The BSDS Annual Trainee Day is always a highlight in the surgical calendar and although held virtually on the 20th of November, it did not disappoint. It was a well-attended meeting with fifty-six enthusiastic delegates with an interest in dermatological surgery tuning in from various locations across the globe. The Chair, Dr. Hayley Leeman organised a talented line up of speakers to deliver a comprehensive programme with lecture-based sessions followed by small group reconstruction workshops. The conference flowed beautifully from beginning to end, covering surgical anatomy of the face, nail surgery, treatment of acne scarring, flap reconstructions, and treatment of rare skin cancers. It was an enjoyable whirlwind day of learning which catered for all levels of surgical experience.

The day commenced with a presentation by Dr. Lisa Naysmith, who gave a great overview of the surgical anatomy of the face. She delivered a succinct review of facial anatomy, nerve blocks, danger zones and complications. Her talk included an interactive quiz ensuring an engaged audience.

Dr. Anshoo Sahoto then followed with a talk on his top tips in nail surgery. Nail surgery can be challenging and as a trainee it is often difficult to gain experience in this area. He gave a great talk on nail anatomy, how to perform a digital nerve block and a few pearls on treating myxoid cysts. He shared practical tips for assessing and treating nail lesions and demonstrated various nail procedures with videos which were a brilliant teaching tool. The interactive quiz between slides was fun and kept us all on our toes!

The morning continued with an outstanding talk by Dr. Emma Craythorne on tips to address acne scarring. This was an invaluable talk for clinical practice. She covered the importance of understanding the different scar types and choosing the appropriate modality to achieve the best results. She also highlighted the optimal time to make a referral and addressed the importance of managing patient’s expectations.

After the break, an overview of flap reconstructions was delivered by Dr. Magnus Lynch. The presentation went through real life examples of defects and the various reconstructive options. He gave an excellent account of the different types of flaps, and tips to achieve the best outcomes. This lecture was particularly helpful for the afternoon workshops and also for clinical practice.

Dr. Nick Koutroumanos delivered an excellent talk on periocular reconstructions. He gave an overview on periocular anatomy, assessment of periocular lesions, and went through various reconstructions. He commented on the rich vascular supply in the periocular region and reminded us to never put a graft on a graft!

The highlight of the meeting was the small group workshops held in the afternoon. The delegates were assigned to a group based on their level of experience. Each work shop was led by a dermatological surgeon who presented cases, accompanied by a photo of a surgical defect. Each group discussed the potential reconstruction options. This was an interactive and fun session that allowed everyone to participate and share ideas. The computer programme allowed the candidates to design the repairs online which brought the experience to life. It was a dynamic learning opportunity that was facilitated well by faculty, fine tuning our repairs and redirecting the group when needed.

The day concluded with an in-depth talk from Dr. Jack Mann on diagnosis and treatment of rare skin cancers. This helpful talk introduced us to the danger guestimatometer!

Overall, the day was an outstanding learning opportunity, delivered by experienced and highly skilled dermatological surgeons. I learned wonderful tips and treatment pearls which will assist me in my surgical training. Trainee days such as this are beneficial for all levels of surgical experience and I would highly recommend attendance at future meetings for anyone with an interest in dermatological surgery.