

Dear Members of The Society,

29<sup>th</sup> January 2010

## Update on board transition

You elected, as you know, a new board for The Society at the end of 2009. I am a member of the new board but this communication is my last to you as president of the old board of The Society. I am writing with an update in the process of transition to the new board following the first meeting of the new board. This was held early this month to minimize any gap between the 2009 election and the time when the new board would take over the reins of The Society.

There is in process a complete changeover of the executive committee and indeed of all six elected officers. I believe that renewal is a healthy process for the board. All of us had competing pressures, in my case a new role facilitating multicentre research efforts across the UK on top of my day job. I would like to thank the old board very much for their willingness to work hard on behalf of The Society and, when there have been differences of opinion, to use them as a way to move forward constructively to new solutions.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the work of Helen Cross, Ingeborg Krageloh-Mann and Willem Frans Arts working with me in the executive; Oebele Brouwer, Alexis Arzimanoglou, Banu Anlar, Peter Baxter and Richard Newton chairing other committees; Lieven Lagae as board member and senior editor of the journal and Lars Palm as chair of the Committee of National Advisors and the Training Advisory Board. Sue Hargreaves has done an excellent job providing The Society with a secretariat. Paul Casaer played a vital role not only as senior editor of the journal but also in establishing the tradition of open, frank but friendly discussion on the board during his eight years presiding over it. I have tried to sustain that over the last four years.

Various factors combined to lead to the decision to hold the first meeting in 2010 with interim arrangements and prior to election of the new officers of the board. This was very successful and, as usual, the meeting included many interesting discussions, all of them open and constructive. The six elected officers of the new board are, at the time of writing, in the process of a web-based election by the board conducted by the electoral reform society using the 'single transferable vote' system. I am pleased to say that there has been considerable enthusiasm for participation in this election and all the candidates for all of the offices are excellent. I am confident that the future of The Society will be resting on very capable shoulders. The election results will become known during the course of the next week.

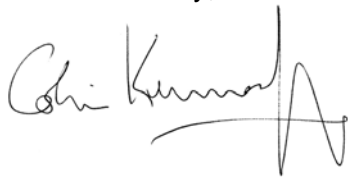
Over the last four years, the board and its local partners has - in Kusadasi and Harrogate - consolidated the reputation of The Society for excellent scientific meetings and for training courses, now established in Romania, that are second to none. The increase in the numbers of paid up members has therefore increased from a steady trickle to a faster flowing stream with greater representation from Eastern Europe. We have added to that achievement with, among other things, continuation of the tradition of quality in the European Journal of Paediatric Neurology, while improving its financial status and the profile of The Society within the journal; a new tradition of 'research in progress' meetings - the next being in Lyon on October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010; a rolling programme of visits to countries, at the request of their national societies, to advise on their training programmes; and a clear message to our colleagues in the former Soviet Union that we are determined to address their priorities, make our activities affordable and take initiatives there that are sustainable.

Challenges for the next four years include maintaining the high standards that the board has established in all these activities; averting disruption by European bureaucracy of the consensus on the training syllabus that has had such a positive impact on the care of children with neurological problems in many parts of Europe; and remembering the need to be relevant to the needs of our colleagues in the Balkans and in South and South West Europe where our impact is currently small.

Thanks to all members of The Society for your support. The board relies on you for many things not least feedback. I do hope that members will consider standing for future election to the board. It is never dull and there is much that we can do to make a positive difference to our specialty and to the care of children with neurological problems in Europe and its neighbours.

Chairing the board of The Society has been a great privilege which has given me deep pleasure and many new friends, some now becoming old friends. I will continue to contribute to the board in the future and look forward to another positive four years as a member of it.

Yours sincerely,



**Colin Kennedy**  
EPNS President (outgoing)