

# MANCHESTER MEDICAL SOCIETY

## Section of Anaesthesia

The final meeting of the 2005/2006 session of the Manchester Medical Society (Section of Anaesthesia) was held on **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2006**. The meeting was held at **The Manchester Conference Centre, Weston Building, Sackville Street, Manchester** with The Royal Society of Medicine (Section of Anaesthesia) and was the fourth biennial all day symposium between the two societies.

The meeting proper commenced at 9.30 am, with registration and coffee from 8.30 am. A healthy attendance figure of over eighty delegates again attested to the popularity of this and previous joint symposia.

The Chairman, Dr Diana Meadows (President of the Manchester Medical Society Section of Anaesthesia) began by welcoming the assembled delegates to the meeting and introduced the theme running through the day as “Consciousness and Anaesthesia”.

The first lecture was given by **Dr Chris Pomfrett**, Lecturer in Neurophysiology applied to Anaesthesia at Manchester University. He proceeded to give an informative and most interesting overview of the state of the art as it currently stands with respect to monitoring anaesthesia (or depth of unconsciousness as he preferred to call it). Dr Pomfrett certainly made a powerful argument that such monitors should be in more routine use and he suggested that better monitors were in development.

The second lecture was given by **Mr John-Paul Garside**, a solicitor working at The Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Trust. His subject of medicolegal problems and awareness under anaesthesia was heard with rapt attention as it is one close to all anaesthetists’ hearts. He clarified the law in this complex area and illustrated it with a number of interesting legal case summaries.

After a break for coffee, there followed a superb talk from **Dr Raj Persaud**, Consultant Psychiatrist at The South London and Maudsley NHS Trust entitled “How to stay sane as an anaesthetist”. This was quite unlike anything probably ever heard before at previous meetings of Manchester Medical Society’s Section of Anaesthesia. It was thoroughly entertaining, amusing and thought-provoking. The coping strategies described by Dr Persaud might well be useful to delegates hearing the talk in dealing with the stresses and strains of work. Judging by the lengthy question session which followed, and which had to be curtailed as lunchtime approached, it was an extremely popular talk.

The afternoon session was chaired by Professor Brian Pollard of The University of Manchester and comprised two debates, before and after an afternoon tea break. The first of these debated the motion that “This house believes that total intravenous anaesthesia is a recipe for awareness”. **Dr Nigel Harper**, Consultant Anaesthetist at Central Manchester and Manchester Children’s University Hospitals NHS Trust, spoke for the motion and **Dr Brenda Bowles**, Consultant Anaesthetist at Salford Royal Hospitals NHT Trust, spoke against. Both speakers marshaled powerful arguments in support of their respective stances. During the Q&A session afterwards it was difficult to judge the mood

of The House and it was not too surprising that the vote was split virtually 50:50 with Dr Harper only just securing the motion. Those from the opposing faction might wish to object to the arithmetic prowess of Professor Pollard!

The afternoon's second session debated the motion that "This house believes that anaesthesia care practitioners (ACPs) are a welcome development in anaesthesia" with **Professor Andrew Smith** of the Institute for Health Research, University of Lancaster pitted against **Professor Tom Healy**, most welcome back to Manchester following his retirement. Professor Smith gave a very well argued review of the evidence, or lack of it, for a series of objections usually voiced against the concept of ACPs. Professor Healy then took the floor by storm and gave a vociferous, passionate, amusing, but also well thought out, objection to the very thought of the idea. Clearly this was an issue very close to his heart.

The vote afterwards was overwhelmingly against the motion, although to be fair to Professor Smith, a vote taken before the debate had been similar.

After the two debates, Professor Pollard returned the floor back to Dr Meadows who reflected on what a good meeting it had been with the highest quality contributions from all the speakers. Finally, a vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Meadows for all the speakers and the organisers of the meeting, especially to Miss Fiona Lamb and her team, which was received with thunderous applause.