

Chairman's Report

The twelve months since the last annual general meeting has been eventful for UKHCDO.

We are nearing the end of another cycle of our national contract for factor concentrates and, as with previous initiatives, UKHCDO has been central to developing the tender with CMU, other haemophilia healthcare professionals and the Haemophilia Society. This tender has very recently been released and the process is on target to achieve a new contract by April 2014. A real strength of our organization is the close collaboration between Haemophilia Centres and the National Haemophilia Database. Without this, we would not have achieved and delivered the national contracts.

In an ever changing amnesic NHS, we must present our robust data to demonstrate how we have been in the forefront of professional organisations working with commissioners to deliver high quality, cost effective services. It is important to highlight the fact that we have already saved the NHS tens of millions of pounds and have achieved the lowest prices of factor concentrates anywhere in the world. In the presentation of the UKHCDO bleeding disorder statistics, we will demonstrate that, for the first time, there has not been any increase in the consumption of factor concentrates and again demonstrates our proactive approach to seeking cost-savings through changes in clinical practice. It is likely that we, as a haemophilia community, will be tasked with exploring more fully how we reduce costs while maintaining high quality clinical care. This is increasingly important as the NHS funding crisis unfolds.

To date, our contracts for purchasing factor concentrates, although demanding of time and effort, have involved relatively straightforward considerations but this is likely to radically change in coming years through the availability of therapeutic products with significant differences from those currently available and also from initiatives to link and possibly change service commissioning through commercial contracting. For this reason, through UKHCDO we will maintain an active task force to more proactively assess our options for future contracting processes.

The relationship between our professional organization, UKHCDO and the Clinical Reference Group (CRG) for Haemophilia, a body of NHS England, continues to evolve. UKHCDO has been very actively involved in haemophilia care for many decades and represents all the countries of the United Kingdom while the CRG is primarily concerned with commissioning English haemophilia care. The functions of UKHCDO will continue and our activities such as the work of the database and our clinical guidelines will continue to be valuable to the work of the CRG and for the commissioners of the devolved nations. One recent example is demonstrated by the UKHCDO recommendations for ITI being adapted for commissioning policy for the CRG. This collaborative approach has significant advantages in that such policies should mean that local funding will be available for those meeting the agreed criteria, without the need for individual funding requests. On the other hand, if a national policy is agreed for treatment such as ITI, any approach deviating from this will probably not be funded. Thus treatment according to agreed clinical guidelines/policies will be much more important in haemophilia care in the UK.

At this meeting, there will be a presentation of the results of the latest round of Triennial Audit. A great deal has been achieved in respect of understanding what services are provided for the care of individuals with bleeding disorders and in improving the quality of care. We have now reached the point where the audit process is comprehensive and has true involvement by clinical nurse specialists, patients and scientists. However with the end of this cycle we should take the opportunity to reflect on the process and, in particular, how we can improve the quality and relevance of the audit. This will be discussed.

Being Chairman of UKHCDO is an interesting and rewarding experience. It has been a pleasure working with a wide range of colleagues in the UK haemophilia community. I wish to give particular thanks to the executive, David Keeling, Mike Laffan and Ri Liesner for their hard work on behalf of UKHCDO and for their invaluable support and wise counsel. Finally, I wish to thank the UKHCDO Secretariat, Lynne Dewhurst and Sarah Rooney as well as everyone at NHD for their work for UKHCDO.

I hope you find the AGM meeting valuable and enjoyable and that you take have the opportunity to catch up with colleagues and friends.

Dr Gerry Dolan
Chairman, UKHCDO
Nottingham, October 2013