

BSDS Annual Trainee Day 2025

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I attended the BSDS's 20th Annual Trainee Day which took place on 6th November via Teams. The day was hosted by the current BSDS trainee representative Dr Alicia Yong and supported by Kristina Putzova and Blake Denkinson.

Speakers covered a range of topics and provided useful practical tips for trainees to use in daily practice. The first talk by Dr Sunny Varma was 'Optimising outcomes for skin surgery'. Dr Varma highlighted important pre-operative, intra-operative and post-operative factors that we should consider when performing a dermatological procedure. He also emphasised the importance of perfecting the fusiform excision before moving on to learn more complex surgical techniques. A key takeaway point was the importance of undermining every wound widely to facilitate deep suture placement and minimise wound tension.

The second talk was 'Approach to reconstruction' by Dr Mel Page. Dr Page summarised the reconstructive ladder, covering the pros and cons of each technique. Her talk highlighted that we should be making individualised decisions for each patient considering factors such as comorbidities, cosmesis, social factors and patient preference.

The third talk was 'Dermoscopic clues for surgical decision making' by Dr Ben Esdaile. Dr Esdaile highlighted dermoscopic features such as 'multiple aggregated yellow-white globules', or MAY globules, which are typically seen in aggressive BCC subtypes on the head and neck. He presented some challenging dermoscopic images highlighting common pitfalls which will be useful to take forward into clinical practice.

The fourth talk was 'All about the ear' by Dr Tom Oliphant. He covered basic surface anatomy as well as the frequently seen condition chondrodermatitis nodularis helices. It was useful to see images demonstrating reconstruction techniques for the ear such as the helical rim advancement flap. Dr Oliphant highlighted the importance of considering ear projection and prioritising function over cosmesis when deciding on a reconstruction technique.

The fifth talk was 'Lasers' by Ben Aldridge and covered the basic principles of laser treatment and the main target chromophores: haemoglobin, melanin and water. This was a useful talk given that not all trainees will have access to laser treatment in their centres. The sixth talk 'All about Mohs' by Dr Dave Brass summarised the practical steps of Mohs surgery and its indications and benefits for patients. The final talk 'All about skin grafts' by Dr Will Hunt covered different types of skin graft (full thickness, split thickness, cartilage and composite), their indications and pros and cons of a full thickness versus split thickness skin graft.

In addition to the talks above, delegates also took part in two interactive reconstruction workshops which were facilitated by faculty members. We were split into groups based

on prior experience and worked through images of surgical defects, discussing our approach to reconstruction. This was useful to consolidate learning throughout the day and learn in an interactive, friendly environment. The workshops took place on Mural so they were interactive and easy to follow. The BSDS also provide excellent pre-course material to make the most of the workshops which can be accessed via <https://bsds.org.uk/bsds-online-learning/>, or <https://learning.bcd.org.uk/my/> for non-BSDS members.

In summary, the BSDS Annual Trainee Day 2025 was a great opportunity to consolidate existing knowledge and learn new practical tips from experts in the field. I will be recommending this to colleagues and look forward to future BSDS events.