



# British Society of Paediatric Dentistry

Improving children's oral health

Well, September 2019. It doesn't seem a year ago that I was standing on the platform in the Caird Hall receiving this Presidential Medal. On behalf of the Executive Committee, thank you for being here: for coming to the Conference, for participating with the enthusiasm and humour so characteristic of the members of this Society. Thank you also to the Local Organising Committee for providing us with such a fantastic conference: the venue, the scientific programme, the ambience... just right.

Thank you also for being here in this room. The AGM is the one time of the year when we have the opportunity to meet collectively together to review and discuss the business of BSPD. I know I speak for my fellow Exec members when I say that we very much appreciate your support in being here.

The year has been a busy one and there is, by nature, a tendency to focus on the things that are still sitting in the 'to action' list, of which I have several. When considering what to say by way of valedictory, it's been encouraging to spend some time reviewing what we have achieved as a Society over the year, several of which have already been referenced in the reports and discussions: the membership review and the movement of the membership database to the College server. The media team continue to be active in their press releases, interviews and initiatives. One of which has been the development and launch of the Society's Branding Guidelines. Any branch wanting to use their branding should contact Neil Sutcliffe via the [administrator@bspd.co.uk](mailto:administrator@bspd.co.uk) email address and he'll arrange access. Dental Check by One has developed massively and now has its own website (<https://dentalcheckbyone.co.uk>).

We've begun to review our conferences – what should start, what should stop and what should continue. There will be one or two questions in the conference evaluation – please let us know what you think. Another acronym to add to the list which appear in Council papers, 'QIRC' replaces the 'PCEC'. Paul Ashley, Chair, and Chris Vernazza, Secretary, of the Policy and Clinical Effectiveness Committee have reviewed the committee's role and the PCEC is in the process as being rebranded as the Quality Improvement and Research Committee to reflect a wider remit and the evolving and increasing role of QI and research in the delivery of health care. I'm sure QIRC will become a very familiar term to us all.

A very small flavour of the many things which have been happening behind the scenes, all of which reflect the commitment and enthusiasm of a huge number of people; my colleagues, and friends, on Exec, Council members, Branch Committees, those of you who represent the Society on other committees: Stephen Fayle, Ferranti Wong, Helen Rodd, Elizabeth O'Sullivan, Jinous Tahmassebi, Michelle Moffat, Rosie Whatling, Rachel Nichols, Susan Parekh, Jenny Harris, Clare Ledingham. Thank you.

So what of my year. Don't worry I will be brief. I was given a number of top tips from recent past presidents of the Society before taking up post last year. One of which was 'the year will go fast, enjoy it!' I must confess that this time last year, a year seemed a very long time, and 'enjoy' would not have been top on my list of emotions. I seem to recall saying one of my objectives was to survive. Well, I'm here...

When I look back, 'enjoy' is there. I've very much enjoyed getting to know and working with the Executive Committee, Caroline and Neil. Neil is the person who will be the most 'well kent' to the members – the first point of contact for all things BSPD. Neil, thank you for your support,



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the advice you give the members, a constant support. It took me a while to appreciate that, when in conversation with Neil, if you hear a pause, that quiet 'mmm', I should stop and listen – the next sentence was always important. He has kept me on track on more than one occasion with a gentle prompt, a timely question, and I'm very much grateful for his pearls of wisdom.

One of the highlights of the year, much as my predecessors, has been to visit a number of the branches. This felt a little like 'flying solo'. To those of you I met on the visits, thank you for your welcome, hospitality and humour, and for your contribution to the journey. What started off as a consideration of the impact our physical health had on patient care, evolved to reflect our conversations as I travelled round the country. Yes, while our own personal health, physical energy and resilience absolutely has an impact on patient care, of equal measure is the environment in which we work.

I have one more perusal for us all. Within the teams we work, do we feel supported and guided, accepted and safe, respected and nurtured? Do we have equality, are we involved in the decisions which affect us, do we have opportunities? If the answer is 'yes' – grab it with both hands, as the protective environment where teams flourish and patient care thrives. If the answer is 'no', let's ask ourselves, is there something we can, and should, do, individually and collectively to, address this? Prevention is better than cure.

There are two more engagements in the diary. I'm joining the Christian Dental Fellowship in November to deliver the CPD talk at their annual conference. The subject for this was confirmed last night – Health and Wellbeing. When talking about Fitness, I've used a model with seven indicators, one of which is 'spiritual'. I've made reference to my Christian faith being important to my journey. In many ways, when talking about this, recognising that this may not suit us all, I feel I've short changed you in what I've said. I'm therefore delighted to have the opportunity of speaking at the CDF conference and if it 'ticks a box' come along. The second event is in March, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March, at the Northern Ireland Branch's Study Day in Belfast. Come and support the Branch.

It has genuinely been an honour to spend the year as your President, and yes I have enjoyed it. It's my absolute delight to be handing the medal into Sarah's caring hands. I've very much appreciated Sarah's wisdom and quiet counsel over the years as fellow trainee and consultant colleague. As I pass on the Presidential Medal, my top tip? 'A year is not long – enjoy.'

Liz Roebuck  
12<sup>th</sup> September 2019