

Mr Marc Pacifico

We were delighted to chat to **Mr Marc Pacifico**, BAAPS Council Member, about the future of plastic surgery training and the new Aesthetic Mentorship Scheme.

BAAPS have recently introduced the Aesthetic Mentorship Scheme; can you tell us a bit about the background to this being developed?

Despite having some world class aesthetic plastic surgeons in the UK, the established training opportunities for our registrars and support for them as they enter their consultant careers are widely variable in terms of access, availability and geographical spread within the UK. The UK is in fact no different from other countries on this front.

However, with the increasingly limited exposure of trainee plastic surgeons to aesthetic surgery, I felt BAAPS had the scope, responsibility and ability to change this. What we have proposed is to engage as many consultant plastic surgeons with established aesthetic plastic surgery practices to become Mentors within a structured programme designed for future generations of UK plastic surgeons.

And how exactly will the scheme work?

Criteria have been established for groups of consultant plastic surgeons or clinics to be eligible to become "host centres". Once appointed, host centres will then be able to advertise their availability to trainees via BAAPS and also via PLASTA, the UK's Plastic Surgery Trainee's Association.

Applicants (who have to have been awarded their FRCS(Plast) qualification) will apply directly to host centres for interview, with successful applicants being awarded a 6-12 month Mentorship post.

Do you see this scheme as being very important to the future of plastic surgery in the UK?

I think that we are developing a scheme that will become an integral part of UK plastic surgery training in the future. With the increasing restrictions on the breadth of exposure to different procedures available within the NHS, our trainees are needing to broaden their scope of training opportunities. We are hoping to build a foundation on which a solid future of aesthetic plastic surgery training can then flourish in the UK. Furthermore, the concept of this scheme does not stop at the end of the training time – we plan that as the trainees become consultants, their Mentors will continue to be there for them, offering advice and career guidance.

What do you think will be the main advantages to plastic surgery trainees?

If the scheme develops as we hope, we will for the first time, be able to provide a map within the UK of all associated aesthetic surgery training opportunities; however, and probably more importantly, we will be building a framework to support trainees as they enter their consultant careers by providing mentorship that



will help oversee and guide them in the early stages of their careers in aesthetic surgery. This will be invaluable from both the clinical perspective and also the practice management side of things too.

Would you also encourage experienced consultants to get involved and do you think it will benefit them as much as the trainees?

I would very much like to see as many experienced consultant plastic surgeons in the country sign up to this scheme as possible – their knowledge and expertise will be an incredible learning resource for the next generation of surgeons. In all aspects of medicine, we never stop learning, and I find we can also learn from our trainees: their previous experience, their academic curiosity, their questioning of why and how we are approaching different situations all keep us on our toes and continue to push us to stay at the top of our game!

How can interested trainees find out more information?

Please do not hesitate to contact the BAAPS office - secretariat@baaps.org.uk or <https://baaps.org.uk> for more information, and to express an interest. We hope to have the first few posts advertised at the beginning of 2022.

Many thanks for your time!