

Society of British Neurological Surgeons



Neil Kitchen, SBNS President

A Message from the President

Dear friends,

As these, now nostalgic, photographs show, earlier this year I was at the JSCFE neurosurgery exam in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with many neurosurgical colleagues and then in early February with Shabin Joshi, consultant neurosurgeon in Coventry, in Nepal representing the SBNS setting up the Devkota bursaries for Nepalese neurosurgeons in training.



Book signing with Nepalese trainees

What a different the world was back then! Little did I know what was round the corner?

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The Examiners at the International Exam in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - Jan 2020

Since then of course everything neurosurgical has changed and been put on hold and held back by COVID and our efforts to thwart its spread and danger, and in getting neurosurgery back on track, treating the myriad of patients with serious, life changing neurosurgical pathologies who have been waiting to be treated when safe to do so.

Neurosurgical training, assessments, meetings, travel have all largely ceased. And yet neurosurgeons are like nature...they find a way to adapt. An impressive example is the virtual teaching project undertaken by Simon Thomson and colleagues in the SAC and eBrain. I know also that Jennifer Brown in the Examination Board is looking at possible ways of adapting examinations so these can restart. Everywhere we are looking at the way we can practice neurosurgery better and learning from this COVID straightjacket we have been bound in. Neurosurgical practice will be changed there is no doubt. As usual I have been fantastically impressed by the many local initiatives started and solutions found by neurosurgeons across the UK and Ireland to the problems thrown up.

It has been an incredibly frustrating and at times worrying period for us all, not only in terms of the disease risk itself but also how this has affected our neurosurgical practices and routines, honed over many years, which have suddenly had to change. Many of us at a trainee and consultant level will be despairing whether our careers will ever get back on track. My message is – Don't despair! Things will get better, we will find a way through and your ingenuity will win the day. We will get back to treating our many neurosurgical patients again and delivering excellent patient care, pushing forward clinical and applied research and teaching and training and assessing neurosurgeons of the future.

Sadly both the 2020 SBNS meetings have had to be postponed till next year, but please be reassured that the SBNS continues to work incredibly on your behalf and we are currently working on several distance learning/virtual meeting possibilities.

I cannot believe it, but this will be my last President's message for our newsletter. In the autumn Alistair Jenkins will take over from me and I can think of no better person to steer us safely through the undoubtedly choppy waters over next two years. It has been a huge privilege and the honour of my professional life to serve as your President.



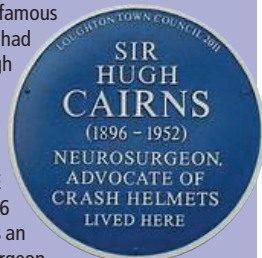
Neil Kitchen, FRCS(SN) FRCSed
SBNS President

A LEGEND - SIR HUGH CAIRNS



During the lockdown in early May I went to deliver some supplies to my aged parents (social distancing rules observed). Afterwards I took Victor, named after Sir Victor Horsley of course, for a walk past my old nursery school, Woodcroft, in Loughton, Essex (where I was a pupil over 50 years ago) and discovered this blue plaque which had been placed on the wall of the school in honour of the famous neurosurgeon who had lived there: Sir Hugh Cairns.

Sir Hugh William Bell Cairns KBE FRCS (26 June 1896 – 18 July 1952) was an Australian neurosurgeon. For most of his life he lived in England. His concern about despatch rider injuries sparked research which led to increased use of motorcycle helmets.



ALISTAIR'S VIRTUAL CURRY TOUR



I started the Curry Tour towards the end of last year for three reasons: to get to know people better, to hear about local problems and successes, and to tell you a little about what the SBNS actually does.

Unfortunately it abruptly hit the pause button in March. There is little prospect of visiting the remainder of units who were interested, I had only managed eight, before the lockdown.

The format of the visits rapidly evolved into a look round the unit, with a quick presentation on the SBNS and a business chat with both consultants and juniors, followed by a trip to the local curry house. I've certainly enjoyed the tour enormously and have learned a lot.

I'd be sorry to let it slip, so I have a proposal for those who are still interested in the idea. We're all getting used to Zoom conferencing. Why don't I split the visit into two parts: The first would be a Zoom or equivalent with anyone in your unit who wishes to take part – this could be done individually or from a seminar room etc. Then, when circumstances permit, I could come and see you for a curry, and a VERY large beer.

Please have a chat with your colleagues. If you're interested, let me know and we'll sort something out.

presidentoffice@sbns.org.uk

Alistair Jenkins
SBNS President Elect

SBNS' FIRST HYBRID MEETING – 22nd - 23rd OCTOBER 2020



The SBNS is planning to deliver a "Hybrid" meeting in October in lieu of the postponed SBNS Spring and Autumn Meetings this year. We will only continue with the physical aspect if it is safe and conforms to the government's guidelines. I am sure you are all fed up with the lockdown, social distancing and the general misery that the COVID-19 pandemic has created and are longing to meet up with friends and colleagues, either in person or virtually, to share/gain knowledge and experiences during the crisis, network and possibly to have a drink or two!

The venue has not been confirmed, but we plan to hold it in a central UK location with access to both parking and public transport. It would be great to have as many members as possible joining this conference, either in person (if that becomes safely possible) or remotely. From the results of the recent SBNS survey we sent out to the membership there

seems to be a good deal of interest in attending, in one form or the other.

