



Dear Member

It is a great pleasure to be able to write to you as the new Chief Executive for the NHS Retirement Fellowship, a role that I commenced on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, taking over from John Rostill who had been in post since 2013.

In case you missed the Facebook post that Lucia sent out on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022. I am Mike Seaton, married to Brec, and we live in Kendal, Cumbria. We have two sons, our eldest David is a fourth year medical student at Leicester University and our youngest James is a second year physiotherapy student at Cardiff University.

I have spent over 30 years working within the charity sector at local, regional and national levels. My most recent role was as Chief Executive for Carers Support South Lakes, a charity that supports unpaid carers within the South Lakeland area.

I am very excited to be joining a charity that has a long history, has members at its heart and has the purpose of supporting anyone who has retired from any involvement in health and social care.

In view of this, I am sorry that my first correspondence with you also needs to highlight the financial challenges facing the Fellowship and to outline the difficult decisions that the Board of Trustees have recently taken. These decisions were shared with and reluctantly endorsed by Members' Council at their meeting on Tuesday' 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

The NHSRF enjoys close relationships with NHS England, and the Health Boards of Scotland and Wales. Until the current financial year, these relationships have included significant grants from each to the Fellowship. Unfortunately, NHS

England and the Health Boards are facing severe financial constraints and are having to take tough decisions to create savings to safeguard the delivery of future services. Consequently, the NHSRF has been notified that whilst they support all that the Fellowship stands for and provides, the most recent round of grant funding received is likely to be the last they provide for our work. This will inevitably have a significant impact upon the Fellowship's revenue. In the past twelve months the value of the grants received from these bodies was £90,000.

The Board of Trustees recently met to discuss the situation, and their first priority was to identify areas to reduce expenditure, in order to balance income against expenditure and ensure the sustainability of the Fellowship. The measures they have identified include the cessation of the quarterly Fellowship magazine (this saves production and postage costs), these will be replaced with bi-monthly mailings from the CEO, which will be sent electronically wherever possible; a deferment on pay increases for NHSRF employees for 2022-23 and possibly for 2023-24; and a move to virtual meetings wherever possible and practical.

Unfortunately, even with the implementations of these savings, expenditure for 2023-24 is anticipated to be £240,000. Without additional grant income the only source of income is the Capitation Fee for Branches and the Membership Fee for Postal members. We currently have some 9,000 members and a fee of £20 per member and so there is likely to be a significant shortfall of income which will make the Fellowship financially unsustainable. It is vital that the Fellowship is not dependent upon external grants for its survival and in view of this the Board has decided to increase the Capitation and Postal membership fees to £30 per member. The Board understands that as a consequence of this decision, some members may choose to leave, especially when it comes in the midst of a cost-of-living increase, which affects us all. We hope that branches and individual members will do all that they can, to encourage as many people as possible to stay. The increase will come into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. This means that for postal members their Direct Debits will automatically increase and any member paying by Standing Order or other means will need to increase the amount to £30.

As your new CEO I would like to emphasise that I will do all I can to ensure all possible savings are implemented, and that we explore all opportunities for the development of sustainable future income streams and ways of working. Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or suggestions and I will ensure that

they are considered at the appropriate forums.

The Board of Trustees currently has four trustee vacancies. Two places are internal and can be filled by members, and two are for external representatives. If you would be interested in applying to become a trustee, or know of someone who may be interested please contact the Central Office for further information at [sherry.smith2@nhs.net](mailto:sherry.smith2@nhs.net) or [debbie.arnold4@nhs.net](mailto:debbie.arnold4@nhs.net).

The closing date for applications is 24<sup>th</sup> March and interviews will be via zoom on 11<sup>th</sup> April.

As I stated at the start of this letter, I am very excited to be joining the Fellowship at this time, I believe there is substantial potential for growth and development and promise I will do all that I can to ensure that the Fellowship thrives and builds on its history so we can continue to grow and support current and future retirees.

With very best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Seaton". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Mike Seaton  
Chief Executive Officer