



# 2021 Annual Report

## **Message from the PLASTA President:**

Dearest PLASTA Committee Members,

Thank you all for working so hard and devoting your time and energy to make this year so successful and enjoyable, despite the challenges continuously thrown our way by the pandemic. I am proud that we have all come together as colleagues and friends and managed and achieve our most successful year to date as PLASTA – for the benefit of all plastic surgery trainees.

A full update of each of your great work is included in this report, so I would just like to mention a few highlights here:

Firstly, 2021 has been the birth year of the **BAPRAS-SAC-PLASTA National Teaching Programme**. This is something that I'm extremely proud of and it's a testament to the efforts of the whole PLASTA Committee and the passion of Mr Mani Ragbir and Mr Dean Boyce that this came to fruition so quickly and so effectively. Since then, BAPRAS Council and Secretariat, the SAC, support by PRASIS and all Consultants who kindly give up their time to prepare and teach each session, have all come together to take our teaching from strength to strength. It is thanks to everyone involved that all trainees throughout the UK and Ireland now have access to such a high standard of teaching for the FRCS(Plast) that is equal between all regions and departments.

It's equally amazing that despite numerous lockdowns and restrictions, we have managed to hold **two successful PLASTA national conferences** in the summer and winter of this year. These were both well attended by over 100 members each and focused on two vitally important topics of Mentorship and Innovation in Plastic Surgery. I am proud that we have been able to lead the way in these areas and feel inspired by what the future of plastic surgery training has to offer with so many engaged trainees, Consultants and members of industry all coming together to achieve our common goals.

Part of achieving this has been the establishment of our new **PLASTA mentoring scheme** that has been piloted successfully this year. As an association we are clear in our aim that all trainees must be supported and treated equally and fairly throughout their careers. I'm passionate that we continue to work closely with BAPRAS, the SAC and BAAPS to make this possible for trainees both now and for years to come.

Another achievement of which I am proud is the establishment of our new national students' association **PRASSA UK (Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery Students Association)**. This is now bringing together all undergraduate plastic surgery societies across the UK, so that all students can more easily become involved in plastic surgery from an early stage and develop their passion in a way that will benefit the future of our speciality.

I feel honoured to have been your PLASTA President during this challenging yet exciting time. I am extremely grateful to all of you for being such an **amazing Executive Committee and Regional Representative Committee**, as well as all of you who have worked so hard on our **Subcommittees**.

I'm excited to work with the **new committee** and **wish you all the best for 2022**. With a combination of new and existing committee members, this promises to be a dynamic and progressive team which I am proud will represent the inclusivity and diversity that defines us as an association. I know this will be reflected in the work we continue to do together, as the voice of all plastic surgery trainees, and feel optimistic for our future.

Keep safe.

Best wishes,

Dimi



Dimitris Reissis

PLASTA President 2021  
ST7 Plastic Surgery Registrar,  
London (Pan Thames) Deanery

## **PLASTA Vice President Report**

Vikram Sharma

Despite the ongoing pandemic, 2021 was an exceptionally successful year for PLASTAUK as we continued to represent Plastic surgery trainees at the highest levels and in the biggest national and international arenas. I was proud to work with all 17 members of the Executive committee and 14 Regional representatives who together embody some of the best qualities of UK Plastic surgery trainees with their commitment, enthusiasm and determination. We are now one of the biggest trainee associations with over 2200 members in the UK and internationally.

As Vice President, I was co-chair of the regional representatives, hosting monthly Zoom videoconferences to identify and offer guidance for a variety of local issues. This also empowered each rep to take the lead on training issues in their region and I help to ensure open and easy dialogue with any members of the Executive committee that might be best placed to help.

I created and led the National Training Survey 2021 which had 71 questions over 9 domains that included: Demographics and Progression, Teaching and Training, Well-being and Mentorship, Operative numbers and Supervision, Fellowships and time Out Of Programme (OOP), ARCP & ISCP, Less Than Full Time Training (LTFT) and Supported Return to Training (SuppoRTT), Academic Trainees, Final/Other Comments. This was completed by 175 trainees accounting for 51% of NTN – the highest ever proportion for this survey and forms the most up to date and accurate snapshot of UK Plastic Surgery training. This was presented to the Plastic Surgery SAC in May 2021 and the data generated will be actioned by the 2022 Executive committee.

Personally, I was able to take my experience in leadership and spirit for international collaboration and published 3 podcasts with The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (available on Spotify and Apple Music). This was with Dr Gordon Lee (Professor of Plastic Surgery, Stanford University) and a former British Airways pilot, Captain Phil Higon and a Michelin-starred Chef-Patron Andrew Pern.

A further collaboration with the ASPS in August was the ASPS Global Partners Webinar Series, representing the first time the ASPS Residents association has collaborated directly with any UK trainee association. Together with PLASTA President Dimi Reisis and Research Rep Matthew Murphy, I organised this webinar to highlight the strengths of PLASTA and UK research and forged a new trans-Atlantic alliance between our respective trainee organisations. I was also the only trainee representative of any country present at the ASPS Global Leadership Forum in November, thereby promoting PLASTA to the heads of every major Plastic surgery society in the world, sowing the seeds for future collaborations.

