

BSDS 15th Annual Trainee Day November 22nd 2019

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The BSDS Annual Trainee Day 2019 took place on the 22nd November at Willan House in London. It brought together over 50 dermatology trainee and GP delegates from across the UK and Ireland. It followed what had been an excellent BSDS clinical meeting on the previous day, chaired by Dr Andrew Birnie on the topic of SCC and Merkel Cell Carcinoma. Many would see this as a very hard act to follow. However, this trainee day certainly did not fail to deliver on quality either. The Chair, Dr David Veitch, had put together a well-balanced and excellent programme with a great faculty, offering both interactive lecture-based sessions as well as small group reconstruction workshops. The talks progressed throughout the day from an overview of surgical anatomy, through perfecting suture techniques, grafting and flap reconstruction, to preventing and managing complaints. In following this stepwise structure, the day catered for all levels of competence.

The first talk of the day was delivered by Dr Lisa Naysmith who gave an excellent overview of surgical anatomy of the face including danger zones, safe surgical excision planes and nerve blocks. It incorporated an interactive quiz and provided an excellent foundation for the day's further learning.

Dr Sandeep Varma gave a great overview of approaching defects and ways to achieve the best possible scars. This included detail on the importance of appropriate undermining and suture techniques to minimise dead space, reduce tension on surface sutures and achieve good wound eversion. The importance of managing patient expectations before embarking on surgery was also highlighted.

Skin grafts are a useful rung on the reconstructive ladder and this topic was covered by Dr Aaron Wernham who talked us through this process. The talk covered basic principles including appropriate indications for use, types of graft, choice of donor site and the processes for harvesting and fixing a graft. Later in the day, Dr Wernham also gave another excellent talk which covered his experience of embarking on a career in dermatological surgery and an overview of the current UK Mohs fellowships. This was an invaluable overview to help interested delegates understand the training opportunities at each centre.

Flap reconstructions were covered by Dr Stamatina Verykiou, who had some great photographs to demonstrate some of her own previous reconstructions. The talk covered the different types of flap, their benefits and drawbacks, as well as some useful tips to achieve successful outcomes.

The lunch and breaks provided ample opportunity to network with other trainees and talk to the knowledgeable faculty. In addition, they provided a chance to visit the stalls of the sponsors for the day, Blink Medical, Bioderma and The Dermatology Partnership.

The afternoon was largely dedicated to small group workshops. Delegates had been given the opportunity to choose the level of complexity prior to the meeting and were divided into appropriate groups. In these groups, delegates were given a set of images of surgical defects and were asked to discuss the specific site considerations, reconstruction options and design closures. This interactive session allowed delegates to share ideas and build on learning from some of the earlier sessions, under the supervision and guidance of faculty members.

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The day finished with a talk from Dr John Mckenna on obtaining appropriate consent and managing and preventing complaints from patients. This important talk covered the core principles of valid consent and reflected work on the consent process in his department that had been presented by Dr Veitch during an excellent talk at the BAD Annual Meeting last summer.

Overall this day was an excellent educational experience and I personally picked up many tips that I will use in my surgical practice. I have now attended 3 of these trainee days and always feel that I benefit from having attended. It is great to hear new ideas, revise essential principles and have the opportunity to discuss ideas with the expert faculty. The trainee days are useful for all levels of surgical competency and I would highly recommend attendance at future events.

On behalf of all delegates, I would like to give a huge thank you to Dr David Veitch for organising and chairing the event, to the faculty who gave their time to teach us and to Blake for his excellent support in organisation and communication as always. I would also like to thank the sponsors who supported the event.

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