



Retired Members Committee

Written report to ARM 2024

Introduction

This was my first year as retired members committee chair and it has certainly been a busy one! I must thank my predecessor Brian Guttridge for handing over a very lively committee with a full work plan which we hope is starting to make a difference for retired members. I have been writing regular blog posts about our work and areas of interest for retired members, which have been highlighted in email newsletters and on the website. If you have not seen these [blog posts](#) please let [Laura Clark](#) know and she will do her best to get this fixed.

Retired members committee elections

For the current session, the committee elected myself as chair and Stephen Millar as deputy chair. Tom Kane was elected as the committee's representative on the professional regulation committee and pensions committee. Surajit Singh was elected as our representative on BMA FREE (Forum for Racial and Ethnic Equality) and I was elected as an observer on the Patient Liaison Group. We also had representatives on the mental health reference group, Nicola Mann and Surjait Singh, who continued to advocate for retired doctors to play a key role in improved mentoring and wellbeing support for their working colleagues.

At the retired members conference in March, elections were held for the vacant seats on the retired members committee for the 2024/25 session. Congratulations to John Hughes and Catherine Royce who were elected, in addition to myself. Catherine and John will join the other members of the committee, Carole Cairns, Brian Guttridge and Stephen Millar. The committee also includes Wendy Savage, the UK council member representing retired members and Surjait Singh and Tom Kane, in their ex-officio voting seats as chair and deputy chair of retired members conference respectively.

I would like to thank Nicola Mann and Tom Kinloch, our outgoing committee members for all their hard work and the useful insight they have provided throughout the year. They will be missed, and I hope that they will continue to be involved with the BMA and its work with retired members. Finally, I must thank Stephen Millar, my deputy chair for his unswerving support and encyclopaedic knowledge of all things BMA and Tom Kane for his commitment and expertise in representing retired

members at professional regulation and pensions committees and feeding into the NHS England discussions. It has been a pleasure to work with them and all of the committee.

Retired members conference

The retired members conference took place on 14th March 2024, both online and at BMA House in London. Conference chair Surjait Singh and deputy chair, Tom Kane oversaw a vibrant and thought-provoking day, which included a panel session on the theme 'retirement – another step in your career'. Through motions debate and discussion, conference attendees were able to influence the work of the retired members committee and the BMA more widely, in areas such as improving the BMA retired member experience, representing members returning to work to support colleagues in tackling the NHS backlog and providing guidance on the ever-changing pension rules. I would thoroughly recommend attendance at future conferences to all retired members.

The conference elected our 17 representatives to the Annual Representative Meeting, including retired members committee officers who received ex-officio voting seats, as well as electing three new members to the retired members committee.

Pensions

It was agreed at the 2023 ARM that retired members should have formal representation on the pensions committee and Tom Kane was elected to this position, having previously been an observer on the committee. Throughout the session, Tom has been very active in ensuring the situation of those already retired or nearing retirement has been properly considered in BMA's pensions policy development. We sent reminders to check that your pensions were being increased properly as this had not been happening with all members. We also issued important information about the McCloud remedy – relevant to doctors who were in the pension scheme before 2015 and either worked throughout the period or perhaps even retired during this period. If you need more information please contact our [pensions department](#) and look out for the excellent [Chase De Vere pensions webinars](#) which run regularly for BMA members.

Workforce Attrition

During the 2023-24 session, the committee was part of the BMA workforce attrition project led by Rob Kidney, which aimed to develop a range of evidence-based retention policies to target specific points of preventable attrition in the medical workforce pipeline. Many thanks to Brian Guttridge, Stephen Millar, Carole Cairns and Surjait Singh who worked with me and were involved with this group. The group's work led to the production of the recently published [When a Doctor Leaves – Tackling the Cost of Attrition in the UK Health Service](#) report.

NHS England Emeritus Consultants Pilot

For some time, the BMA and the retired members committee have been calling for more flexibility for retired doctors still wishing to work part-time. This year NHS England launched a pilot digital platform for newly-retired doctors to be able to offer their availability to Trusts across England to perform outpatient appointments. The BMA had several lengthy meetings with NHS England to feed in our thoughts and concerns for the scheme - some of which, I am pleased to say, were taken on board by NHS England prior to the launch. Tom Kane and I will be meeting with them again shortly to find out more about the first stages of the pilot and to ensure that the remuneration, terms and conditions, pension, appraisal, registration and licensing issues associated with the scheme are all properly considered.

Secretariat

This has been the first full session in which the retired members committee has sat with other branches of practice within the national negotiations and representation team at the BMA - having moved from council secretariat towards the end of the last session. This better alignment with the other major membership groups is something the committee had been calling for to improve our integration into the BMA national structure and has proved really useful for our work. I am also pleased to announce that the committee has recently had extra staff resource allocated. Laura Clark, senior policy advisor, has been joined by Jonny Carey, policy advice and support officer, and Winifred Annan, coordination and support officer, with David Cloke as our head of committee secretariat. I look forward to working with them all and am very grateful for their hard work to date.

Changes to BMA Local Structures and AGM

The BMA has been [consulting](#) and putting forward proposals for changes to its local representative structures, moving from local pan branch of practice based divisions, to new work based units. At conference, members expressed their concerns about retired members being separated from other branches of practice under the new proposals and I have been putting forward members' views at UK council. The proposals will require changes to the Association's articles and bye-laws being agreed at the ARM. All members will then be able to vote for or against the changes at the AGM at 12.20 on Tuesday 25th June. It would be very good to have your support and consideration at the AGM. You would need to register to attend in advance (as soon as possible) and all the details including the documentation can be found at [this link](#). If you cannot attend, any of the officers of the retired members committee (or indeed anyone else you may wish to nominate) would be happy to act as proxy for you. Your vote is important please do not allow it to be wasted.

Next Steps and Thank you

On 6th June we held a meeting of all retired members in elected and representative positions (above divisions) throughout the BMA to explore the issues facing us and how we can improve the support the BMA provides to you in retirement. We will report back from this meeting with proposals for our work over the next session and hope that these meetings will take place once or twice a year going forward. We are also planning to run more retired member focused events throughout the year, beginning with IT support, in response to requests for more provision in this area.

And finally, a message to everybody please - retiring from work gives new opportunities to contribute to BMA activity, whether at local, regional or national level. I would encourage any retired member interested in becoming more involved to get in touch.

Thank you for taking the trouble to read this report.

[BMA retired members committee overview](#)

Dr Peter Curry

Chair, Retired Members Committee

June 2024