The likely format will be an option to remotely observe the SBNS Council/AGM meeting on Thursday October 22nd, which would be followed by a dinner for anyone who wishes to arrive that evening. The meeting on Friday would consist of keynote lectures, hopefully from international and UK speakers, and a few of the best abstracts that were originally submitted for the postponed Dundee 2020 meeting.

As soon as we have more details these will be placed on our website and circulated to the membership, so in the meantime please mark your diaries. We look forward to welcoming you to this meeting and thank you for completing the questionnaire which will help us optimise this experience for you.



14-16 April 2021 Venue: Apex City Quay Hotel

SBNS SPRING MEETING – DUNDEE

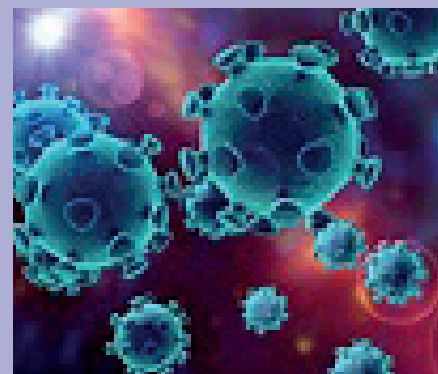
Hosted by: Ninewells Hospital and Medical School

Invited guests: **The Canadian Neurosurgical Society**

The SBNS and Hosts of our 2020 spring meeting were very disappointed that the Spring Dundee meeting had to be postponed so close to the start date due to the restrictions on travel and gatherings as a result of the Covid virus. We had a great academic and social programme planned and put in a lot of time and effort organising the event.

Our invited guests from Canada were equally disappointed, but thankfully we have managed to reschedule the event at the same venue next spring. The new dates are 14-16 April 2021 and we are hoping to stick to the original programme as much as possible. However, due to the time lapse, we will not be using the abstracts accepted for the 2020 meeting and will be reopening the abstract line in September 2020.

For full details please visit the Dundee2021 conference webpage on the [SBNS Website](#).

COVID-19 GUIDELINES

The SBNS, in collaboration with several sub-specialty groups: Trauma, Paediatrics, Oncology, Neurovascular and general neurosurgery has produced a set of guidelines to assist neurosurgeons during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

These can be found on the [SBNS website](#). The guidelines will be regularly updated and are liable to change as more information becomes available and as safe protocols are developed and shared. Please regularly check the page.



29 September – 1 October 2021 Venue: Winter Gardens Conference Centre

SBNS AUTUMN MEETING – BLACKPOOL

Hosted by the Department of Neurological Surgery, Preston, UK

Invited guests **Neurological Society of India & British Association of Spine Surgeons**

The SBNS Autumn 2020 meeting scheduled to take place in Blackpool has also been put back a year and will now take place on 29 September to 1 October 2021. More details will be posted on the SBNS website in due course.

SBNS OFFICE IN LOCKDOWN

Although the SBNS office is currently closed, it is still business as usual. Alix and I are both working from home and are contactable via our usual email address and office phone numbers. All committee meetings have been held via Zoom and we are both safe and well, but in desperate need of a haircut!

**Suzanne Murray**

Contact information for President's Office/Council
Conference Programme & General Enquiries:

Email: admin@sbns.org.uk | Tel: 020 7869 6892

**Alix Gordon**

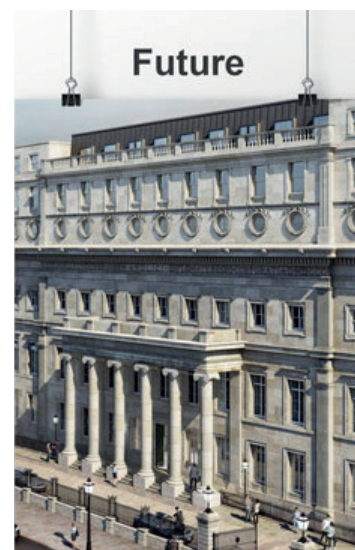
Contact information for Finance/Membership/
Sponsorship & Registration for Conferences:

Email: admin2@sbns.org.uk | Tel: 020 7869 6887

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS - BUILDING PROGRESS

The site remains open and Wates continue their construction activities with a reduced number of operatives. Works continue to comply with the prevailing COVID-19 guidelines on distancing etc. The project team continues to constantly assess the situation and is working to maintain the project timeline. For further information about the 2020 project [click here](#).

The SBNS along with several Specialist Associations plan to move into the new building in February 2021.



NEW APPOINTMENTS



Donald MacArthur – National Selection Secretary

Donald MacArthur, Consultant and Honorary Associate Professor at Nottingham University Hospital has been appointed Secretary of the Neurosurgical National Selection Board to take over in 2021. He specialises in paediatric neurosurgery and adult tumour surgery and has research interests in tumour imaging and biology and posterior fossa syndrome. He is a former Chair of the British Paediatric Neurosurgery Group and Vice Chair of the SAC.

"Entry to neurosurgical training remains highly competitive (4.5-6 applicants / vacancy over the last 6 years) and I look forward to continuing the hard work of Bill Taylor and previous NNSB Secretaries in ensuring that our selection process remains fair and transparent and selects the most suitable of those applicants in an era when we now face the likelihood of a cap on numbers entering training and competition becoming more intense than ever."



