Trainees Newsletter

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Trainee Representative
& Tim Graham, SAC Chair

The general outlook for cardiothoracic trainees is currently very good. Lots of important background work is going on to ensure that the training is excellent across the UK and Ireland and then to try to make sure that trainees end up in employment as consultants.

We would like to thank Steve Hunter for his time as the Cardiothoracic Dean and welcome Sion Barnard as new Cardiothoracic Dean. Mike Lewis replaces Jonathan Hyde who as the College Tutor did a wonderful job.

Recruitment into the specialty at ST3 level is approaching. As in the previous 2 years it will be done via the national selection process. Selection and recruitment will be similar to 2009 with some improvements. The National Workforce planning team has agreed to a total of 22 NTNs for recruitment for 2010. This includes two academic clinical fellows to be appointed to Newcastle and Bristol (with NTNs). The other 20 clinical NTNs are to be allocated to all the UK training programmes according to the bidding process from the Programme Directors. Allocation of the NTN posts to programmes by the SAC is due to occur before the 2010 National Selection and Recruitment process starting in January.

We continue to raise awareness of cardiothoracic surgery amongst medical students through to core trainees in surgery. David McCormack has put in a lot of effort and we have had presence at the Royal Society of Medicine Careers Fair and British Medical Association Careers Fair. Leaflets have been created highlighting a career in cardiothoracic surgery. Anecdotally interest amongst medical students and newly qualified doctors for cardiothoracic surgery has been gradually increasing after reaching an embarrassing low earlier in the decade. (website for medical students at: http://sscts.org/default.aspx). There are other examples, like Special Study Modules, that are taking place around the country, which are increasing the exposure of cardiothoracic surgery. The acid-test will come in 3 - 4 years when the ratio of applicants per ST3 place nationally from MMC trainees increases.

We also continue to push forward in increasing medical student participation and attendance at the Annual SCTS Meeting. One option is to invite medical students to submit posters to the meeting. Another is to provide bursaries to medical students to undertake electives in the specialty, either in the UK or abroad.

Working time!

European Working Time Directive has finally arrived with lots of publicity! We need to be proactive and develop solutions together for optimising the quality of

training. We are aware there are numerous examples around the country where quality of training has not been affected negatively and we should expand on this.

Finally the SCTS Annual Meeting 2010 is in Liverpool on 7th to 9th March. We expect/hope that all trainees will attend the Trainee Forum on the 7th March 2010. We would like to concentrate on Leadership Qualities and Measuring Outcomes of Training. All trainees and potential trainees will be able to ask those burning questions to an expert panel with all the answers!!

The SAC look forward to seeing you all in Merseyside in March.