



Reg Charity No 287936

**PATRONS: Ethel Armstrong  
Ken Jarrold CBE**

JR/ss

6 April 2017

Dear Colleague

**Latest from Central Office**

You will be aware that the ballot relating to the continuance of the NHS RF resulted in 6746 members voting in favour and 1217 voting against. This was a resounding result with a 66% turnout, 85% of whom voted in favour of continuing the fellowship and raising the capitation fee from April 2017. Less than 10% of the membership voted against the proposal.

Both the National Council and Board of Trustees at meetings last month were delighted that the future of the Fellowship was now assured but it was appreciated that the discussions leading up to the ballot had significantly increased the level of knowledge about the Fellowship and had prompted a series of debates as to how the organisation should move forward. It was agreed that a document highlighting future potential will be produced by 31 May 2017 for further discussion by National Council members and Trustees.

I will share that document with branches and indeed anybody that wishes to be involved in discussing the future of the Fellowship should submit their name to Central Office as we are in the process of organising a small group of members (who are neither National Council members or trustees) to be involved in a discussion on 8 May.

National Council members have a vital responsibility in conveying the views and wishes of branches and members and they have been asked to undertake several tasks within their region.

Firstly it is clear that members believe that the Fellowship website needs to be modernised. The Fellowship has received a grant from CSIS to help with this and Council have accepted that whilst we do not have the skills in house to re-build the website, it was important to find out from members what improvements they wanted from the website. Your National Council member will be responding on behalf of the region by mid-May.

Next year is the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NHS and I am keen that Fellowship members are involved in local and national celebratory events. Council members have been asked to liaise with branches to find out what is happening locally whilst I will find out what National events are taking place. I have a meeting with NHS England next week.

Many of our members will remember with affection the events that were organised in 2008 to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Details of the 2017 Annual General Meeting which is to be held at Eastwood Hall Hotel, Nottingham (post code NG16 3SS) will be circulated shortly and Council members have been asked to encourage attendance.

Following criticism of the costs of previous conferences this event will be organised by the Isle of Wight tours limited (and not central office) and will be at a neutral cost for the organisation.

The Annual General meeting will be held on Saturday 25 November at 10.00 am and the remainder of the day will be devoted to the future of the Fellowship, including the very popular “any questions” panel, chaired by patron Ken Jarrold in the afternoon.

At the National Council meeting, there was some discussion about the potential for reconfiguring some regional boundaries. Council members have agreed to liaise with each other (and their branches) to produce proposals later this year. This relates only to England.

We are still having difficulty in recruiting to some vacancies on the National Council. I am very pleased to say that there are new representatives in the North West (Barbara Smart) and North East Thames (Michael Bennett) but we are still trying to encourage people to apply for vacancies in the North East, Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and North Wales.

At their meeting, Trustees considered a request from National Council that they consider a move towards changing the name of the Charity. Trustees were reluctant to make changes for changes sake but agreed that developments and modernisation will enhance the organisation. The view was that the priority is to determine a future for the Fellowship and any change of name to be considered as part of the development of the strategic plan.

The minutes of the National Council meeting and Board of Trustees meeting held on 22 March and 23 March respectively will be posted on the website and if there are any questions on any of the issues discussed don't hesitate in communicating with your National Council member and if they can't answer, directly with Central Office.

Regrettably, inevitably some of our members will choose to leave and some branches will close. We wish them well whilst we concentrate on building a revitalised organisation.

Kindest regards

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Rostill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Rostill OBE  
Chief Executive

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