

A message from the President

I would like to wish each and every one of you all the very best for the festive season and the fast approaching 2021. 2020, as we all know, has been a challenge. Covid 19 has certainly changed the outlook of us all and it has impacted upon so many and at so many different levels. My heart goes out to anyone who has been personally or significantly affected by Covid 19. I would also like to go on record and formally thank Council for their tireless efforts to ensure our Society grows in the right direction as we re-focus our approach to get back to some degree of normality; remember Council work voluntarily for a society they see as family.

2020 saw the postponement of the joint conference with RD UK, BSRD and SRRDG. However, it is being delivered next year in a virtual format and the provisional programme is available. <https://www.bsspd.org/Conferences/Annual+Conference+2021.aspx>

Our society continues to have a significant voice in this inaugural venture and whilst now in my tenancy I still intend to have a standalone BSSPD meeting later in the year and before summer. Please be patient with me a little while longer until a definite decision on the exact format is reached. I will go on record and assure all that the opportunities for our young researchers and that all prizes will still be available during 2021 for the membership.

Thursday the 17th December saw the first Gold Medal award lecture. It was delivered by this year's very deserving winner Richard Welfare. A citation was provided by Craig Barclay with the evening hosted by Chris Butterworth. Richards's recollections of 50 years in clinical service and the changes he has witnessed was well received by all who attended in the virtual medium of Zoom; the address was also streamed live on Facebook! Richards wife Rosina presented him with his medal and was able to "seal the deal" with a well-deserved kiss. It was good to see so many members of the society on-line and fitting to receive their words of congratulations.

So before 2021 brings in the year of the Dragon, I wish to re-assure all that Council will continue to work tirelessly and in the best interests of the Society. There are a number of innovative proposals for the future which I am sure will be well received. You will continue to see our Society as not only as a progressive one but one which continues to remain consistent in fulfilling the foundations and principles it was built upon.

Keep safe, keep well and remember that it is only a matter of time before we all meet again as the one big happy family we are.

Dr Robert McAndrew

BSSPD president 2020-21