

Dear colleagues

It is unlikely that two nations have such history of close relationship in anaesthesia as Sweden & Britain. There has been enormous British influence in the development of the practice of anaesthesia in Sweden over the decades. Even until as late as the mid eighties, most of the anaesthesia departments in Swedish hospitals were partly if not fully managed by British guest anaesthetists.

I am a product of such cooperation and interaction of British - Swedish anaesthesia. Initially trained in the UK I spent most of my working life in Sweden. I had a desire to revive that old relationship albeit in a different form. Anaesthesia training, research, and practices in both our countries is of the highest standards and sets an example for rest of the world. Despite the commonalities between the practices in UK & Sweden, there still are a number of different approaches and there remains much to learn from each other. I am striving to establish a platform where the new foundations for such relationships can be built.

British Swedish Anaesthesia Society was established in 2004 and held its first inaugural meeting in the wonderful Association of Anaesthesia building in Portland Place London on May 5-6 2004. The second meeting was held in Uppsala under the able leadership of Lars Wiklund who has been the inspiration to me from the very beginning. The third meeting was organised successfully by Dr Michael Ward in Oxford last year and the next meeting is planned for May 8-9 2009 in Vesteras.

I personally feel that it is the next generation of anaesthetists who should be able to develop and sustain this very special relationship. In order to achieve that I am floating this concept of an **'Exchange Fellowship Programme'** where by final year trainees from both countries would be encouraged and supported by our society to spend a token period of just one week with colleagues across the North Sea. I hope that this, however brief, contact could lead to further cooperation between the clinics and individuals. I envisage cooperation in the field of research and clinical practices such as Intensive Care and Chronic Pain. This can only lead to better patient care.

From our side the society would be prepared to offer financial support towards travel and we hope the host department could offer free or subsidised accommodation along with a memorable hospitality.

I hope that his letter from a colleague will meet with your enthusiastic support to make this dream come true.

Bhaskar Tandon
bhaskartandon@nlg.nhs.uk
For the British Swedish Anaesthesia Society.