

Association of Basic Science Teachers in Dentistry

Christmas Newsletter - December 2015



Presidents Message

Following ADEE in Szeged (August 2015 newsletter), I had the opportunity to attend the 'Forum des Jeunes Chercheurs en Odontologie' in Lille, courtesy of Valerie Roger. This gave a welcome opportunity to meet French colleagues and it emphasised just how far we have come towards being an international Association. Alongside this we are having to manage change and some of the issues are outlined below. This has stimulated much vigorous and healthy debate leading to consensus, and we will be starting 2016 in a strong position, with clear direction for the future and every prospect of furthering the cause of the Basic Sciences in Dentistry in new and exciting ways.

The AGM in Cardiff in September saw the election of a new committee (see the website), and in November, Henk Brand from ACTA in Amsterdam was co-opted in recognition of his help in arranging the forthcoming Amsterdam meeting. The new committee has already begun work on several issues. We were also able to recognise

two individuals who have worked tirelessly for the Association. So, it is with great pleasure that I can announce the award of Honorary Life Membership to Josie Beeley and Tony Smith.

Although the Association has remained active in recent years and has developed an ongoing involvement with groups like ADEE, there is a pressing need to raise our profile within individual Dental Schools. One proposal is that we identify ABSTD advocates within each school to provide a point of contact and generate a two way exchange of news and information. If you are able to help with this please let me know.

Finally I would like to thank you for re-electing me to a second term as President and wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Infrastructure, Membership and Financial Issues

In November, the committee unanimously agreed to move away from individual subscriptions towards an institutional based subscription system for a trial period of two years. This builds on a motion passed at the AGM. Alongside this, our Secretary, Paul Anderson, and Membership Secretary, Marcello Riggio, together with ongoing support from the Scheven family have been developing a web based membership system. These changes will streamline our administration whilst continuing to give a stable source of income. Up to this point, subscriptions have been paid by Standing Order and the Committee would like to thank current members for their continued support over what has been a difficult time for the Association.

External Examiners Register

After requests from colleagues we are planning to re-start our register of individuals able to act as external examiners to the basic and applied science modules of dental programmes. Previously this list was 'open access', but it had to be temporarily discontinued after advice that we may be contravening UK data protection regulations. The list will be accessible to Deans, module leads or equivalent Louise Belfield and I will be administering it and further details will be circulated in due course.

ABSTD Student Essay Prize

A proposal has been tabled to establish an Essay prize for Undergraduate Dental Students together with those taking programmes in related disciplines (e.g. Dental Therapy and Hygiene, Dental Technology). This will target areas of interest to the Association and seek to engage our students in the Biomedical Sciences applied to Dentistry and publicise the work of the Association. We are probably too late for the Academic Year 2015/2016 so hope to have this live for 2016/2017.

Future Meeting

7th/8th April 2016 - 'Saliva, Salivary Glands and the Dental Curriculum - whetting the appetite for learning'. (7th European Meeting at ACTA, Amsterdam).

This will consider recent advances in Salivary Bioscience, and blend discussion in this rapidly evolving area with contemporary educational issues and explore its use as a theme for integrated contextualised learning. We look forward to seeing you in Amsterdam in the Spring.

Committee Meetings

It has been agreed that the Association will fund reasonable travel expenses to help committee members attend one committee meeting a year, and reduce travel by the use of teleconferencing for Association business. Hopefully this will encourage members to stand for committee posts. This decision will be reviewed annually.