

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Action Plan update

17 March 2022



Royal College  
of Surgeons  
of England

ADVANCING SURGICAL CARE



# RCS England Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan update

**In September 2021 we published our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 16 Point Action Plan, which lays out our response to the Kennedy Review, an independent review of diversity in professional leadership which was conducted over the course of 2020/early 2021.**

In response to feedback, we have since developed an additional initiative focusing on the wellbeing and experience of LGBTQ+ surgeons and College staff.

We are committed to publishing our progress on the (now 17 point) Action Plan every six months. This report provides that update.

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Fiona Myint, Council lead for Parents in Surgery said:

‘Over the past few months the College has been conducting some initial exploratory work as part of our Parents in Surgery project that came out of the Kennedy Review recommendations. It is clear that greater support is required to help current and prospective surgical parents balance parenthood and a surgical career. At a time when there are workforce shortages, we cannot afford to allow more brilliant surgeons to leave the profession due to inadequate support in pregnancy and childcare. A sea change is needed in the heart of surgical culture. As a College we are committed to sharing our findings in this project, continuing the conversation, and working with our fellows, members, the wider workforce and external stakeholders to effect such changes.’

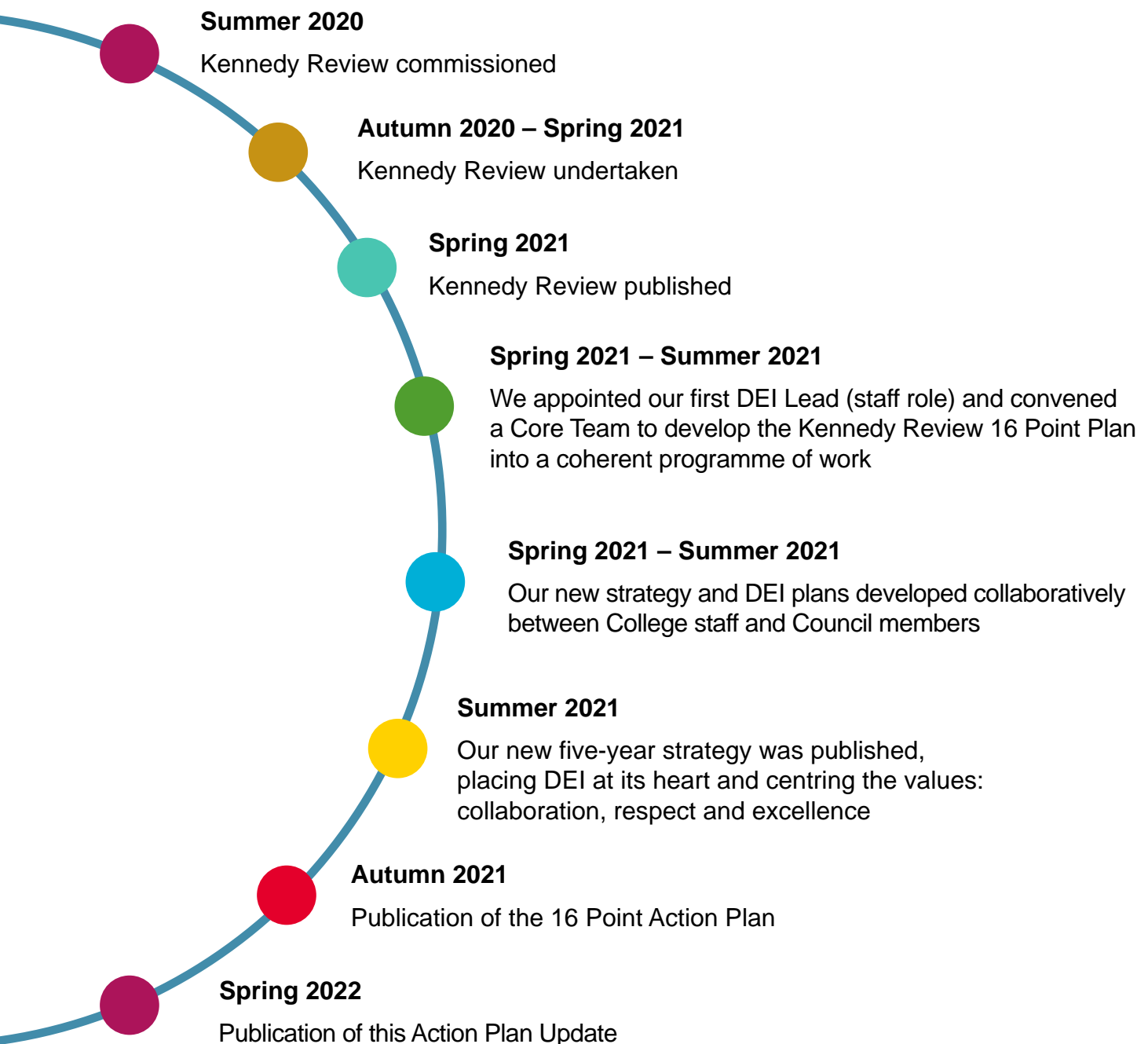
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Tim Mitchell, Vice President said:

‘We are making progress, as this report shows. But we absolutely cannot become complacent. The Kennedy Review outlined a vision of a College that was a “professional home” for everyone, whatever their background and whatever their career stage. It was described as a mission that would take two presidential terms, six years, to fulfil. In that sense, we’re still in the foothills. We have been delighted by the willingness of so many of our members to get involved in the various initiatives that comprise the Action Plan. We will continue through 2022 to make progress together.’

