



Sexual Misconduct And Harassment In Surgery

The Working Party on Sexual Misconduct in Surgery (WPSMS) has recently published its report on sexual misconduct in healthcare [Breaking the Silence](#). It is recommended that all members of the neurosurgical community read the report.

The SBNS believes that sexual abuse, harassment, and intimidation must not be tolerated and has no place in our society or community. Sexual assault is an illegal and criminal act. As highlighted by the findings of WPSMS it is often under reported and the SBNS recognises that females and trainees are particularly, although not exclusively, subjected to this form of abuse and misconduct.

Sexual harassment often has the effect of making the recipient feel ashamed, humiliated, undermined, and frightened and can have a lasting impact on mental health and careers. This behaviour, along with intimidation, bullying and undermining, constitute an erosion of standards and professionalism and is profoundly destructive to individuals, creates dysfunctional and ineffective teams, and ultimately compromises the care that surgeons and the wider medical profession are expected to deliver.

The SBNS is committed to creating and sustaining a working environment which is safe, inclusive, supportive and a positive experience for everyone and facilitates team working that optimises patient care.

If you experience or witness sexual harassment or assault in the workplace, if you feel able, please report it through your hospital procedures. We recommend that all neurosurgeons with managerial or training roles familiarise themselves with their local harassment reporting processes so that they can support and advise colleagues appropriately.

The SBNS will continue to work with the FSSA and Royal Colleges to address these issues. In terms of support, the SBNS has a [Support Line](#) and [Mentoring Services](#) available for our members via our website.