It is a pleasure to be writing to you all again, though this time in the guise of the incoming President of the Association, rather than as Editor of the Journal, as was my role two years ago. In the intervening time, we have seen BADS develop from strength to strength, as Ian Smith has highlighted in his outgoing letter. As I mentioned in my address at the Annual Scientific Meeting in June, I have a legacy of superb leadership to inherit and continue, and Ian is going to be a very hard act to follow. On behalf of the Association and Council, I’d like to thank him for the sterling work he’s done over the past two years with development and promotion of our message, our ethos, and our credo. BADS has developed its influence and its credibility under his guidance and I know, like previous Presidents, he will continue to offer his guidance and wisdom to me as the “new boy on the block”.

So, where do we want to go for the next two years? We heard some inspiring talks and presentations at Torquay, and it’s phenomenal that the Association received over 120 submissions for oral presentations and posters for this meeting. This is the highest number ever, for any Annual Scientific meeting in our 23 years of existence, so that makes me think there is a real desire out there to be more innovative, more resourceful, and seek out new ways of improving the quality of patient care for day and short stay surgery. And yet, we learned from the various presentations, that there remains continued wide variation in day surgery rates for reasons that at times, seem pretty inexplicable. At BADS, we have a message that day surgery works; sure, it involves collaborative team work from a variety of multi-disciplinary backgrounds, certainly, it involves pre-emptive planning of the integrated patient pathway, but it’s not rocket science. So, who are the people who can best deliver and develop this message? Surely, everyone of you who are members reading this are the folks who can take back this message that we believe in, and indeed know to be true… The most important people who can continue to influence and deliver change isn’t me and, it isn’t Council… It’s you.

In Torquay, nearly two thirds of the attending delegates were non members, and it was wonderful to see a significant number of these people, who obviously have an interest in Day and Short Stay Surgery, join the Association. We will be now be better able to support them by representing their views, and indeed learning a little more about the challenges, successes and tribulations that, actually, we all face and deal with on a daily basis. So, if you are one of the new readers of the Journal, welcome to the BADS team.

If you are an existing member…. you are our life blood. It is you that I and the rest of Council represent with all of the national input that has been delivered so well over the last few years. We are grateful to you for supporting us. But how can we support you? Well, to my mind, it’s about further developing some of the resources already available to you as a result of you being a member, and then perhaps, trying to empower you even more. In the Member’s section on the website, we already have a series of discounts for books and other meetings that we are involved with, there’s access to every presentation that has been given at our Annual Scientific Meetings for the last few years, and this year will be no exception. We have a literature database, downloadable articles from the Journal of One Day Surgery, and the links to comparative benchmarking for Day Surgery will be there soon. I would like to see us further enhancing educational media in this section of the website that you can then go out and use within your own working environments to influence the change that is sorely needed across the country. I would like us to be able to help you in any way that we can. But, I would like to know from you, how you feel we can do that...

So here’s an offer to you all. Our next Council meeting is scheduled for Friday 21st September. The day before, on the afternoon of Thursday 20th September, if any of you would like to come and meet with me, in London, with any bright ideas for how you would like to see the Association develop to meet your needs, then I would love to chat with you. Please e-mail me via hads@bads.co.uk, heading your mail ‘President’s Offer’. My own personal challenge, and perhaps one to you, is to ensure that you get involved, and that you feel involved with our Association. Next year, at our meeting in Southport, I would like my President’s review to include details of what you’ve achieved over 12 months, rather than what the Association has achieved; I’d
want to highlight you and your efforts as the most significant development, rather than anything I and the rest of Council have been doing . . . and, who knows . . . perhaps we should develop a series of awards for innovations and improvements that you have been able to facilitate over the next year?

So, my offer is out . . . talk to me, e-mail me, meet with me, and let’s see what we can do to support you in your job developing day and short stay services in your own hospital . . . we have a lot of work ahead to spread the message that the Association promotes, and I need your help to be able to do it.

As a final note; when I’d finished my new President’s address in June, Sarah Lloyd and I chaired the last session of the meeting hearing about the ‘ideal’ members of a day surgery team we’d all like to work with. It was a super ‘closure’ that was both entertaining and challenging. I remain very aware, though, that it’s you, our members, who are the most valued asset of our BADS ‘team’. So, let’s talk together, plan together and do it together, and really make a change.

MARK SKUES

**The BADS Fellowship**

The BADS Fellowship is available to be awarded each year. However, the award will only be made when a suitable project is approved by the council of the British Association of Day Surgery. The award is for a maximum of £2,000.

The Fellowship is open to all members of the Association. It may be awarded to aid a research project or to help fund travel costs as part of a study or practice development. In all cases, the project must be aimed at improving day surgery, either within the UK or abroad. A precondition of the Fellowship is that those who receive it will attend the next BADS Annual Scientific Meeting and present the outcomes of their project.

To apply for the Fellowship, a full description of the aims, methods and costs of the proposed project must be submitted and should include ethical committee approval where this is appropriate.

Applications should be sent to: Dr. Sarah Lloyd, Honorary Secretary, British Association of Day Surgery, 35–43 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PN