When we published our Action Plan in 2021, we articulated three objectives, which remain relevant. We wanted to:

1. Share our progress – and challenges – so far
2. Begin building the confidence of members and the profession – and future entrants to the profession – that DEI issues are a key priority for the College
3. Make it clear to all what we intend to do, and when we intend to do it



In the table below we have colour coded the recommendations as green (on target), yellow (in progress) and red (not started).

## Kennedy 17 Point Action Plan update March 2022

	Kennedy Review recommendation	The outcome we are working towards	What we have done since September 2021	What you will see next
1.	<b>Commit to the Vision and put diversity at the heart of the College strategy.</b>	Delivery of this Action Plan.	<p>Diversity, equity and inclusion is one of the five strategic priorities in our new strategy published in July 2021. Specific project updates are provided below.</p> <p>Examples of how a better understanding of DEI issues are influencing our priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Our Winter Appeal 2021</b></li> <li>- Creating a focus on DEI in The Faculty of Dental Surgery's new strategy due to be published April 2022.</li> </ul>	Keep an eye on the <i>Bulletin</i> , our website, podcasts and social channels for further developments.

2.	<b>Commit to the Reform Target.</b>	For the College's Council to be a diverse group of surgical professionals representative of, and accountable to, the College's membership.	In October 2021 Council discussed governance proposals.	We are still on track to publish in 2022 a paper on the outcomes from the membership survey and review of governance arrangements at other Colleges.
3.	<b>Reform elections for Presidency.</b>		We have completed a survey of governance arrangements at other colleges.	
4.	<b>Reform election for vice presidential roles.</b>		We conducted a membership survey about our governance in February and March 2022. Council and trustees will review the results of the survey in May 2022.	Look out for more information in our September 2022 update.
5.	<b>Reform Council.</b>			
6.	<b>Reform election process, appointments, Committees and conduct.</b>		Any changes to governance following this will be communicated to the membership and raised at the College's AGM in November 2022.	
7.	<b>Develop a clear Specialist and Associate Specialist (SAS) strategy.</b>	For SAS surgeons to be respected and acknowledged for the contribution that they can, and do, make to the surgical team, the College and the profession AND to see that their opportunities to contribute are enhanced.	We have established a core group to lead on this work, chaired by Vinita Shekar, Chair of our SAS forum.  We have also created accountability and stakeholder reference groups.  The planned audit of College language, materials, rules and regulations is being finalised.	Clear language and messaging will be developed highlighting the important role that SAS surgeons play. More opportunities are being created for SAS surgeons to participate in the College's work.

<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Deliver a flagship project – Parents in Surgery.</b></p>	<p>For surgeons and dentists with parental responsibilities to have the same access to, and opportunities for, training and development as those who are not parents.</p>	<p>We have conducted an extensive consultation with parents in surgical careers, parents who have left surgical careers, those that are not parents - and don't see that in their future, stakeholders and experts within this field.</p> <p>More information on the Parents in Surgery can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p>We will publish the findings from our consultation and next steps in June 2022.</p> <p>Our ambitious plans for next steps after publishing our report. These include making strategic investments in resource development (for example to provide support to surgeons at the pre-parent / planning stage), network development and advocacy on rotas, LTFT and workforce planning, as well as further in-depth research to inform longer term initiatives.</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Deliver a study on differential attainment in surgical exams.</b></p>	<p>To have achieved a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to differential attainment in surgical exams, to inform focused projects to have addressed these factors by 2026.</p>	<p>We will publish a summary of our initial findings on differential attainment and a prioritised action plan to move forwards in June 2022.</p>	<p>June 2022: Summary report.</p>

<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Launch two annual research Fellowships into surgery and DEI.</b></p>	<p>To have catalysed high quality research that creates new knowledge and improved understanding of DEI in surgery.</p>	<p>We have developed new opportunities for surgical trainees to apply for research fellowships in diversity, equity and inclusion.</p>	<p>In March 2022 we will launch applications for two research fellowships into diversity, equity and inclusion.</p> <p>Autumn 2022: Applications and awards process completed.</p>
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Support diverse grassroots medical organisations with seed funding.</b></p>	<p>For a wider diversity of talent to become aware of opportunities to participate in the College ecosystem.</p>	<p>We have conducted extensive consultation and published our initial findings and key recommendations.</p>	<p>We will be opening the Grassroots in Surgery scheme for applications in mid-April with a closing date of early June. UK-based organisations and groups will be eligible if they are working to address diversity, equity and inclusion issues within surgery and smaller groups will be prioritised. Full eligibility criteria and the application process will be published in April 2022.</p>

