

Subject: Letter from the Chairman

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To: Dr G Forrest <webmaster@scata.org.uk>

From the Chairman

April 2009

Dear SCATA member

I am writing to let you know what SCATA has been doing recently and what is being planned for the future.

In November 2008 we held our annual meeting in Bath. The scientific sessions were held in the glorious setting of the Assembly Rooms, while the formal dinner was in the Pump Rooms. Following a private drinks reception around the Roman bath itself, we enjoyed a splendid meal in the gallery overlooking the bath. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers, Andrew Donovan and Steve Sale, for what really was a most enjoyable and informative meeting. My thanks also to Juliette McCormack who, yet again, provided the necessary administrative support.

SCATA's next meeting will be held in Lincolnshire on 1st and 2nd June. Andrew Norton (andrew.norton@scata.org.uk) is the organiser, and you should by now have received notice of this meeting both by email and by snail mail. It's just over 8 weeks away so if you haven't yet booked your study leave you need to do so now! Andrew has put together an excellent programme, details of which can be found on SCATA's web site, along with booking forms. Among other things, Chris Dodds will be telling us about the College's latest thinking regarding the information requirements for revalidation, while the whole of Tuesday will provide an opportunity for everyone to influence the development of iSoft's Lorenzo, the electronic medical record system that most anaesthetists working north of the M4 corridor will have to use in the near future.

This meeting represents a change for SCATA. It is in early June rather than November and it will be held on Monday and Tuesday. The reasons for these changes are, as I said in my Chairman's report last autumn, that November was becoming very crowded with anaesthetic meetings, while holding the meeting on Monday and Tuesday should help reduce the time that people need to take away from work.

On Wednesday 3rd June we will be running an Information Technology Life Support Course (ITLS). While this is designed to meet the needs of trainees a number of Consultants have found it provides a useful introduction to medical informatics. Participants receive a certificate of attendance approved for 5 CPD points by the RCoA, and all attendees who pass the final MCQ receive a Certificate of Competence which can be used as supporting evidence at RITA or appraisal. We are always on the lookout for new faculty members for ITLS courses, so if you have some expertise in one or more areas covered by the course, and would like to join the faculty, then please contact me.

SCATA will also hold a one day meeting in November. This will be primarily for the Working Groups, and will be held at the Association of Anaesthetists headquarters in London. Details will be made available in due course.

One of the Working Groups is concerned with the development of standardised terminology to facilitate computerisation. Andrew Norton is the Content Director for the International Organisation for Terminology in Anesthesia (IOTA) which has close links with the International Healthcare Terminology Standards Development Organisation (IHTSDO). The latter is the body responsible for the ongoing development and promotion of SNOMED CT. If you would like to get involved with this work, which requires anaesthetic rather than terminological expertise, please contact Andrew (andrew.norton@scata.org.uk).

One of SCATA's objects is to support research. The financial resources of the Society are quite modest by comparison with those of larger organisations but we do encourage members to seek support for any projects which fall within SCATA's sphere of interest. The Society also supports members applying for Clinical Excellence Awards. The ACCEA process seems now to be a continuous one and members are advised to start considering their application for the forthcoming round as soon as possible. Further information about both research grants and ACCEA is on the web site.

Another area where SCATA provides a service to the anaesthetic community is through the provision of a cybercafe at AAGBI meetings. So far we have had an unofficial cybercafe at the meeting in Torquay and an official cybercafe at the WSM in London in 2006 and 2009. The latter was a particular success, seldom being unoccupied throughout the 3 days of the meeting; there was usually a queue waiting for the first laptop to be connected to the internet each morning. I would particularly like to thank Paul Cooper, the Vice-Chairman, for his help with this. It would not have been possible without his knowledge of DHCP, DNS, proxies, sub-net masks, IPv4 and IPv6 addresses etc! Discussions with the Association regarding the cybercafe for their Liverpool meeting are in progress. SCATA is always willing to run a cybercafe at meetings of other societies. Costs are minimal when compared with the charges of commercial organisations, so if any member knows of another specialist society that wants a cybercafe please get in touch.

In common with other charities, SCATA has had to modify its Constitution to comply with new legislation. SCATA's new Constitution was discussed and approved at the Annual General Meeting held in Bath, and came into force on 1 January 2009. It is modelled closely on the new Constitution of the Association of Anaesthetists. The big changes are that "Annual General

Meetings” which can vote on matters are out, to be replaced by “General Meetings of Members”, held at least annually, which can not vote on matters. If a vote is required on any matter then all members must have the opportunity to vote, even if they have never attended a meeting. To facilitate that new process electronic communication is now approved as the only means by which SCATA must communicate with its members.

Since electronic communication is now the norm, it is most important that SCATA has a current email address for every member. As a member you can log in to the members only section of the web site and change your personal details on SCATA's database. Please check your entry and keep it up to date, especially your email address. If you have any difficulty contact the webmaster (webmaster@scata.org.uk) or the membership secretary (treasurer@scata.org.uk).

The Committee is always looking for ideas for meetings and suggestions are most welcome. In particular, it is always difficult to know where to set the balance between topics with clinical or general relevance, and those of a more technical nature.

Finally, if you can't manage to attend SCATA's meetings in Lincolnshire or London this year why not attend the European Society's meeting in Berlin in September? There is a link to ESCTAIC's meeting on SCATA's web site.

Anthony P Madden

Chairman

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