Prof. Michael Jenkinson - Surgical Specialty Lead (SSL) for the RCS

Michael Jenkinson was appointed to the role of Neurosurgery Subspecialty Lead for the Royal College of Surgeons of England in March 2020. The SSL has responsibility both for the development of clinical networks to deliver multi-centre studies as well as ensuring that the studies are relevant to neurosurgery and their patients. UK neurosurgery has a well-developed and active clinical trials network delivering pragmatic, multi-centre trials supported by the SBNS, BNRG and BNTRC.

Currently there are multi-centre RCTs open in most sub-speciality areas, but there are opportunities to develop studies that will benefit other patient groups, including for normal pressure hydrocephalus, brain metastases and spinal conditions. Several initiatives are planned over the next 3 years that will increase the number of trials, new chief investigators, principle investigators and trainee investigators. These include trials sandpit sessions at the annual BNRG meeting, working with the BNTRC to develop a prospective trial with a trainee co-chief investigator and encouraging surgeons and centres not currently participating in trials to get more involved.



CSF/Paediatric, Subspecialty Lead – Mr Guirish Solanki

The British Paediatric Neurosurgery Group held its election of Chair for 2020-2022 on the 12th March 2020, duly electing Mr Guirish Solanki. Guirish is a Consultant Paediatric Neurosurgeon at the Birmingham Children's Hospital, Birmingham, and Clinical Senior Lecturer to the School of Clinical & Experimental Medicine, University of Birmingham. He is also the Training Programme Director and Chair of the STC Neurosurgery for the West Midlands and a member of the SAC in Neurosurgery.

Mr Solanki looks forward to working with the SBNS President, SBNS Council and various committees to advance the cause of British Paediatric Neurosurgery. The BPNG has been active in a number of areas and has run an annual audit of operative activity that will be expanded this year to capture more information. A greater involvement in clinical trials and research is envisaged. Additional activities during SBNS meetings is intended including holding an interim meeting.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, the BPNG has played its role developing a Paediatric Neurosurgery Guidance during Covid-19, provided a detailed Paediatric Neurosurgery surgical prioritisation and worked with the specialised paediatric Neurosciences CRG to develop further guidelines for the paediatric neurosurgery operational escalation guidance. The BPNG has also set-up a rapid response communication group that connects all the 19 paediatric neurosurgery units in the UK and Ireland.

Next Year's BPNG Annual Meeting has been provisionally selected to be in London with St George's Hospital as hosts.



Nitin Mukerji – ebrain Neurosurgical Lead

Nitin Mukerji, Consultant Neurosurgeon in Middlesbrough, has just joined the ebrain team as the Neurosurgical lead, and will be taking over from Simon Thomson in November. ebrain is a fantastic training resource and Simon has done an exceptional job of nurturing it from its conception.

During the current COVID pandemic, ebrain has been providing the necessary training resources for all trainees with regular lectures and journal club thanks to a very enthusiastic team of trainees and speakers. In recent times, attendance of the online teaching sessions has skyrocketed - 32% more sessions, 35% more overall site users, and 37% more new users (1290) than in the same period last year.

As local and regional teaching programmes restart and everyone returns to normal rotas we intend to close down the programme on 11th June (with one additional final talk on 20th June).

Thank-you very much to all the speakers who between them have delivered over 30 webinars in the last 2 ½ months and for the enthusiastic support of the trainees too. We may restart the webinars (due to popular demand) perhaps once a month in the autumn.

Over the next few months, we also intend to bring some new ideas and enhance the ebrain resource for the benefit of trainees. So, if you haven't logged on yet – what are you waiting for?



Logging in to ebrain

This is the direct link to the [webinar series page](#). All paid up SBNS members get free access to ebrain. [Click here](#) if you have forgotten your password and enter your email address to reset your password. If you encounter any problems please contact:

Elinor Pritchard

Administrator, ebrain

Email: admin@ebain.net

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The following new members were ratified by Council in April 2020.

Full

Andrew Alalade	Preston
Vasileios Apostolopoulos	Oxford
Michael Canty	Glasgow
Jonathan Ellenbogen	Liverpool
Jibin Francis	Cambridge
Samih Hassan	Glasgow
Kismet Ibrahim	Dundee
Tim Lawrence	Oxford
Wail Mohammad	Cork
Anna Solth	Dundee

Associate

A. Nimer Amr	London
Stavros Constantinou	Belfast
Emma Dalton	Liverpool
Debayan Dasgupta	London
Ahmed Elghamry	Newcastle
Luke Galloway	Cardiff
Rebecca Hodnett	Bristol
David Holmes	London
Patrick Holton	Southampton
Zoe James	Wales
Nithish Jayakumar	Newcastle
Emma Lucas	Nottingham
Haritha Maripi	Plymouth
Mohammed Patel	Sheffield
Matthew Sanders	Sheffield
Vashisht Sekar	Belfast
Rosa Sun	Newcastle
John Usuah	Plymouth
Oliver Wroe Wright	London

Affiliated

Praise Briggs	Devon
Ha Phuong Do Le	Bolton
Michael Helley	Glasgow
Nida Kalyal	Essex
Helen Koewitz	Swindon
Asifa Lallloo	Liverpool
Keng Lee	Bristol
Igor Maleyko	South Tees
Helen Ota	London
Andrea Sangheli	Middlesbrough
Aisha Sooltangos	Nottingham
Simon Williams	Birmingham
Zaitun Zakaria	Dublin

International

Haitham Ben Ali	Wales
Tariq Saeed	Saudi Arabia
Santosh Sharma	Dubai

Senior

Bob Bradford	London
David Jellinek	Sheffield
David Mowle	Dundee

NEUROSURGICAL TRAINING NEWS

The work ethic, flexibility and sheer professionalism of Neurosurgical middle grade and junior doctors as well as our nursing staff during the COVID crisis has been truly remarkable and deserves to be recognised and applauded. Rotations have been rearranged, rotas changed, operative exposure cut and teaching suspended, all of which has impact on surgical training experience. It is now more important than ever to get our juniors operating again and it falls to all of us to do everything we can to facilitate this - it's the least our juniors deserve.

