

Nomination for Trainer of the Year 2016 West Midlands Region

Mr Rhodri Williams BDS FDSRCS MBChB FRCS FRCS(OMFS)

Trainee Development

Rhodri Williams has recently taken over as Training Programme Director for the West Midlands region, having been a trainer in the region for over a decade. Since taking on the role he has developed the acclaimed West Midlands Educational Programme for Trainees to rotate around all the placements rather than being based centrally at a single unit to best exploit everything the region has to offer. This dedicated teaching programme has been “highly commended” by a General Medical Council review and has recently been extended to incorporate inter-deanery teaching days with the neighbouring East Midlands deanery. Rhodri has recently developed an Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) post in our specialty, a first for the West Midlands. In addition, he has initiated a mentoring scheme for new ST3 starters in the region, which sees them paired with more senior trainees for informal and accessible support and guidance. West Midlands trainees based at Rhodri’s unit are scheduled to give regular teaching sessions on a wide range of topics to a weekly forum of consultants and other trainees of all levels. This encourages development of in depth knowledge of a wide variety of topics, public speaking skills, self-awareness and self-confidence.

Professionalism

Rhodri has maintained excellent links with the Birmingham Dental Hospital and Birmingham Children’s Hospital, working across three sites and holding separate contracts at adult and paediatric units. He interfaces with a multi-disciplinary team of colleagues in the dental world including specialists in restorative dentistry, orthodontics and paediatric dentistry to deliver a varied caseload to include the management of challenging hypodontia cases, paediatric maxillofacial trauma and complex orthognathic surgery. He has an established joint clinic dealing with hemifacial microsomia which is invaluable for patients and trainees alike. He is well-liked and respected by all who know and work with him and his wide referral base is as much a testimony to his surgical outcomes as his personal demeanour.

Leadership

“The best leaders value their words and use them sparingly/When they have accomplished their task, people say ‘Amazing! We did it all by ourselves!’” This could sum up Rhodri’s leadership style. If he feels a trainee has reached the right point, he is happy to “take a step back”. At all times he is a “safety net” for the trainee – there if you need him, reserved and standing back if you do not. His philosophy is clearly to allow trainees to express themselves and develop their own leadership potential by being a pillar of strength for the trainee whilst not being overbearing. This is a rare gift and his reserved but solid approach deserves commendation.

Communication

Rhodri is a true ambassador for the specialty. A regular contributor to educational events such as the DePuy Synthes Trainees’ Forum, his ability to communicate his enthusiasm to trainees extends beyond the classroom. He has organised charity cycling events incorporating trainees on more than one occasion, most notably cycling with 9 consultants and 3 trainees from Birmingham to Ypres, raising £14,000 for military patients at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham in the process.

Resourcefulness

Rhodri maximises trainee learning opportunities. Joint orthognathic planning clinics are a particular joy, as Rhodri encourages trainees to present back to him in exit examination-style format in a non-critical learning environment with constructive feedback. He will go out of his way to make sure that more complex cases are seen by trainees approaching their FRCS and his clinics are often attended by trainees from across the region as the exam draws near.

Summary

It gives me great pleasure to nominate Rhodri as the West Midlands entry for Trainer of the Year 2016. A consummate professional, gifted teacher and all round great guy, he is more than deserving of the award.