

BSDS Annual Surgical Workshop Report: A trainee's perspective

**Dr Silvia Aguilar-Duran
ST4, Royal
Infirmary
Edinburgh**

Surgery is an essential part of the Dermatology curriculum. As a Dermatology Registrar, we are expected to be able to undertake certain procedures without supervision to obtain a CCT. Throughout my training, I have been taught how to do simple biopsies or small excisions appropriately and I put this into practice on a weekly basis. However, my confidence diminishes in more complex cases and I refer these patients to our most experienced consultants. By attending the surgical course I hoped to confirm that I have mastered the basics of skin surgery and to develop my skills on the more complex aspects with the aim of improving my confidence. I was not disappointed.

Edinburgh hosted the 32nd Annual BDS Surgery Workshop. Dr Lisa Naysmith and Dr Shantini Rice opened the popular three-day course in the beautiful Royal College of Surgeons. It was a truly International meeting including faculty from the USA - Dr Tu and Dr Bukowski - and delegates from all over the UK as well

as the Netherlands and Norway. Although the workshop is not advertised as an advanced surgery course there was something for all skill-sets and practical advice and tips from very experienced surgeons.

The course was a mixture of didactic sessions alternating with practical surgical workshops on pig belly and pig heads. There was a high ratio of faculty to delegates in the workshops, making it possible to discuss the areas where I struggled the most and get tips to improve my technique in an informal non-judgmental environment. The first day covered some of the more basic aspects of skin surgery with the second and third day moving onto more complex components including the more advanced surgical reconstructions with flaps and grafts along with nail surgery. The hands on workshops with the pig heads allowed us to put into practice all those newly learned techniques!

For the annual Gala Dinner a traditional Scottish bag piper greeted us at the entrance of the beautiful Playfair Hall. The atmosphere was magnificent. We enjoyed a delicious supper and a guest lecture from Professor Jonathan Rees entitled "From Neanderthal to

Dermatological Surgeon: which way is progress?"

On the final day, we had the chance to consolidate the acquired knowledge and review those techniques that we found more challenging. Dr Diana Morgan from Derriford Hospital Plymouth and Dr Marloes van Kester from Leiden University Medical Centre in the Netherlands were awarded 'the best pig heads'. The course ended with a highly interactive drawing session with Dr Tu, making one consider the different ways to repair a defect... or not!

I really enjoyed the course. I think it was extremely useful irrespective of grade, skill-set or level of surgical experience. I learnt that even when you feel that you have mastered a technique, there is always scope for improvement and the tips from experts are invaluable. The course allowed me the opportunity to learn new techniques and now it's time to put them into practice. I recommend the Annual Workshop to anyone carrying out skin surgery, as it will give you the chance to take your surgical skills to the next level. Next year it will be hosted in Edinburgh again. Don't miss your opportunity to attend!



Dr Diana Morgan - winner of 'Best pig'



Dr Marloes van Kester - winner of 'Best pig'

BSDS Annual Surgical Workshop Photo Album, Edinburgh 2015



Drs Tom Oliphant and James Langtry hard at work.



Drs Colin Fleming and Shantini Rice...not so hard at work!



Enraptured delegates



Dr Katie Blasdale providing assistance



Drs Dev Shah, Gus Martin-Clavijo, Shantini Rice, Tom Oliphant & Saj Rajpar having fun scooping pig brains...above and beyond the call of duty!



Dr Andrew Affleck demonstrating surgical techniques with the usual enthusiasm.