COVID related cancellations include the exam in October which has been cancelled, there are plans to have a multispecialty exam in November instead with priority being given to those closest to CCT. As far as we are aware virtually all courses have been cancelled until at least September. Currently we are still hoping that the three boot camps in September, November and December will go ahead.

The new curriculum will now begin in August 2021 rather than August 2020. Outcome 10 will be introduced at ARCPs this year for trainees who are otherwise satisfactory but have failed to achieve something required for the ARCP as a result of COVID and the rules around CESR-CP have changed

so that Neurosurgeons with 5 years of training in a UK training programme and 3 years of equivalent training outside a training programme may be able to apply for CCT rather than CESR-CP. Importantly, this change is to be applied retrospectively.

The 7th ebrain formative test questions exercise was completed on 5th - 7th June. There were 165 attempts which is a record number, the mean score was 61%, feedback was very positive and we will be doing this again next year. The webinar series which has been a phenomenal success is to close down on 11th June. Trainers will need to restart local teaching programmes from then.

Apologies for the repetition, but overwhelmingly the really important message on the training front is this: Please do everything you can to get our trainees operating again, it's the least they deserve.



Many thanks

Simon Thomson
Chair Specialty Advisory Committee on Neurosurgery

CONGRATULATIONS TO...



Will Singleton

Will Singleton, was awarded the Norman Dott Medal by the Intercollegiate Specialty Board in Neurosurgery for the most outstanding performance at the Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations in Neurosurgery in 2019. As well as receiving the Medal he will also receive the Marjorie Newsome Fellowship which consists of an all-expenses paid (up to £5,000) visit to the Barrow Institute, Phoenix, Arizona for up to 6 weeks (min 3 weeks) and to attend the AANS congress or equivalent.



Vikesh Patel

Fortunately the 2020 National Selection process was completed just before the COVID lockdown. Vikesh Patel was the ST1 trainee who was ranked first place which entitles him to receive the Jr Neurosurgical Trainee Award. This consists of an all expenses trip (up to £3,000) to visit the Barrow Institute, Phoenix, Arizona.

Well done and congratulations to both Will and Vikesh. What a wonderful opportunity for them and well deserved.

NEUROSURGERY EXAMS

IMPORTANT:

Postponement of examinations

JCIE | THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON INTERCOLLEGIATE EXAMINATIONS

Please visit the JCIE News page for an update on examinations.

THE BRAIN LOCKED DOWN FOREVER

Over 35 years ago, I was SHO in Neurosurgery in North Manchester General Hospital. One of the three consultants (!) was Carys Bannister, the first – and at that point still the only – female Neurosurgeon in Britain.



My registrar was a very colourful character, and hailed from Pune in India. He taught me to make curry. On call was MUCH more frequent than now – one in two – but could be quiet at times, so we would chop and fry onions, and generally make our (free) accommodation smell pretty exotic. Or so we thought. Dilip Kiyawat returned to Pune and is very prominent nationally, and we have kept in touch ever since. Somewhere I have a picture of the two of us on a tandem in Newcastle – perhaps for a future Newsletter.

He sent me this yesterday – a musing on Covid, from an Indian perspective.



The lockdown status, with its uncertainties and future projections, highlights a resemblance to situations that are close to what a neurosurgeon very often encounter during the management of patients with severe brain injury.

A 45 years old man is brought to the emergency room unconscious with a head injury in a road accident. Close relatives wait in the counselling room for the neurosurgeon to come out and give some satisfactory breaking news. The neurosurgeon's grim façade spells a serious verdict: "The patient has suffered severe injuries to his brain and as a result, he is unconscious and having difficulty in breathing for which ventilator's support has been started".

The Neurosurgeon faces a shower of questions, all phrased differently, but hinting at the same underlying doubt: "When will he open his eyes and start talking?" And, so the responses from the neurosurgeon were all phrased differently, but all indicated the same meaning: "his brain is injured badly, the condition is serious and the first couple of days are crucial; at the end of that period we may gain some insight about the progress". The relatives are unable to grasp all that was told, and retire for the day, optimistically expecting that everything would be alright after 48 hours.

We had a similar situation when our Prime Minister warned the masses that the corona pandemic is spreading fast and that the condition of India is very serious. On the 22nd March 2020, he imposed the Janata Curfew (similar to the entire country being pushed into ICU for one day). All the countrymen accepted it unwaveringly, expecting the clouds to clear soon. The entire nation was in a state of total bandh (shutdown), an unprecedented successful total national bandh which perhaps any political party aspiring to call for a bandh in normal times would be envious of.

A few days later doctors in the ICU informed the relatives that his condition was worsening since the injuries were deep and widespread and recovery is unpredictable. The wife's anxious questions regarding gaining consciousness and duration of stay in the ICU were not answered with any confident affirmation from the doctor.

