Dear Colleague

I hope that everyone had the opportunity to enjoy some or all of the recent Easter weekend, though May provides an opportunity to enjoy two further Bank Holiday weekends; sandwiched in between is the All Staff and PGR Students Away Day. I hope that as many as possible of you are able to attend, and to stay for the whole day. I know that the Working Lives Group and the Social Committee have put significant effort into its organisation to ensure that it matches the success of last year. In addition, Tuesday 2nd May at 1730 sees the inaugural lectures of Professors Matt Bown and Shu Ye. This is not only an important public event for the University and Department, but also a chance to celebrate the individual success of Matt and Shu, so I do hope that everyone will make every effort to attend and support them.

It has been a busy couple of months since my last newsletter, so let’s get started:

Success
As you know, it is my view that everyone contributes to the success of the Department, but it is worth highlighting some noteworthy external achievements of some of our colleagues:

- Dave Lambert has been appointed to the Chair of the Editorial Board of the British Journal of Anaesthesia; a truly exceptional achievement, as Dave will be the first non-clinician to take on this role.
- Bill Toff and the Heartwize team have been short-listed as one of the finalists in the BMJ Education Team of the Year 2017 Award; hopefully joining very distinguished previous winners (my wife won in 2013!).
- Tim Coats, with the PRISM Investigators, has published an important patient level meta-analysis of early goal-directed therapy for septic shock in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Research Away Day
A number of you will have been involved in a Research Away Day at College Court last month, where we discussed how the new Research theme structure will operate, but also to engage with researchers across the College and University to maximise the opportunities for collaborative research and future strategic grant applications. This is particularly important as the Department’s annual research income target is to rise to £9.3M over the next two years; a very challenging target as last year we only achieved £3.8M, though we are on course to do very much better and achieve our target this year. This is thanks to the strategic award of the BRC, but also a number of significant individual sizeable grant successes.

The Biomedical Research Centre and Research Group Moves
The BRC officially started on 1st April 2017, and I appreciate that this has been particularly challenging for a number of you as we move from a BRU to BRC structure and are still finalising contractual details with all the uncertainty that this entails. In addition, we are seeing a number of Research Groups move location; in part enforced by clinical service moves but also by the need to consolidate our foot-print as we prepare for a future where we need to be in financial balance at Departmental level (and yes paying for our estate costs – heating, lighting,
IT, etc). Eleanor, Jenna and I will be liaising with groups and individuals affected by these moves, but I want to be reassured of everyone’s fullest cooperation. Whilst I appreciate the individual disruption of office moves (I have had four in the last ten years), these are necessary at a Departmental level and also offer an opportunity to ensure appropriate staff co-location, wherever possible.

**Professional Services reorganisation**

I fully understand that this has been a particularly difficult time for those involved, but I now look forward to working with the team who will continue to support the Department’s work in delivering success in its research and teaching. Whilst the team will be based at the Glenfield site, we will ensure that members of the Department based at the LRI and main sites continue to be supported. Full details of the proposed new structure, together with roles and responsibilities will be circulated in due course by Eleanor.

**Honorary Academic Staff**

We are fortunate to have a number of honorary academic staff in the Department; 31 in fact! The majority are based in the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust, a very important partner of the University. I have had an excellent response from honorary academic staff to attend two forthcoming meetings with me, where we can discuss improving mutually beneficial collaboration in delivering and developing the Department’s research and teaching mission.

Finally, I look forward to seeing everyone at the All Staff and PGR Students Away Day, where Phil Baker, the Pro-Vice Chancellor and Dean, and I will provide further update on current issues in the College and Department.

Very best wishes

Tom