

25 January 2021

Dear Member

What a year!

It was 31st January 2020 when the first 2 cases of coronavirus were diagnosed in a York hotel. We could not have possibly imagined the impact this virus would have and even when the first lockdown started on 23rd March 2020 we were all hopeful of some sort of normality by the summer. This has proved to have been very wishful thinking and with the latest lockdown in place now (albeit slightly different in England, Scotland and Wales) it is clear that there is uncertainty as to when the regulations will be relaxed. Matt Hancock said over the weekend that the easing of lockdown restrictions was a long, long way off.

The good news is the vaccination programme is now well under way with over 6 million already vaccinated and the likelihood that by the end of February most of the vulnerable groups including those over 70 will have had their first vaccination. So there is light at the end of the tunnel but it remains a very long tunnel.

The impact of this on the Fellowship remains huge and it seems unlikely that branches will be able to meet before July or even September. However we do have to make some planning decisions and we are still very optimistic that our Conference and AGM will be able to go ahead in Manchester on the 22nd October 2021. Another decision we have had to take means that the major recruitment drive planned for April/May 2021 can no longer go ahead and it is clear from the returns we have had from the branches so far that our membership figures are reducing.

As I have mentioned in previous letters we very much hope that you continue with your membership even though branches are not meeting. If you have not been able to pay your capitation fee to your branch due to current restrictions or for any other reason please contact central office for guidance.

We continue to be delighted with the positive comments received from our members about the contact from the Fellowship. I will continue to send you my monthly letter but I am very open to suggestions from you if there are topics you would like me to refer to. Remember the staff and I are happy to talk to you and the central office telephone is monitored daily.

Things have changed considerably over the last year and many members have elected to receive correspondence by email and now for the first time the Fellowship Newsletter and Fellowship Extra are available to read online by following these links:

Fellowship Newsletter February 2021

<http://nhsrf.org.uk/resources/a1-newsletter-february-2021/>

Fellowship Extra February 2021

<http://nhsrf.org.uk/resources/fellowship-extra-february-2021/>

We may already have your email address but not your permission to use it which is required by data protection. If that is the case please email Sherry or Debbie in Central Office with your permission.

Some of you joined in the virtual Winchester Cathedral Carol Service in December last year. My grateful thanks to our Patron, Ken Jarrold for arranging for this to happen and look forward to a repeat event this year.

The Mirthy talks continue to be very popular with our members the programme for February is:-

9 February	10.45am	My Mysterious Grandmas	David Clark
23 February	10.45am	Morecambe and Wise	Steve Short

If you have not already done so register at <http://www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF>

The talks of course will remain free to all members and I hope you will let us know what sort of talks you might appreciate in the future. Mirthy may be able to provide other entertainment such as quizzes and musicals please let us know if that would appeal to you or any other ideas you may have.

I continue to have discussions with other organisations to see if we can work together. My most recent contact has been with the College of Dentistry; as a result of which we would like to identify 2 or 3 volunteers to help the college further develop their website for patients and the public and also to become a source of patient representatives for the college. This is at a very initial stage but if you would like to become involved in reviewing patient literature to make it more patient friendly please get in touch with me directly john.rostill@gmail.com This new college will include not only dentists but all other professions involved in dentistry and if you were involved before you retired we would like to hear from you.

If you have not joined the Fellowship's new Book Club I would recommend that you reconsider. The Book Club has resulted in some interest but there is scope for many more to join. One of the books recommended before Christmas was Richard Osman's new novel The Thursday Murder Club. I did read it before Christmas and found it an interesting if somewhat implausible story. I found it nostalgic and it reminded me of the New Tricks TV series where a group of retired policemen are doing the work of the police!

The Richard Osman book is top of the hardback fiction and the Book Club's current recommendation Where the Crawdads Sing is top of the paperback fiction so clearly worth a read. Speaking about books I would like to congratulate Sally Bundock, Development Officer in the South East who recently published her book called Daniel's Magic Tree. Ideal I'm told for grandchildren at £5.99 from Amazon.

I still would very much like to hear your personal stories of what you have been doing during lockdown and whether you will continue with any of these new activities in the future.

I made a New Year's Resolution that I would have a "dry" January and I'm pleased to say with 7 days to go that I have not had an alcoholic drink and I don't feel any better and I haven't lost any weight. So not something I'm going to repeat in 2022!

Finally many congratulations to Joan Dew who celebrates her 100th birthday on 7th February.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely



John Rostill OBE
Chief Executive