certainly be before our next ASM, the AGM will follow the Council meeting, on the same day. We will inform members of the date and venue.

### **Elections**

Thank you to all those who voted. The results are as follow:

- Vice President: Andrew Kent
- Senior Representatives: Arvind Vashisht, Fevzi Shakir, Angus Thomson and Karolina Afors
- Trainees Representative: Angharad Jones
- Endometriosis CNS: Gilly Macdonald
- Nurse Hysteroscopist: Caroline Bell

We send our congratulations to all the successful candidates. There were a large number of extremely able and committed people standing for election, and I hope that

those who were not elected will continue to contribute to the work of the Society and consider re-applying for Council. We need all these talented people. Sincere thanks also to Wendy-Rae Mitchell, Chris Guyer and Natasha Waters who have provided fantastic service to our Society, with their wisdom and experience, and who are now stepping down from Council. However, quality never goes away and I am sure that we will find many other ways to use their talents.

### **Future agenda**

Our focus is now understandably concentrated on combatting the Covid-19 crisis. However, post-lockdown I want to hit the ground running and advance a progressive agenda for endoscopic surgery in gynaecology. I am fortunate to have a talented council to represent you and to support me in driving forward the BSGE over the next two years. I am keen to address training deficiencies in gynaecological surgery and also to promote better surgical outcomes by tackling the dearth of high output gynaecological laparoscopic and / or hysteroscopic surgeons in the UK due to competing demands within job plans.

### **Concluding remarks**

This current situation will gradually come to an end. I have to say that whilst not being an avid monarchist, I was struck by the resonance of the Queen's coronavirus speech of the 5th April:

"I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge. And those who come after us will say the Britons of this generation were as strong as any. That the attributes of self-discipline, of quiet good-humoured resolve and of fellow-feeling still characterise this country. The pride in who we are is not a part of our past, it defines our present and our future."

I know our membership will be stepping up.

In the meantime, on behalf of the officers, members of Council, Atia and Lesley, I send you my very best wishes as you exercise your own leadership, employ your skills for your patients, support your trainees, maintain your resilience and protect your families. I look forward to meeting up in happier times.

Wishing you and your loved ones the best of health

With my very best wishes

Justin

**Professor Justin Clark MD (Hons) FRCOG**

**President- BSGE**