On the national scale also, after two days the PM announced that corona pandemic is taking a serious turn and we have to follow three weeks of strict discipline, stay quarantined at home, no going out, businesses and factories closed, no gym, no malls, no restaurants, devoid of all social pleasures only stay at home and home only; a state of total lockdown was imposed in the country. "Lockdown"! A phrase, heard first time being used for a region or whole country, was destined to become the most commonly used phrase in the coming months. For most of us so far, it was linked to criminals and prisons only.

In the ICU, doctors informed that the patient continues to be serious, intracranial pressure is increasing, and

he needs constant monitoring and ventilator support. He may remain ICU bound for three to four weeks. "Will he be alright? Will he start talking after that?" were the curious queries that got side-lined in the midst of medical jargon explaining challenges in managing such serious patients and uncertainties posed by each case.

Three weeks passed; people stayed at home and got used to a new life pattern of working from home to working for home, self-cleaning, self-cooking, sans restaurants, sans outside entertainment, sans the luxury of moving outside freely, sans habits that were so easily adopted unknowingly over the past many years. The common habits of paan, gutaka, smoking, alcohol, and even innocuous pleasures such as fine dining, movies, gym, etc., all receded from 'essential' aspects of life to 'liveable-without' pleasures. For some, what more they would have achieved by visiting a de-addiction center; time and money saved was a bonus.

By now, the financial impact of lockdown was visible on millions of people across the country due to lost jobs and businesses and was similar to what the family of the head-injured victim was facing due to abrupt halt in his business on one hand and mounting hospital bills on the other. The excitement of the family at weaning off the ventilator and starting of nasal tube feeds was akin to the relaxation in lockdown, where people were allowed to go out to get some essential items. But essentially the lockdown continues, and so also the patient continues to remain in ICU.

Finally, the lockdown was lifted, but only in certain green zone areas. People were delighted, restricted movements were seen in many parts of the cities. People began to question when life as such would return to a state of normalcy. In hospital also the family was delighted to see him eat some food, communicate with gestures, and move about on a wheelchair: but when would he return to normal life? was the lingering question. Thus the uncertainties continued with both the head injury victim and locked down victims. The question of returning to normalcy got rephrased - from when, to whether.

Experts state that even if the lockdown is completely lifted and the pandemic passes away, the life, businesses, free and fearless movements, gatherings and enjoyment, work in offices and factories, attendance in schools and colleges, movements in malls, theatres and clubs would never again be the same. We will have to learn to live a different life in the post corona phase.

In hospital also the neurosurgeon predicted a similar future for the patient. Even if he recovers, he will have poor attention, poor memory, and dependent life, and certainly will not return to his business and usual enjoyments. With limited activities, he will never be the same person as before. He will have to learn to live a different life in the post head injury phase. The brain will be locked down forever...

Dr Dilip Kiyawat
Consultant Neurosurgeon
Jehangir Hospital, Pune

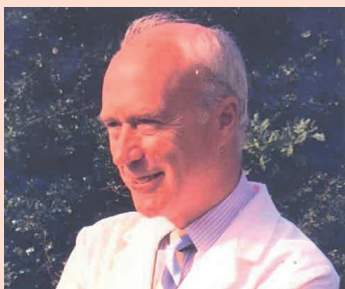
SAD FAREWELL

The first half of 2020 has not been good, besides the start of the COVID pandemic, the SBNS had to say farewell to 3 of our senior members and one Full member. Below is a brief tribute to them.



Prof Lindsay Symon died peacefully at home on 2nd December 2019, aged 90 years, with his family at his side. When Lindsay Symon retired from the Institute of Neurology and National Hospital in 1995, David Thomas took over as Professor and I was appointed Senior Lecturer. It seemed like a generational change. Lindsay had been at Queen Square for 30 years as Consultant and then Professor, and left an indelible mark on the Institution and had influenced and was adored by a huge cohort of UK neurosurgical trainees and consultants. His ground-breaking research and international presence had reinvigorated UK neurosurgery on the world stage. Lindsay remained a friend and provided wise counsel to many of us during his long and happy retirement. He was the 'neurosurgeons' neurosurgeon'.

Neil Kitchen



Peter John Edgar Malyan, died peacefully at home on 15 December 2019, aged 86.

He was President of Headway in Wales, and a Captain of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 1958-1960. He was also a Fellow of the RCS of England and Edinburgh, a Member of the British Medical Association and the Society of British Neurological Surgeons.

He started his neurosurgical career as a Senior Neurosurgery registrar training at the Maudsley Hospital with Mr Murray Falconer and ended his career as a Consultant Neurosurgeon at Morriston Hospital, Swansea 1973-1992.

His special interest was spina bifida and hydrocephalus and helped to establish the first UK neurosurgery ITU in 1978. He continued with an active medico-legal practice long into retirement.

Robert Redfern



Tom King (28th March 1930-17th January 2020). During his career my father was one of a small cohort of internationally famous neurosurgeons from the UK. He was Consultant neurosurgeon at The London Hospital from 1958-1995, and pioneered, with his ENT colleague Andrew Morrison, new techniques in acoustic neuroma surgery in the UK, notably the translabyrinthine route. At the recent British Skull Base Society Meeting, which took place only a week after he died, he was recognised as one of the founders of modern skull base surgery in the UK. Most neurosurgeons attending the meeting were able to trace their skull base lineage directly or indirectly back to "TTK" at The London. At that meeting it was decided that an eponymous annual lecture in his honour would be held at future meetings, an honour which sits alongside being awarded the SBNS Medal in 2009. The previous year's recipient of the SBNS Medal was Professor Lindsay Symon, his colleague from Queen Square who passed way two months before him and who is also recognised in this newsletter. Lindsay was asked in an article on neurosurgeons in The Observer Magazine in 1990 whom he thought was outstanding in British neurosurgery. He commented that "Tom King at The London Hospital has developed techniques of neuro-otology with ENT colleagues which have been much admired and which have been spread throughout the country by the modest and unassuming persuasion of this excellent technical surgeon".

