

## New Year, New Challenges



Natalie Quine

*BARNA Chair*

Well, the New Year is here and I am embracing new challenges with a change in role at work and with BARN. What does 2011 hold for us? Well, it has started badly with talks of further cuts to Public Service funding. I hear regularly of NHS funding issues, threats of job losses, consultation for redundancy and downgrading of roles. It is worrying that the workload does not diminish but they are asking more for even less. The NHS was created with one thing in mind – that everyone would have access to health care, which would be free at the point of need. I wonder what the creators of the NHS would think of how it has changed over the years. As a nurse, my focus is always patient care, but there are a lot of issues that attempt to interfere with this in the current health service. At the heart of the health service remains a reliable and caring team of dedicated professionals – long may this continue!

I have watched with interest the developments around the proposed increment freeze in addition to the annual pay rise freeze for the next 2 years. There were some interesting comments on the RCN Facebook page. Many were not only “blaming” the Bankers for the country’s financial crisis, but were also commenting that this has not affected the banker’s bonuses. The price of petrol and diesel is at an all-time high, and, as with the NHS funding postcode lottery, there appears to be national disparity on the price of a litre of fuel.

Agenda for Change was brought in to ensure parity of pay for all Professions Allied to Medicine (PAMS). This system was supposed to be more robust than the previous Whitley Scale, ensuring that new graduates

started on the same pay point, and experienced the same accelerated pay progression during their first year in practice. The accelerated pay progression seems to have been forgotten in some circumstances and we have seen numerous publications urging staff to ensure that they have this in place. The full Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions came into force in October 2005. Some individuals have been entitled to a lot of back pay!

As ever in BARN, we are working hard, and we are starting to revise our Standards of Practice. We are working with the Association of Anaesthetics in Great Britain and Ireland on a Recovery Competency document and you will hear more about this at the conference. We have also just finished designing an advertising poster for members to use to advertise BARN in their place of work. It can be found on our website.

BARN, as ever, has its own challenges. We are currently planning our annual conference on 1 July 2011, and as I have previously written, it is booked at the Clarendon Suites in Birmingham. We will be celebrating the 25th BARN Conference. A bit of a milestone! In recognition of the turmoil the NHS and individuals are experiencing, we have set our prices to reflect this:

Members – £100

Non-members – £175 (membership prices are not changing – £30 for Nurses and £40 for Non-Nurses).

We hope that by reducing our prices, we will encourage more of you to attend and network, and share your problems, innovations and issues. A conference is always a great day of education and this

year is going to be no different. We have an excellent day of topical education planned. The booking system and conference information can now be found on the website and booked online via the BARNA website conference page.

Well, it is time for me to go and start my next challenge. We are looking forward to seeing you all at Conference 2011 to celebrate 25 years of BARNA and promoting excellence in Anaesthetic and Recovery Practice.