

# voice

## Professor Jackie Taylor

Workforce, wellbeing  
and inclusivity



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SURGEONS

# voice EDITION 2



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# MY VISION

**Professor Jackie Taylor took office as our president on 7 December. She's written for Voice setting out the priorities for her presidency**

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While our strategic priorities are clear, my vision is for us to focus on three areas which from my experience are of key importance to clinicians: workforce, wellbeing and inclusivity.



Watch the President introduce Voice: [rcp.sg/winter18](http://rcp.sg/winter18)

**W**here did 2018 go? As a one year draws to a close and a New Year approaches it's an ideal time to look ahead and visualise what the next three years of my Presidency will hold. A few years ago during an informal chat, I was asked what I thought the College should be. My response was that we should aspire to be the "Go To" Royal College - one which offers so much in terms of education, training, support and influence that it becomes a focal point of excellence. That is still my view, and we have embarked on a journey of transformation.

Thanks to the leadership of Past President David Galloway, the continuing efforts of all health care professionals who give so freely of their time, and the hard work and expertise of the staff, our College is in a good place. We have a growing, more engaged membership and our educational offering is expanding. Education, training and CPD are our core functions. Developing e-learning is a priority and we now have the equipment and capability to do it. With the advent of augmented and virtual reality, allied to our clinical skills training facilities, the possibilities truly are limitless.

While our strategic priorities are clear, my vision is for us to focus on three areas which from my experience are of key importance to clinicians.

The first of these is workforce. Staff are the most valuable asset of the NHS, but we all work in environments where every day there are shortages: rota gaps and unfilled posts at all grades have become the norm, resulting in even heavier workloads for those at work. The impact in terms of ill health is becoming all too apparent. More worryingly 31% of doctors in training, if given their time again, would choose a career outwith medicine. So what can we do? Workforce planning is extremely complex. We plan to work with the other Colleges, the NHS and government to devise short and medium term solutions to develop a sustainable workforce. The experience that doctors in training have at work requires a sea change. Enhancing recruitment is of fundamental importance, but retention of staff equally so. This is of particular relevance as about 35% of consultants will reach retiral age within the next 10 years. We need to retain the skills and expertise of this group by improving the experience in later stages of a career and we have some ideas how we might do that.

The second area is wellbeing. The health and wellbeing of health care professionals at all stages of career is something which concerns me greatly. Doctors and nurses are reporting increasing levels of stress, fatigue, ill health and burnout. This year's GMC national training survey highlighted that 1 in 4 trainees and 1 in 5 trainers reported features of burnout. Some of this is related to sheer volume of work and there is no doubt that wellbeing and workforce are inextricably linked. However, workplace culture also plays a crucial role

in wellbeing. Sadly reports of bullying and harassment in the workplace are becoming more frequent, particularly related to underperforming services. Poor teamwork, leadership and undermining of staff erodes morale. These issues aren't just bad for healthcare workers: there is clear evidence that staff wellbeing is related to patient safety, medical errors and quality of care. So what can we do? We will develop a programme of work to support wellbeing for healthcare professionals. This will include educational events, reinforcing the role of our mentorship and buddy programmes, peer support, signposting resources and services and working with the NHS and providers to improve workplace culture. We want you to feel that this is your community and Collegiate home both physically and virtually.

The third area is inclusivity. As the first female President of the College, I feel entitled to comment that as an

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institution it may not always have been as inclusive as it could be. While the permafrost is melting and there has been considerable progress, still when I look around, the constitution of the various boards and committees does not adequately represent the workforce. That must change. So what will we do? Equality and diversity must overarch all College activities. Producing policy is important, but insufficient. These values will be woven into every aspect of the College strategy and function. Allied to this will be the development of values and behaviours which will sit at the heart of the College.

During my Presidency I also plan to bring the work of the Trainee Committee to the centre of College activities. It sounds trite to say that they represent the future of the College. That is however the fact! Our doctors in training bring a unique perspective, incredible enthusiasm and ability, and great ideas. Combining these attributes with the skill and experience of more senior healthcare professionals is a winning combination. You will hear more of their plans from Mahua Chakrabarti in this edition of College **Voice**.

I would like to thank David Galloway for handing over the College in such an excellent state of health. David has been an outstanding President and during his time in office the College has flourished. I have very much appreciated his advice, support and wisdom. He will remain on speed dial! I am also grateful to the College staff, Council and Office Bearers for their continuing hard work and help during my year of preparation. I also must acknowledge the huge support from my colleagues at work: without their help, I would not be in a position to be a working President.

I've outlined a vision for the next three years. No doubt during that time there will be ups and downs. I am however determined to deliver. We are on the threshold of an exciting time in College history. Please work with us to help to make Our College the "Go To" College.

# Conference

facilities



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