

ASiT & The Trainee Speciality Associations Joint Letter to Surgical Trainees

Dear Colleagues,

3rd April 2020

RE: The Impact of COVID-19 on Surgical Training.

During the COVID-19 pandemic our primary focus is to work together in the best interests of our patients. In these unprecedented times, we recognise that there will be a significant impact on surgical training, the health and well-being of surgical trainees, our families and loved ones, and our clinical practice. We wish to assure trainees that ASiT and the Trainees Speciality Associations are working continuously to advocate for trainees and mitigate the long-term effects the pandemic will have on surgical training.

A statement released on 30th March 2020 by HEE, NES, HEIW & NIMDTA, our four educational bodies, provided an update on national recruitment (link accessible [here](#)). The Joint Committee for Surgical Training (JCST) released a statement regarding the immediate impact of COVID-19 on surgical training on 19th March 2020 (found [here](#)) and an update, including on National Recruitment, on 1st April 2020 (found [here](#)).

We are writing to reassure you that ASiT and The Surgical Specialty Trainee Associations are working together, and are in regular dialogue with the JCST and Specialist Advisory Committees (SACs), to ensure that the voice of our respective trainee members is heard.

A number of concerns have been raised by trainees with regards to changes to national selection, which will affect applicants across all surgical and non-surgical specialities. We hear your concerns. ASiT and The Trainee Speciality Associations did not support these changes. Although we do not support the final outcome, we understand that pragmatic decisions are required to ensure an adequate workforce during this unprecedented medical crisis. We will continue to work with the JCST, SACs, The Four Surgical Royal Colleges and The Four Educational Bodies to prevent trainees being disadvantaged both as a result of the process that has been imposed and in future application rounds,

ASiT and The Specialty Trainee Associations will continue to advocate for you, and provide the best support that we can throughout this difficult period. We must act together across all grades, surgical specialities and healthcare disciplines, to do our best for our patients and look after one another as colleagues at this difficult time.

Yours faithfully

Joshua Burke	ASiT President on Behalf of ASiT Council
Benjamin Baker	President - Plastic Surgery Trainees Association (PLASTA)
Sotonye K Tolofari	President - BAUS Section of Trainees (BSoT)
Claire Webster	Military Trainees ASiT Representative
Shaneel Patel	President - Rouleaux Club
Duncan Steele	Senior Trainee Rep Society for Cardiothoracic Surgery, GB and Ireland
Dominic Summers	President - Herrick Society
Ashan Jayasekera	Chair - British Neurosurgical Training Association (BNTA)
Siobhan McKay	President - Roux Group
Manish George	President - Association of Otolaryngologists in Training (AOT)
Panchali Sarmah	Dukes' Club - ASiT Representative
Afsana Elanko	President, British Association of Surgical Oncology Trainees
Gina Weston-Petrides	Chair, Mammary Fold
Raghuram Boyapati	Fellows in Training Representative to BAOMS

