



Chairman's Report

Welcome to another newsletter. ABCD continues to prosper although we have run into a patch of troubled water recently. Unfortunately our London Secretariat is no more. When ABCD accepted a kind offer of support from Magellan Communications this was an enormous step

forward for the Association. It gave us a London office base at minimal cost, a highly efficient secretary to run our database and organise mail shots and a conference organiser all rolled into one. However, as most of you will know, tragically our good friend and supporter Tom Delaney, MD of Magellan, died suddenly last November. We would like to extend our deepest sympathy to his family, friends and staff.

This disaster occurred just before our autumn meeting and almost had catastrophic consequences for us because some ABCD assets (meeting registration fees etc) held by Magellan were immediately frozen and our meeting was threatened with cancellation. Eventually it was rescued at the last moment by the expedient of several Officers and Committee Members underwriting the hotel bill using their credit cards! We are grateful to Ken Shaw, our redoubtable Treasurer, for organising the rescue operation. Happily the meeting then went ahead uneventfully and was well up to our usual standard. Our credit cards remained intact and we had just about stopped sweating by the time it finished. This unfortunate happening does mean that we are now looking for a new Secretariat. The Officer's long suffering personal secretaries are currently running the ABCD database and helping to organise the Spring meeting, our grateful thanks go to them.

My last Chairman's Message seems to have caused a few ripples. My suggestion that ABCD is becoming the "only game in town" for diabetes specialists did not go down well with some professional members of Diabetes UK. I do believe that my statement was and is factually correct. It was certainly not my intention that this should be construed as an attack on Diabetes UK. The Officers and Committee of ABCD would very much like to work more closely

with Diabetes UK to provide support for specialist services. For several months we have been trying to organise a meeting with Sir Michael Hirst to see what the two organisations might be able to do together but regrettably we have been unable to find a suitable date until now. However, I am pleased to report that the Officers have finally managed to secure a meeting with Sir Michael and the professional officers of Diabetes UK during the spring meeting in Birmingham. Although there still appears to be some sensitivity about ABCD it is important to remember that most if not all of ABCD members still belong to Diabetes UK so there is no real conflict between the two organisations; we simply cater for different professional and lay interests within the same medical area. I feel that it is very important that ABCD and Diabetes UK do work closely together to provide the support for professional services that is urgently required, whilst preserving the identity and independence of consultants and SpR's. Most other medical specialities manage satisfactory symbiotic relationships between specialist professional and patient support organisations without any ownership problems and in my view there is no reason why diabetes should be any different. At the end of the day it is important that we both give consistent messages on matters pertaining to the quality and availability of both specialist and integrated services for diabetes patients.

There are many other issues concerning us at present including foundation hospitals, the new consultant contract, the working time directive, "asset stripping" of specialist services and not least the new GMS contract which is sure to have a huge impact on diabetes care. It is vital that all involved health professionals and patient groups work together to find a rational way forward through this quagmire and somehow or other end up with a better (not worse) service for our patients.

Richard Greenwood, Chairman, ABCD

ABCD would be very interested in the views of members as to why this is happening and what can be done about it. How can we make our speciality more attractive to trainees? Answers to the Chairman on a postcard (or E-mail) please.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM FOR ABCD

HOW TO JOIN ABCD

About the Association and Membership

The Association of British Clinical Diabetologists (ABCD) was founded in June 1997 to meet the perceived need for an independent forum in which Consultant Physicians could meet together and discuss specialist diabetic patient care in the NHS. ABCD feel the views of Specialist Diabetologists in the development of diabetic patient services have been overlooked and are important if the highest level of care is to be maintained and developed. ABCD is involved at present in three spheres of activity: meetings; training; and the organisation and delivery of patient care.

Membership of ABCD is open to all Consultant Physicians with an interest in diabetes patient care in the NHS and all SpRs in Diabetes and Endocrinology in their Final Year, ie post-PYA. At present, the annual membership fee is £25.00. This helps to reduce the cost of the six-monthly meetings for members as well as providing this Newsletter. If you are interested in joining the Association, please fill in the application form alongside and return it to the ABCD Membership Co-ordinator at the following address:

Dr Jeremy Bending
Consultant Physician
District Diabetes Centre
Eastbourne District Hospital
Kings Drive, Eastbourne
East Sussex, BN21 2UD
Tel: 01323 414902
Email: jeremy.bending@esht.nhs.uk

When your application has been approved, you will be sent a Standing Order Form for your annual subscription.

Please note that all enquiries for other information about ABCD should be addressed to the Hon Secretary, Dr Peter Winocour (see contact details on front cover).

Membership Proposal Form

I wish to apply for membership of the Association of British Clinical Diabetologists.

Please use block capitals

Name (in full, please)
Professional Qualifications
Position held
Address
Post Code
Tel. No.
Fax No.
Email
Signed
Date