

Tara Bartley
Nursing Representative.

Since my appointment in May I have concentrated upon improving communication. We are all aware that the current changes in the NHS are having a profound effect upon nursing and associated professions. The challenge set by national changes in cardiac practice, medical training and broader issues faced by the NHS has created an unsettled period that calls for a proactive approach amongst health professionals.

I am then pleased to say that the national network of contacts in all cardiothoracic centres is almost complete. This has enabled the database to expand, opening channels of communication.

The following regional representatives have been established;
Scotland & Ireland; Linda Mckee Cardiothoracic Specialist Practitioner, Glasgow Western Infirmary
North East England; Davis Purdue, Clinical Nurse Manager, Nottingham City Hospital
North West England; Georgina Aldous Cardiothoracic ITU, Cardiothoracic Centre, Liverpool
East Anglia; Helen Munday, Clinical Research Nurse, Papworth Hospital
I am covering the Midlands, London & the South, South West and Wales.
Tony Jessop, Surgeons' Assistant, Hull. As chairman of their society he is liaising with the Surgeons' Assistants.

A circular has gone to all on the database requesting the dissemination of current information and this highlights the need to liaise about existing and new initiatives, protocols, ways of working etc.

It is important that we take an active role and help steer the workforce changes that will need to take place in light of the impact of MMC. Nursing and associated professions need to create opportunities and work collaboratively with our colleagues to underpin the cardiothoracic specialism. With this in mind, the theme at this year's forum is the patient pathway and collaborative working.

I am delighted to inform you that Maura Buchanan, the incoming president of the RCN, will give the open remarks. There will be an opportunity to contrast a surgeons' and nurses' perspective with that of a patient from both cardiac and thoracic surgery. For those of you who wish to brush up on your cardiothoracic assessment skills there

will be an interactive session with an emphasis on how developing such skills can enhance care as traditional roles expand.

We will also be looking for suggestions from delegates as to how we as a group can further amalgamate with the surgeons. There will be an opportunity to review options for membership of the SCTS among nurses. This important matter will result in the expansion of the SCTS and increase our input to the Society.

To underpin this concept I am pleased to say that the nurses' page on the SCTS web site is currently open and accessible to all. We have removed the log in process pending discussion at forum and expanded the information. We welcome your comments and ideas. If you have any burning issues or key developments you would like to air please contact me with a view to placing them on the page.

We look forward to seeing you in Manchester and may I remind you the early bird registration for the forum is £75 per day until January. Not only will the conference be good value but it compares well other conferences of the same calibre.

If you have any comments, ideas or matters that you would like to raise I welcome your emails.