

I undertook my higher surgical training (general and vascular) in Wales. Wales excels in providing opportunities for open operating and training, but lacked any complex endovascular aneurysm service, and there were no hybrid theatres in Wales during my training time. Furthermore, as a general surgical trainee, my time spent in the IR suite during my senior training years was limited. I was delighted therefore to be awarded the highly competitive 2018-19 BSET fellowship. My aims were twofold; first to focus on peripheral and hybrid lower limb interventions, and second to gain exposure to complex endovascular aneurysm repair.

I chose to do my fellowship in Southmead Hospital, Bristol. This arterial unit serves a population of 1.3 million people in the South West, as well as accepting complex aortic work from a population of approximately 4 million. Whilst the BSET fellowship lasts 6 months, I rapidly appreciated the fantastic opportunity afforded to me in this proactive and engaged vascular unit, and therefore extended my fellowship to 12 months, to maximise my learning opportunities. My time was predominantly spent in IR, with supervision from both interventional radiology and vascular surgery consultants. I was able to do a large number of peripheral iliac/SFA/tibial endovascular cases, which comprised the majority of my day-to-day work. In addition, I took all opportunities available for gaining transferable skills from other IR procedures, and therefore I also did/part performed a number of other interventional cases; fistuloplasties, visceral stenting, arterial and venous thrombolysis, PE thrombectomy, coiling of acute GI bleeding, IVC insertion and removal, and even a couple of TIPPS. I planned and performed a number of hybrid lower-limb cases.

In total I did just under 200 peripheral cases, with over 100 arterial punctures. I have been signed off as 'level 4' for lower limb angioplasty and hybrid cases.

Southmead also has a very busy FEVAR/BEVAR/TEVAR programme, and I was involved in lots of these cases. I also did a number of infra-renal EVARs. In total I was involved with/did just under 50 major endovascular aortic cases. There was also plenty of open operating going on, so I was able to do a significant number of open cases: distal bypasses, pop-pedals, aortic aneurismal/occlusive cases etc, and got to see a few venous arterialisations.

This fellowship has also been invaluable in seeing the setup of a centralised vascular unit, which serves a similar population to that of South Wales. During my fellowship I was delighted to be successfully appointed as a Vascular Consultant to Newport. Southmead boasts robust governance, management, team organisation and leadership, which I look forward to drawing upon in my new consultant post.

I would like to thank BSET for the opportunity for this fellowship, and the IR and Vascular Team for the training and mentorship. They have been exceptionally supportive and have made this year the success it is.