# Nomination for BAOMS Trainer of the Year – Robert Bentley

The South London Trainees wish to nominate Mr Robert Paul Bentley for the 2016 ‘Trainer of the Year’ Award. In very many aspects Mr Bentley has demonstrated a commitment towards the welfare, training and individual needs of his trainees as illustrated in the following examples.

# Trainee Development

Mr Bentley is unanimously acknowledged as the driving force of OMFS specialty training in London. Being amongst the pioneers to engage in a Health Education Framework has successfully led Kings to the lead education provider for the pan-­‐London specialty training programme. He has subsequently orchestrated educational committees, monthly educational regional study days and standardized rotational placements optimized to guide all trainees through a structured and staged clinical programme. He has organized faculty development days for Assigned Education Supervisors (AESs) to facilitate engagement with the ISCP compliance and recently has been the key facilitator in upgrading the regional Deanery-based website into an interactive educational platform to stimulate exchange of scientific opinion, surgical expertise and specialty related information. He has forged incorporation of OMFS blocks into core surgical training (CT) level thus widening exposure of the specialty at this crucial point in training and recruitment. For those more advanced in their surgical training, Mr Bentley has established National Trauma Fellowships. He has consistently championed trainees pursuing Masters, PhDs and currently devises an intercalated ‘clinical OMFS-MSc’ scheme recognizing the need to establish a robust research base and academic brilliance for the future of the specialty.

**Professionalism**

Mr Bentley exercises the highest standards of clinical care and expects no less from his trainees. He is a tireless surgeon whose spectrum of practice encompasses trauma, complex craniofacial deformity and skull base surgery. He imparts and cultivates a work ethic from all those around him that raises clinical standards to the highest level. In clinics he is happy to explain cases to medical and dental students engaging them fully and does likewise with his trainees. In theatres, he is a fantastically enthusiastic and patient educator who rigorously follows pre-operative briefing and post-operative debriefing for every surgical case to maximize learning opportunities with the trainee. He has the knack of giving just the right amount of supervision to enable the trainee to feel supported yet to allow them to gain independence as a thinker and decision-maker.

# Leadership

Through his numerous leadership roles Mr. Bentley has championed the specialty of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS) and the needs of its trainee body. As the Director for Trauma in a Major Level I Trauma Center he has been instrumental in the strategic re-design of the hospital workforce and infrastructure into a Centre of Excellence delivering consistently outstanding outcomes. He has established OMFS as a named specialty in the twenty-six named Major Trauma Centres (MTCS) and has promoted, through his role as a specialist commissioner, the importance of OMFS to the Clinical Reference Frameworks (CRFs) in Trauma.

**Communication**

Mr Bentley is always available – and we don’t mean just when the trainees are on call. For someone with such a busy schedule it is commendable that he always responds to any phone-call, text or email. This has fostered a culture of openness, approachability and dependability that extends far beyond the remit of day‐to-day clinical practice. He has an ‘open-door’ policy for any problems coupled with an uncanny sense for when a trainee wants to discuss a very personal issue for which he will schedule a private appointment without hesitation. Mr Bentley always finds time for everyone. It is his discrete handling of trainees’ personal issues that we feel distinguishes him from other trainers. He shows compassion and empathy for the more challenging times in life always providing support and time for trainees to figure out solutions and ‘weather the storm’. He has actively supported pregnant trainees recognizing that such a life event is not to the exclusion of professional ambition but rather offering consistent contact and constructive support throughout maternity leaves. In other circumstances, Mr. Bentley has clearly demonstrated cultural sensitivity for complex domestic issues that would likely elude other trainers. These additional dimensions to Mr. Bentley’s supervision of trainees demonstrate a healthy, holistic approach to their needs and his very sincere desire to develop each and every individual trainee’s potential.

**Resourcefulness**

Inextricably linked to leadership, Mr Bentley, amongst numerous achievements, has recently been the leading force in the construction of a major unit encompassing a modern helipad directly linked with the imaging department, operating theatres and the country’s largest intensive care unit, upgrading King’s College Hospital into a world-class treatment and training centre. On the international front, Mr Bentley has been a member of the European Council of OMFS and has helped establish collaborative links with overseas institutions through the provision of Cranio-Maxillo-Facial (CMF) fellowships. He has been chair of the AO CMF group and been actively involved in setting up the CMF Principles course.

**Summary**

In summary we feel it is rare for a trainer to demonstrate this combination of commitment to education and training, and professionalism and communication with his trainees. Mr Bentley is eminently worthy of the accolade of ‘Trainer of the Year’.