

Professor Norman Williams,  
Chair, EWTD taskforce

*Via Email*

Professional and Clinical Standards  
Clare Wynn-Mackenzie  
0207 869 6212  
[cwynn-mackenzie@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:cwynn-mackenzie@rcseng.ac.uk)

25 November 2013

Dear Professor Williams,

**RE: European Working Time Directive: implementation and impact**

I am writing in my capacity as chair of Women in Surgery. We are glad that the taskforce you are chairing will be considering the impact and implementation of the EWTD as it is clear that there are on-going concerns regarding this throughout medicine and particularly in surgery.

When undertaking your investigation, we hope that you will consider the impact of the EWTD on the wide diversity of surgeons.

As you know, surgery has struggled to attract and retain women, partly due to the perception that surgery requires unfeasibly long hours and inflexible working patterns<sup>1,2</sup>. The concept of a maximum number of hours to be worked is very helpful in addressing these concerns for both men and women with commitments, either professional or personal, outside surgery.

We would therefore hope to maintain a maximum number of hours, and would welcome the dissemination of information regarding more flexible/less restrictive ways of implementing this.

Yours sincerely,



Miss / Dr Laurie Baxter FRCS  
Chair, Women in Surgery

---

<sup>1</sup> Elston MA. Women and medicine: the future. London: Royal College of Physicians, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> J. Edward et al *Gender-related perceptions of careers in surgery among new medical graduates: results of a cross-sectional study*, The American Journal of Surgery (2013) 206, 112–119