

Association of Systematic Kinesiology in Ireland

Chairperson's Address 2012



Hello there, my name's Bridget Mannion, often known as Ted, and I've been Chairperson for the past year.

Firstly, on behalf of the members I'd like to thank Siobhan, Kieran, Deirdre, Niamh, Lauren, Adrienne, Des and Clive, for all their hard work over this last year.

It's great to see you all here today, I love meeting up with you, and in fact would like to meet up with you more often, but like a lot of people, life seems to take over and before you know it, another year has passed.

Hopefully Member's Day will provide you with a good opportunity to catch up with your friends, and colleagues, to enjoy your day and have some fun, but also to get some updates, an opportunity to have your voice heard, to have your say and to get some really valuable training from Brian Miller. If there's something you feel the Association needs to know or to hear about we hope you find the opportunity today to communicate that and to get the support you need and deserve from your Association.

Much like life in general each year in the Association seems to have its own unique character. This year the Association felt like an adolescent, one which is changing and maturing, and developing a stronger sense of its own identity as it overcomes new challenges. Some of these transformations are the result of new insights that come from having such fantastic, passionate new blood on the Council, and some are the unique burdens being placed on the CAM sector by legislative changes taking place at a national and European level. You can rest assured that ASK is a strong organisation, very well placed to adapt to the changing needs of its members and the changing responsibilities placed on it externally. You just have to think back to last year's Member's Day. We were encouraged by some really positive feedback on the day itself and afterwards. We were especially delighted by the increased involvement and interest expressed by you the members.

The natural evolution of the Association and the Council happened at a time when the CAM sector was being targeted by politicians and vested interests from the pharmaceutical and medical world. The way the Association can operate is being ever more tightly and stringently controlled by government working groups and changes in legislation. This has meant that the Council's job of running the day to day business of the Association has become increasingly complex. It has meant that we've to stay on our toes and on top of changes and new developments both within the Association and also the world beyond the Association. We've all been learning how to operate in this new climate, to evolve and grow along with the Association. It's very hard work but rewarding, especially if it helps to protect the rights and support the needs of our Members, which is after all, what motivates us to do this in the first place.

One of the really important jobs undertaken this year was updating the Rules of the Association. The foundation documents are the Trust Deed, which sets up the Association, and the Rules, which provides the guidelines on how the Association is run. Of course this document was drafted right at the beginning, before anyone had tried to run it. The Association has evolved over the years and it was important that the Rules reflect this. When drafting the Rules the first time it was just the three founding trustees doing it however this time there were more members involved and that proved to be a very valuable process. It's another sign that the Association has, in a way, come of age.

As we change and grow as an organisation the needs of the members naturally mature and change also. A great deal of time this year was spent discussing ways to support the changing needs of the Members. We felt that it was time to develop greater flexibility with respect to the types of membership available in ASK to better accommodate the changes in life circumstances that can happen from time to time to any of us. We're proposing three new membership categories in addition to the existing ones. I understand that Kieran and Niamh will be talking to you about this a bit later.

You'll also be hearing from Deirdre, the Secretary, who'll report on what we've been up to this year, from Niamh, the Membership Secretary, with an update on the membership, from Kieran, the Treasurer who'll present the Treasurer's report and from Clive our FICTA rep who'll bring you up to speed on FICTA and EFCAM.

There's plenty more though, the amended Rules of the Association need to be approved of by the members and so we'll be dealing with that this morning.

This afternoon we have a very well respected Systematic Kinesiologist, Brian Miller, providing us with some first-rate post-graduate training. As I'm sure you know, there are 2 CPD points for each hour of training with Brian.

Next year we intend to review the CPD scheme. The Scheme's been in operation for a few years now and because most of you have experience with it we're hoping that you have some feedback for us that will be helpful for the review. We're going to have a breakout session this morning, after the morning break and up to lunchtime, where you'll get the opportunity to divide into groups and discuss the CPD scheme and other topics you find relevant to your membership. We'd encourage you to write down your suggestions and give us your feedback. Again, we hope that this is a positive experience for you.

Finally, the research project hasn't been forgotten about. Progress this year has been slower than anticipated. We've received fantastic support from Dr. Anne Matthews, as always, and at this stage the speed of our progress is dictated mostly by the academic schedules within DCU. We had hoped to have ethical approval for the pilot study by now but that hasn't been possible, due to the enormous workload that Dr. Matthews has. The plan is for us to receive the final draft of the Proposal and Ethics Approval Application Form from Dr. Matthews in early May. This draft will need to be approved firstly by the Research Study Working Group and then by the Council. Formal application for ethical approval to conduct the pilot study in DCU will hopefully be made in June and we should hear back from them about two weeks later. Dr. Matthews believes that it should be possible to be ready to start conducting the pilot about a month later. That of course is also heavily dependent on us as well, and how much preparation we feel we need before conducting the pilot, and our resources in terms of volunteers and time.

There's plenty more happening today but I think you've probably heard enough from me. So it just remains for me to say thank you very much for the honour of being Chairperson this year.

Ted Mannion

Chairperson to ASK Ireland 2011-2012