

28 May 2021

Dear Member

Do you remember last May? The hottest that we have had for many years. Not quite the same this year is it with record amounts of rainfall during the month. My walks with the dog have frequently been interrupted by hail storms - having started out in sunshine and coming back soaking wet and then the sun starts shining again when I'm back home! However the forecast for the weekend ahead is fine so I do hope you have a good bank holiday.

It is clear from the reports today that the next 7 days is crucial as to whether the complete relaxation of the coronavirus rules will occur on the 21st June. It now appears that the decision will be announced in about 2 weeks time. Let us hope that by the end of June we are back to the new normal.

Next week is Volunteers' Week and I want to take this opportunity to thank everybody involved in the Fellowship who all give their time freely.

Think of all the activities that take place at a branch – visits, walks, holidays, speakers, raffles and more that simply don't just happen someone volunteers and takes responsibility for the organisation of these events. There are also the others who bring refreshments, make the tea, wash up, set up the room before the meeting and pack everything away afterwards, almost too many to mention. If you are involved in any of these activities – thank you. I am sure you would also like to thank committee members and office holders because without you and them the branch would not function.

As we come out of lockdown we want to have a membership drive and I emphasise that membership of the Fellowship is not restricted to those that worked in the NHS. Membership is offered to anyone involved in health and social care activities not just those in paid employment but all others helping and volunteering in NHS organisations, hospices and care homes. If you know of someone why not bring them along to a meeting?

We want the membership drive to reflect what the Fellowship means to our members. What does the Fellowship mean to you? Send me a note and we will quote some of your comments in our publicity and recruitment material. When you go to your local supermarket or library you will see lots of advertisements relating to groups on their noticeboards. Is your branch advertised if not ask central office for posters which can be adapted? You don't have to be a mathematician to realise that if everyone brings along one new member we will double our numbers.

Do you have any other ideas that may help with our membership drive? If we don't try new things we will never know if they would have been successful. Do you belong to other groups and are there any members there who may have been involved in health or care activities if so bring them along to a meeting.

The summer Fellowship newsletter will be circulated next month (yes summer officially starts on 21st June) and I hope you will find some interesting articles especially the £10,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to support older people in Manchester. This has led to the setting up of two new branches Central Manchester and Stockport. There are also several examples of how branches are preparing for meetings again and how some of our members have made valuable contributions during the pandemic.

I am delighted to see such a significant use of our Facebook Group and pleased that we now have over 1,700 followers. If you are not one of those followers can I encourage you to join Facebook? It would be good to increase that number to over 2,000.

I mentioned in a previous letter that we were hoping to have a collaborative arrangement with the fledgling organisation College of Dentistry and I can now report we have entered into a new exciting partnership. The benefits are that the College has the opportunity of using our members as a sounding and the Fellowship benefits from the College being a new source of recruitment. I am looking forward to starting similar discussions with other organisations.

The Mirthy talks continue to be popular with over 700 members registering for each event, the next ones are:-

1 June 10.45am	Under the influence	Andy Smith
15 June 10.45am	Tommy Cooper	Steve Short

You don't have to be on email to join the popular Fellowship Book Club. If you would like to join please contact Sherry or Debbie in Central Office.

Following my earlier requests seeking applications from members to fill vacancies on the Board of Trustees I am pleased to say Janine Brooks, a dental clinician from Northamptonshire and John Mosley a retired consultant general surgeon from Manchester have been appointed. A profile of both of these new trustees will appear in the Autumn Fellowship newsletter. I am sure you will be hearing more about them in the future.

Finally I hope to see some of you at the conference in October in Manchester.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely



John Rostill OBE
Chief Executive