<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Emerging Leaders and Women in Surgery.</b></p>	<p>For individuals from diverse backgrounds and with diverse opinions and beliefs to gain leadership roles within the profession, both inside and outside of the College governance structures. For these individuals to be able to engage, be themselves, feel that they belong and have equal status to all their colleagues. For women to have parity of esteem, opportunity and success within the ecosystem of the College and beyond.</p>	<p>We have reviewed and developed the Emerging Leaders programme.</p> <p>We have recruited a <b>new cohort</b> of Emerging Leaders to the reinvigorated programme.</p>	<p>We will be expanding the support we provide to both experienced and emerging leaders.</p> <p>Keep an eye out for an experienced leaders networking event in May 2022 and online workshops to support applications for the 2023 Emerging Leaders programme in late 2022.</p> <p>In 2023 we will also be piloting regional programmes for Emerging Leaders. More on this exciting initiative in late 2022.</p>
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Mentorship.</b></p>	<p>For the College to support the development of mentoring as a core surgical skill and as a 'human' element of the membership package.</p>	<p>We are currently in the 'explore' phase and are reviewing both the College's existing mentorship offers, and also those being run by other groups of surgeons. We will also take into consideration best practice from other professions.</p> <p>A steering group has been established with dates for three meetings to take place by April 2022.</p>	<p>A pilot programme will be launched in December 2022.</p>



<p>14.</p>	<p><b>Data collection, monitoring and career tracking.</b></p>	<p>For the College to make better informed decisions in making progress against all its DEI (and broader strategic) aims.</p>	<p>A new business intelligence manager has been appointed and we will be recruiting for a data modeller to analyse the initial data.</p> <p>We have also been in discussion with the GMC and made good progress with obtaining data on some of the different aspects of the DEI projects.</p>	<p>We will be asking members for their details, particularly on race, ethnic origin and socioeconomic background. We understand that this is private and sensitive data, but without it, it is more difficult to make progress and create accountability.</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p><b>Training.</b></p>	<p>For all staff and Council members to be confident in how to conduct anti-discrimination recruitment and interviewing.</p>	<p>All staff and Council members received anti-discrimination training at the end of 2021, and this will be repeated on a yearly basis. It will also be incorporated in our induction process for new staff and Council members.</p>	<p>We aim to provide all members and the wider public with an excellent and inclusive service. Should we ever fall short, please email us at <a href="mailto:diversity@rcseng.ac.uk">diversity@rcseng.ac.uk</a></p>

16.	<b>New building.</b>	For the College building to be an inclusive, stimulating and welcoming place, accessible to all visitors on-site and online.	Watch our launch video and please do provide us with feedback if you have visited the building. We would love to know what you think.	We are working in partnership with AccessAble to make the building as accessible as possible. We will be making an app available with detailed access guides, providing visitors with information and insight to the facilities ahead of their visit. Keep an eye out for our fly through video which will be launched in 2022. We want to create an inclusive environment, and make sure that those who can't visit the building in person have an opportunity to visit it virtually.
17.	<b>LGBTQ+ initiative.</b>	For the College to be able to provide the appropriate support for LGBTQ+ surgeons and the College staff.	The LGBTQ+ strategy project has started its work to understand what role the College can take in supporting LGBTQ+ surgeons and College staff. The project lead will be exploring this question at the Out at the College conference, the inaugural RCS England LGBTQ+ conference which is being held on 25 March 2022.	We will publish a paper in May 2022, outlining our recommendations for what the strategy should contain.

If you want to get involved do connect with us on social media or at [diversity@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:diversity@rcseng.ac.uk)  
We will be reporting on progress again in September 2022.

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Professor Neil Mortensen, President at the College said:

‘The College together with our key stakeholders and the surgical community – is making progress with the Action Plan. We are wholly committed to diversifying both surgery and our leadership, and we recognise that this won’t happen overnight. Meaningful change takes time, particularly if we want to make a long-lasting and positive impact on the way surgery is viewed. That is why we have projects that look at grassroots, right the way through to our leadership positions. We want all surgeons – those who are training, practising and the future generation of surgeons to know they will be represented, they will have a voice and a College they can call their professional home that will support them. We will continue to engage with you and update you on how the different projects are progressing. The face of surgery is changing and we are grateful to you for your support, engagement and feedback in making this happen.’

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We hope you will stay with us on this journey. Together, we’re changing the face of surgery. Action Plan produced and signed by the Core Team of The Royal College of Surgeons of England DEI Programme and the President of The Royal College of Surgeons of England Neil Mortensen.

## Core team

**Corriene Bailey-Bearfield** Diversity and Inclusion Programme Manager,  
The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Tamzin Cuming** Chair of Women in Surgery, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Lucy Davies** Executive Director (Membership, Marketing and Communications),  
The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Matthew Garrett** Dean, Faculty of Dental Surgery, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Tim Mitchell** Vice President, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Professor Neil Mortensen** President, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Andrew Reed** Chief Executive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Nuha Yassin** Council member, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

**Charlotte Eckhardt** Vice Dean, Faculty of Dental Surgery,  
The Royal College of Surgeons of England.