Outside of his skull base work, he was held in the highest esteem at The London Hospital where he worked for almost 50 years, first as registrar in 1957 and then as consultant, replacing Douglas Northfield. After his death, a long-time neurology colleague wrote that "Tom represented all that was good about this unit. He was exemplary in his care for patients, with his determination to see things done properly, and incorporating with colleagues throughout the hospital. His clinical skills in diagnosis were superlative." Another tribute stated "for many of us of a particular vintage he was one of the giants of the hospital: not through showmanship or extravagant behaviour, but through sheer scholarship and surgical craft".

Beyond his skills as a neurosurgeon, he was recognised as being a kind and humble man, universally popular with all his colleagues; perhaps even loved by them. Attendees at his funeral included the theatre nurses, with whom he had last operated 25 years previously. At the funeral, a former student nurse recalled how she had confused him for one of the maintenance staff who had come to change a light bulb when she first saw

him on the ward. She gave him the spare bulb and showed him the problem. He duly fixed the light before asking her, very politely, if he could possibly see his patient.

He is survived by his 5 children and 15 grandchildren.

Andrew King

Tom King was also the Society's Archivist for many years and produced a book covering the Society's History from its formation in 1926 to 1980. The book is available on the Society's website - [History of the Society of British Neurological Surgeons 1926 to circa 1980 by T T King](#).

I am going miss Tom popping into the office for a cup of tea and hearing his stories and snippets of gossip about his days when he was a practicing neurosurgeon. A lovely old school gentleman.

Suzanne Murray



Pablo Goetz Consultant Neurosurgeon (b 1971; q 1995), died from colon cancer on 27 February 2020.

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Pablo Goetz, Consultant neurosurgeon in Cardiff at the age of 49 in February this year. Pablo was brought up in France and Argentina, where he studied medicine at Universidad de Salvador in Buenos Aires. After working in post-genocide Rwanda, he came to the UK to be a neurosurgeon, working through house jobs in Milton Keynes and undertaking a PhD in Oxford.

Pablo married Victoria in 2004 and has two children, Lucas and Delfina. Most of us will remember Pablo for his beautiful smile and sunny presence during his time as trainee in London and at SBNS meetings. He loved life and always had time for everyone. Once he completed his training, he undertook a fellowship in Toronto before being appointed as a Consultant in Cardiff in 2011 where he specialised in skull base and neuro-oncology.

Pablo was a meticulous and kind Neurosurgeon and was adored by his patients. He was a devoted husband and father, and the humblest of gentlemen. He will be sorely missed by us all.

Mark Wilson

INDUCTION TRAINING CAMPS 2019/2020



University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire one of the largest acute teaching hospitals in the UK, hosted the fourth innovative simulation course for ST3 Trainee Neurosurgeons - the only one of its kind to exist nationally.

The Clinical Science Building was filled with enthusiastic trainees willing to learn and develop their skills. ST3 Trainee Tom Grundy said: "Having four Consultants in the room is such a rare thing. They are always on-hand to offer guidance and advice."



Feedback from each trainee was glowing and positive and there was one common theme.

Anna Craig-McQuaide said: "There were cadaveric heads - one between two trainees - for simulation operations, with neurological microscopes, navigation

and high speed drills which you would find in real theatres.

"We couldn't believe how fantastic the resources were."

Mr Amar Saxena, Consultant Neurosurgeon, Course Director and National ST3 simulation lead for Neurosurgery, was proud to organise UHCW's fourth annual event in a row.

He said: "The need for simulation in Neurosurgery is great due to reduced training opportunities secondary to reduced working hours (EWTB).

"The course covered cranial and spinal surgical approaches appropriate to ST3 trainees through regional anatomy, consent (role play) and positioning simulation (role play and use of artificial heads) followed by dissection on cadavers using navigation, operating microscopes and high speed drills.

The course provides an ideal opportunity to simulate real time operating in a safe environment."

Peter Whitfield, Chairman of the Specialist Advisory Committee (SAC) in Neurosurgery, added: "The cadaveric work, which the trainees love and enjoy, is crucial for giving them confidence when working with patients."

UHCW would like to thank the 28 consultants from all over the UK who attended the boot camp over the course of the week.

Jessica Clarke- Wheatley

Induction Training Camps Dates for 2020

ST1 Induction Training
28th Sep – 2nd Oct
Preston
Led by [Ankur Saxena](#) & Arup Ray

ST3 Induction Training
7th – 12th December
Coventry
Led by [Sandeep Solanki](#)

ST7/8 Finishing School
November - dates tbc
Bristol
Led by [Venkat Iyer](#)

Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) induction
25th/26th Jan 2020
Coventry
Led by [Sandeep Solanki](#)

BRITISH JOURNAL OF NEUROSURGERY

The British Journal of Neurosurgery is the official journal of the Society and is a leading international forum for debate in the field of neurosurgery, publishing original peer-reviewed articles of the highest quality, along with comment and correspondence on all topics of current interest to neurosurgeons worldwide.

If you are a paid up member of the SBNS you will have on-line access to the journal when logged into the [SBNS website](#).

