



[*https://www.rcsed.ac.uk/news-public-affairs/news/2020/march/joint-policy-statement-on-covid-19-from-the-royal-surgical-colleges](https://www.rcsed.ac.uk/news-public-affairs/news/2020/march/joint-policy-statement-on-covid-19-from-the-royal-surgical-colleges)
<https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/coronavirus/>
<https://www.rcsi.com/dublin/news-and-events/news/news-article/2020/03/joint-policy-statement-from-the-royal-surgical-colleges>

13 March 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues

Events have been rapidly evolving over the last 48 hours and following the Federation of Specialty Surgical Associations (FSSA) meeting yesterday, which I attended, it has become absolutely clear to me that postponing our SBNS Dundee meeting scheduled to start on the 24th March is the correct thing to do.

Other SSAs have already cancelled their upcoming meetings and the 4 Surgical Royal Colleges have issued a statement* cancelling all meetings, exams and conferences from next week, possibly till September. The FSSA is clear that it stands behind and with the Royal Colleges and will do anything that is required in the national interest. Many NHS trusts have also stopped study and professional leave and representatives from our industrial company partners have had travel restrictions imposed.

We are approaching in the next few weeks a period of national health crisis and I believe we must do all we can as neurosurgeons and doctors to assist. I am particularly persuaded by the fact that neurosurgery will be in the centre of the resource crisis with respect to intensive care beds and ventilation capacity and we will be needed in our hospitals to make difficult decisions at many levels.

Postponing our meeting in the grand scheme of things is not important. Clearly I feel very sorry for, and apologise to, everyone that has put in all the hard work for the Dundee meeting, which will now not go ahead, from our local neurosurgical hosts, to our industrial partners, guest speakers and partner neurosurgical society from Canada. I also apologise for the inconvenience this will cause you cancelling at this late hour prior to the meeting.

The SBNS will need now to regroup as a neurosurgical society and plan ahead for the next, difficult, 12 months to provide support to our members and representation nationally.

Thank you for your support and patience and, in anticipation, for your clinical expertise and input that will be needed over the coming weeks and months.

Details regarding refunds and meeting rescheduling will follow ASAP.

Regards

Neil Kitchen FRCS(SN) FRCSEd
SBNS President