

Association of Basic Science Teachers in Dentistry

Spring Newsletter – April 2013



Presidents Message

The first quarter the year is traditionally quiet, with most of the societies activity taking place behind the scenes. We have been very sorry to learn that Roger Shore, our Secretary /Treasurer/Webmaster will be relinquishing some of his activities for health reasons.

Paul Anderson has agreed to take over as interim Secretary/Treasurer whilst Roger will remain as Webmaster. We wish him a speedy recovery and hope that it will not be long before we welcome him back to our meetings.

Spring Meeting 2013

'Basic Science Teaching in Undergraduate and Postgraduate Curricula and the Advent of '...omics'.

This was a joint meeting with the Oral Microbiology and Immunology Group (OMIG) of BSODR hosted by the University of Glasgow. It was divided into two parts. The first, defined the meaning of '...omics' as a strategy for looking at '...all at the same time', as a contemporary approach to the study of biological systems. Dr's Graham Hamilton, Richard Burchmore and Karl Burgess, all from the Glasgow Polyomics lab provided an overview of genomics, proteomics and metabolomics respectively. There was a common message; by studying all genes or proteins expressed in a system it is possible to obtain a global perspective not hitherto achievable. These technologies are becoming cheaper, more accessible and increasingly available for application in a wide range of situations. Professor Wim Crielaard from ACTA in Amsterdam followed. Focussing on his own discipline of microbiology he showed how '...omics' could be applied to the study of oral disease processes and , in some key areas, challenge accepted understanding. Students were introduced to this approach in their clinical years and he gave examples of how the material covered could be made relevant and contextualised to their needs. Dr Vehid Salih from the UCL-Eastman Dental Institute then gave a personalised account of his experiences providing basic science input undergoing speciality training.

The meeting concluded with a discussion around the challenges these new technologies pose for the dental curriculum; the difficulty in establishing an appropriate depth of coverage, and how curriculum time might be found given the intense pressure on timetabling. These are recurring themes to be considered more fully in future meetings.

Finally, we owe a debt of gratitude to Marcello Riggio for organising a very rewarding day.

Internationalisation

Our North American counsellor, Tracy De Peralta, has been developing a list of contacts with a view to creating opportunities for greater engagement with North American faculty, exchange of ideas and information. More about this in future news letters.

Closer to home we are in discussion with the French Association of Teachers of Odontological Basic Sciences to with a view to sharing experiences and developing a forum for areas of common interest. The committee has invited Dr Jeff O'Sullivan from Dublin to be co-opted onto the committee giving us, once again, representation from the Irish Republic.

Future Meetings

The Society will be hosting a special interest group session around the theme 'Towards a Core Curriculum in Basic Science' on Friday 30th August as part of the 2013 ADEE meeting in Birmingham – more details in the Summer newsletter.

The next European meeting is scheduled for the week beginning 7th April 2014 in Madrid to be themed around 'The Interface between Oral Biology and Oral Medicine' – details to follow.

WWW.ABSTD.ORG