You can read the most read articles and top cited articles published in 2019 by [clicking here](#).



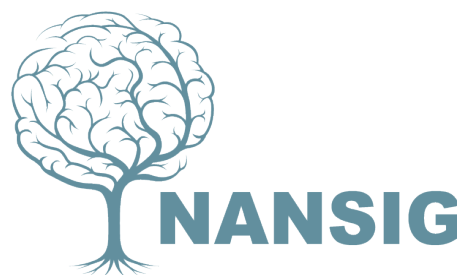
NATIONAL NEUROLOGY AND NEUROSURGERY STUDENT INTEREST GROUP (NANSIG) CAREERS DAY



The NANSIG and the SBNS ran the 9th Annual Careers Day, on the 18th of January, 2020, at the University of Birmingham. This year we had nine speakers comprising foundation doctors, trainees, and consultants. The event consisted of talks across four themes:

- How to secure a training post and early years of training
- How to train and become a neurosurgeon
- The life of a neurosurgeon including benefits and drawbacks
- Academic neurosurgery

There were also poster/oral presentations from abstracts submitted and the students were able to get some practical experience during the lunch breaks.



Rowena gets a drilling!



Best Poster
Raghad Alshamasi



Best Oral Presentation
Conor Gillespie

Prizes presented by Alistair Jenkins, SBNS President Elect

Attendance was high, 77 students and junior doctors attended the conference from 21 universities and institutions in the UK and 3 from abroad. The majority of attendees stated they would recommend this conference to a colleague, highlighting that this undergraduate conference motivated them to pursue neurosurgery as a career.

The day was a great success, and it would not have been possible without the support of the SBNS Speakers and sponsors: B. Braun Medical Ltd, Medtronic, Stryker, Severn, Wesleyan, MDU, Unofficial Guide for Medicine and of course Rowena for the use of her head! We thank you for all your help.

Our next careers day is planned for 30th January 2021 in Oxford. The link for the event is on the [NANSIG website](#) and our Facebook page.

Soham Bandyopadhyay
NANSIG Chair

GLOBAL NEUROSURGERY UPDATE: InterSurgeon PANDEMIC AND BEYOND

In late 2019 the WFNS set up a Global Neurosurgery Committee headed by Kee Park of the Harvard School Program in Global Surgery and Social Change, with the specific mandate to Amplify Access to neurosurgical care; Align all neurosurgical activity; Advance relevant research; Assimilate Neurosurgical activity and Advocate for Universal Neurosurgical coverage. Despite the pandemic this committee is already making considerable progress and as a member of the committee I am pleased to be involved as an individual but also we see that InterSurgeon may have a considerable role to play in this advocacy process.

InterSurgeon has not been idle during the pandemic and as we stand at the end of May we have 467 members, of which 334 are neurosurgeons, in 86 countries. We now have 29 NGO members working in 60 locations and are in the process of reaching out to all members of the surgical team. Our website has received over 8000 hits with the average session lasting over 8 minutes.

It is impossible to predict exactly what the post pandemic world will look like, especially in the area of Global Neurosurgery. It is estimated that the pandemic will have led to the cancellation of over 28 million operations worldwide over all specialities and if we estimate 5% of those as being neurosurgical, then we have a backlog of almost 1.5 million operations. Add to that the acknowledged deficit of

5 million neurosurgical operations per year in Low and Middle income countries and we get an idea of the enormity of the problem. The timing has also not been good for the whole Global Surgery movement as the pandemic has re-focused everyone's attention at a time when major organisations such as the WHO and the United Nations General Council had at last recognised Global Surgery as a priority in Universal Health coverage.

I think that one thing that we can be certain of is that travel, especially to more remote areas, will be made more difficult due to additional bureaucratic processes, reduction of airlines and available routes and increased costs. In addition, physical attendance at meetings, traditionally the means of establishing contacts, will be considerably reduced, with many attending virtually. There may also a reduced willingness for individuals to travel and in addition centres may be reluctant to receive guests, however illustrious, from abroad. All of this adds up to an increase demand for electronic means of collaboration as has been demonstrated by the remarkable growth of Zoom and other media during the lockdown.

With anticipation of an increased reliance on digital media in mind, InterSurgeon has been working on two digital developments that we shall be offering to our members free of charge. The first is a platform that allows the merging of two video streams. It has been developed for the service industry and

the recent lockdown has seen a huge growth in its utilisation. From a medical standpoint, it allows a surgical mentor to provide remote advice and supervision in real time in either the operating theatre, clinic or during teaching sessions. We hope to have this amazing software available in the next few weeks and going forwards we are working with one of our NGO members on a trial supplementing this technology with Smart Glasses so that the clinician operating or seeing the patient in clinic can access the advice through a heads-up display in response to the camera feed from the glasses. The second development is a case advice and discussion app designed specifically with InterSurgeon members in mind. This is in an earlier stage of development but we hope to have this up and running in the coming months.

Please take the opportunity of visiting the [InterSurgeon website](https://www.intersurgeon.org) and if you have already registered why not update your profile and consider placing an offer or request to get the maximum benefit from what InterSurgeon has to offer!

Keep Safe!

