

BSDS Stitch Up! Suturing Course Delegate Review – September 2018

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I was delighted to be awarded the nursing scholarship by the BSDS to attend the recent Stitch-up Course held at Birmingham Medical School. My expectations were high, having had no previous experience of the course elements, and I was not disappointed. From the minute I entered to register and was greeted by Kristina, I felt at ease and was looking forward to what the day had in store. I received my delegate pack with interest and was able to read much of it while enjoying a coffee. The first session was a series of short presentations outlining the day and introducing the various staff. The pace was brisk and professional, allowing for questions at the end of each session to clarify any points raised by delegates. Then it was on to the focus of the day, practice, practice, practice. Lab coats and gloves were the dress code as we filed into the lab to begin suturing. After admiring my kilo of belly pork in a culinary manner, I settled into watching the CC TV demonstrations of incisions, suturing and handling of instruments, then attempted to copy what I had seen. There were a number of experienced assistants circulating among the students, who could give help and encouragement where needed. It was a shock to be told lunch was ready, the preceding 2 and a half hours had passed so quickly.

Lunch was a substantial buffet and offered an opportunity to forge links with the company representatives sponsoring the course. There was also a chance to test our dexterity on peg boards, but I was too busy eating and chatting to some of the other delegates to test myself.

Our second set of presentations concentrated on minimising any scarring through careful incision planning and using appropriate suturing and dressings. Then it was back to the lab for more practice. I had thought of taking a photo of my handiwork from the morning, so I was surprised to find a piece of fresh flesh at my work station. Once more, I wrestled with different suturing techniques, tidying up uneven incisions, dealing with dog ears and using biopsy instruments (including Q-tips!). Again, the time just flew and all too soon we were ready to go home, having enjoyed an excellent days' programme of teaching.

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I am absolutely thrilled to be awarded the BSDS Medical Student Essay Prize and to have had the opportunity to attend the BSDS "Stitch Up" course. This course provided me with an unparalleled and invaluable opportunity to develop my suturing skills, learn advanced techniques and receive personalised feedback from experts in the field. The course was very well organised and provided attendees with a detailed information pack. The faculty were friendly, approachable and always readily available to help. I would highly recommend this course!