

7 November 2022

Dear Member

I am pleased to tell you that we now have over 9,000 members, which means that we have reversed the downward trend of recent years. This is as a result of the recent campaign where all NHS retirees were invited to join the Fellowship.

You will be aware that all branches were given the opportunity of voting to make changes to our constitution. The rules state that two thirds majority of voting branches need to be in favour before any changes can be made. A total of 74 branches completed the ballot forms and 15 branches designated voting delegates to the AGM. A vote was taken and the result is that aspects relating to the Members Council (formerly the National Council) was carried. This means that the regional members' representatives will form a new Members Council (replacing the existing National Council).

The Members Council will elect one of its own as Chair. The Chair of the Board of Trustees will attend the Members Council meeting but will not be entitled to vote. Additionally, postal members will be invited to elect two of their number to the Members Council.

Those aspects relating to the changes to the terms of office, that all members' representatives should initially be for two years, renewable for up to ten years, then one year at a time thereafter for a maximum period of tenure of ten consecutive years, was also carried.

The third proposal that counties should be used as the future basis for the membership structure did not receive sufficient votes in favour and therefore was not carried.

The first meeting of the new Members Council will be held in London on 24 January 2023.

I am pleased to say that there has been very positive feedback on the conference and many thanks given to the Isle of Wight Tours that organised it for us, despite some people having real problems with travelling issues because of the rail situation.

As you know the NHS was formed in 1948 and next year will be celebrating its 75th anniversary. There is no doubt that our profile was raised considerably in July 2018 as the NHS celebrated its 70th anniversary. We very much hope to have similar press coverage next year.

In particular we will be looking to hear the stories of some of our oldest members, particularly those that were involved in the health service in the very early days, either in the late 1940's or early 1950's. If you were involved at that time and are prepared to share your story please make contact directly with me or with Central Office.

The Fellowship has already been invited to join the National steering group for NHS75 which will enable us to fully participate in the plans for next year. Additionally, we have formed our own working group, chaired by one of our Trustees Mabel Saw, and we have begun to plan what we might do in 2023. Inevitably many branches will want to celebrate in the usual manner but any other innovative ideas as to how we might mark this historic event will be welcomed.

Next year also sees the coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6 May (and it has been recently announced that there will be an additional bank holiday on Monday 8 May). I know that many branches will want to celebrate this event and again I look forward to hearing what plans your branch may have.

I know that a number of our members are also members of the Patients Association, which will be running its first ever patient partnership week from 28 November to 2 December this year. That week will include webinars on a number of issues including a session by Dr Henrietta Hughes, the new Patient Safety Commissioner for England. This event will be held on zoom on Wednesday 30 November between 9 am and 10 am. If anyone would like register for this, use the link below:-

<https://www.patients-association.org.uk/Event/join-us-for-a-week-of-patient-partnership>

At the conference I mentioned that there are many financial benefits that members can take advantage of and that I would welcome hearing from members who have benefitted from these schemes. I issued a challenge to see if we could identify the biggest savings made by any member. Since the conference, Sally from Ruislip has written to me detailing over £700 worth of savings in one year! If you can beat that, or get close to it, please let me know.

Regrettably, Ken Jarrold, who has been our Patron and much involved in the Fellowship for over a decade has decided to stand down. I owe much to Ken for his solid support, his support to me personally and to the Fellowship particularly in my early days, when he was able to influence NHS England and NHS Wales into giving the Fellowship annual grants. He will be much missed and difficult to replace.

I also take this opportunity of thanking Cynthia Matthews and Margaret Moffat, both previous Chairs of the Fellowship for their work over a considerable number of years. Again they have both decided to stand down this year, as has Clare Panniker who is taking up an even more demanding post as Director for NHS East of England. Again my grateful thanks for their unstinting support.

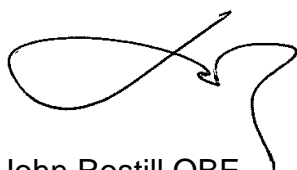
As you are receiving this letter by post, I would be grateful if you would consider letting us send this regular communication to you by email. Since the pandemic many members who were not comfortable with electronic communications have become more computer literate. You will appreciate the cost of postage continues to rise and if we were able to get everybody onto email it would make communications so much easier and less expensive.

Please let central office know if you are prepared to receive future correspondence by email

Finally, as I explained at conference, I have decided to stand down as Chief Executive. I was appointed as Director in 2013, following being interviewed by Ethel Armstrong, Martin Davies (the then Treasurer), Ken Jarrold, Patron and Cynthia Matthews. I have thoroughly enjoyed being actively involved in the Fellowship for almost a decade and I am delighted to have met so many of you over the years. I am not leaving until the end of March 2023 so there is plenty of time for me to pass on my thanks to those that have done so much to keep the Fellowship going. I will miss you all.

*Kind regards*

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large loop followed by a smaller loop and a trailing line.

John Rostill OBE  
Chief Executive