William Harkness

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Future SBNS Meetings

[20th European Congress of Neurosurgery](#),
Belgrade
18 - 22 October 2020

SBNS Council/AGM & Hybrid Meeting
Venue TBC
22 - 23 October 2020

[3rd MANS Congress 2020](#)
In collaboration with the SBNS &
Egyptian Society of Neurosurgeons
Cairo, Egypt
(SBNS are invited guests)
27 - 30 October 2020

[SBNS/NANSIG Career's Day](#)
Oxford
30 January 2021

[SBNS Spring Meeting](#)
Dundee
13 - 16 April 2021

[SBNS Autumn Meeting](#)
Bathpool
29 September - 1 October 2021

Details for the meetings (left) and various other meetings and courses please visit the [Dates for your Diary Section](#) on the SBNS website.

The SBNS Newsletter is your chance to communicate with your SBNS colleagues. Contributions are welcome for the next issue due out in January 2021, content will be required by November 2020. Please contact [Suzanne Murray](#) at the SBNS office.

Meetings Supported by Aesculap Academia 2020/21



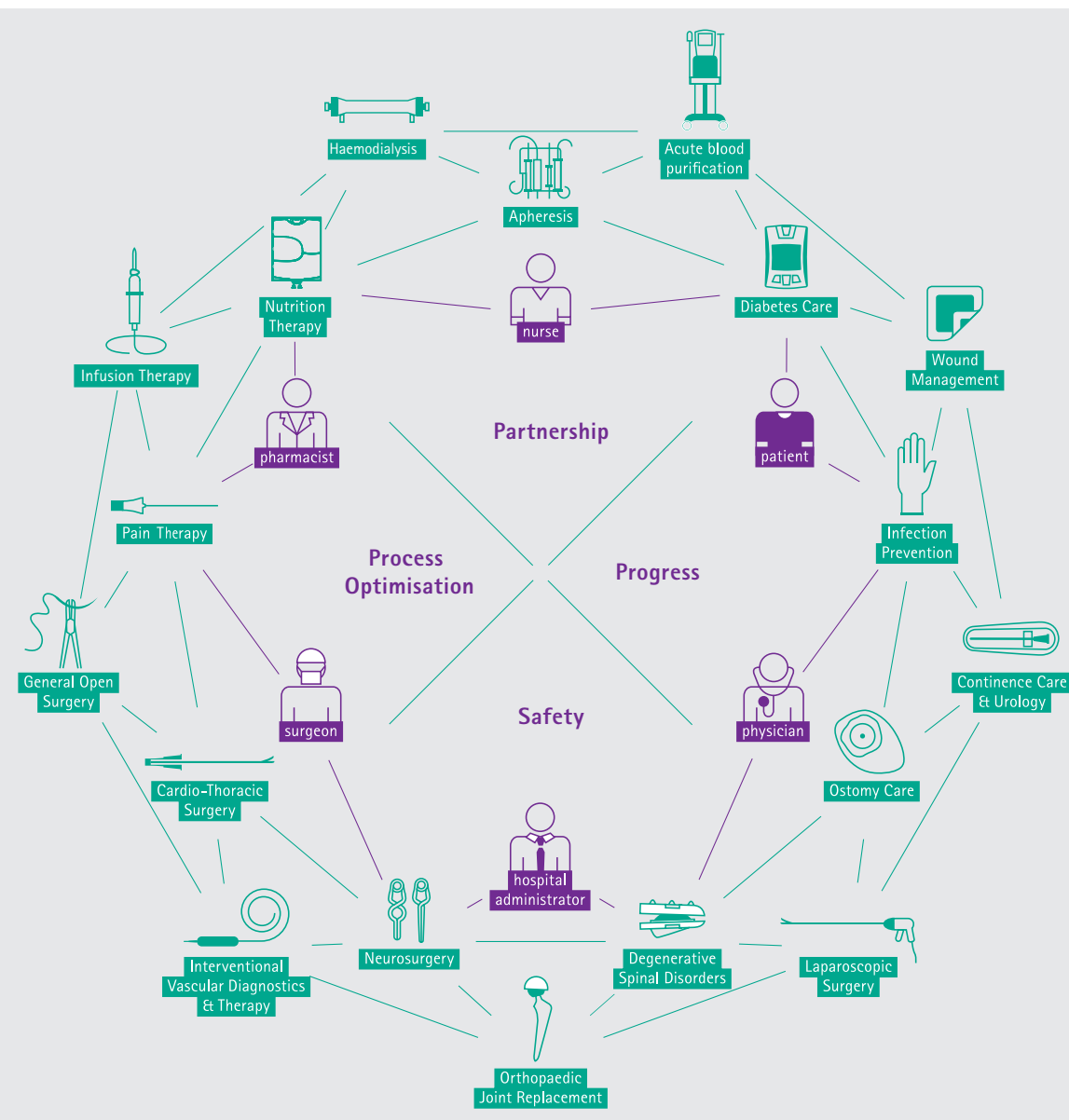
Prevention & Management of Neurosurgical Complications
B. Braun Business Centre, Sheffield
6th November 2020

British Neurosurgical Research Group (BNRG)
Jurys Inn, Cardiff
26th - 27th November 2020

Care of the Critically Ill Neurosurgical Patient (CCrINSP)
B. Braun Business Centre/Royal Hallamshire Hospital,
Sheffield
7th - 8th January 2021

Leeds Endoscopic Skull Base Course
Leeds School of Medicine, Leeds
28th - 29th June 2021

British Neuro-Oncology Society (BNOS)
Bramall Music Building, University of
Birmingham
7th - 9th July 2021



THANK YOU

During these difficult times whilst we may not be able to meet in person, we continue to think about our customers needs and strive to protect and improve the health of people around the world.