Finally, I led the Trainer of the Year Awards 2021 which sought to identify and highlight excellence in training across all 14 UK regions. The most outstanding

trainer from each region was notified and entered to win one of 3 national prizes. The top 3 winners of Gold, Silver and Bronze awards were made and presented live at the BAPRAS Winter Meeting via Zoom and in-person. I also worked closely with PLASTA Treasurer Joeseeph Ward to help secure significant sponsorship for the preceding PLASTA Innovation Congress.

It has been an honour to serve with all members of the 2021 Executive and Regional committee members and feel the future for PLASTA UK and Plastic Surgery training in the UK is very bright!

### **PLASTA Head of Operations Report**

- Head of Operations: Nikita Joji
- Operations Subcommittee
- Webinar Lead: Rini Vyas
- Congress Lead: Georgie Phillips
- Journal Club Lead: Oliver Jones

It been a busy and productive year for the PLASTA Operations Committee. We have developed and delivered a wide range of operational activities on behalf of the PLASTA executive committee and membership. Our key outputs for the year have been:

### **PLASTA Events**

- PLASTA Mentorship Day- Organised in collaboration with BAPRAS, the inaugural PLASTA Mentorship Day 2021 took place on 6 th June as the first face-to-face event of the year at the East Midlands Conference centre in Nottingham. It certainly lived up to its promises to be a great event with excellent talks from Ms Ruth Waters, Mr Maniram Ragbir, Ms Sam McNally & Mr Simon Eccles followed by practical mentorship workshop run by Alexis Hutson. We also launched our highly successful PLASTA mentorship pilot for newly appointed ST3 trainees.
- PLASTA Simulation Dragon's Den - We were joined by over 100 delegates for the inaugural PLASTA Simulation Congress took place on 2nd December at the newly refurbished Royal College of Surgeons of England in London. We hosted a Simulation 'Dragon's Den' competition to bring together the latest innovations and simulations to benefit the future of plastic surgery training, with interactive sessions for delegates to trial and test latest technologies. We hosted excellent talks from diverse range of speakers ranging from Plastic Surgery and healthcare technology roles in the wider world. We were able to work with multiple exciting sponsors including PRASIS, Stryker & Motiva to provide a high-quality learning experience for all attendees.

### **PLASTA Webinar Series**

These have been extremely popular and successful now running in their second year, regularly reaching 200-300 participants on a monthly basis. We have run parallel series for the FRCS(Plast) and ST3 preparation, with regular collaborations

with ICOPLAST, BAPRAS and BAAPS, Pulvertaft Centre, Pan Thames and Stoke Mandeville webinar series. We also distribute a weekly webinar update to compile all plastic surgery webinars and educational resources to our membership, which now has over 1500 subscribers. PLASTA webinars are available for access to on-demand on our website.

### **JPRAS & EJPS journal club, in collaboration with JPRAS/EJPS/ICOPLAST**

These have run on a monthly and bi-monthly basis respectively, with hundreds of live attendees and subsequent listens and downloads on platforms such as Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

The Operations Committee will continue to develop and expand in the next year with a focus on continuing to deliver high quality and reliable resources for trainees across our expanding and diverse membership.

### **Communications Report**

The communications team (Lead: Nalin Nagrath and Subcommittee: Gemma Batten, Ewan Campbell, Chris Deutsch) achieved the following objectives during our tenure:

- Transfer and embedding of all webinars past and present
- Uploading and embedding of PLASTA/ICOPLAST journal clubs
- Important contributions to the requirements for awarding of prizes/grants and uploading on the website
- Important contributions to the delivery of the BAPRAS/SAC/PLASTA National Teaching Programme
- Introduction and awarding of PLASTA UK badging of courses
- Change of banners and committee pages to the website
- Regular liaison with other committee members for inclusion of content and timely delivery of newsletters
- Expansion of membership and addressing all membership concerns, queries, and problems
- Regular social media updates driving not only PLASTA's work but publicising of many external events and organisations related to plastic surgery
- Creation and dissemination of multiple infographics and posters
- Compiling the Winter Research Bulletin 2021
- Coordination and delivery of relevant publishing and unpublishing of pages relating to essay prizes, PLASTA congresses, nominations, and elections

Going forwards into 2022, we will maintain current activity, keep on serving our membership, and build upon PLASTA's achievements in fulfilling PLASTA's mission.

### **General Secretary Report**

Kirstie Taylor

2021 was a busy but highly productive year for PLASTA. Despite the ongoing pandemic we continued to give our all to represent Plastic surgery trainees and I am extremely proud of what PLASTA continues to grow to be as an organisation. We've seen our reach expand; from medical student members to consultants, and all stages in between, and now we hold our own on an international stage.

In 2021 we established and maintained monthly meetings for both our Executive and Regional Committees which I was pleased to ensure ran smoothly. It has been a privilege to work with both committees and see the hard work of my colleagues who are truly fantastic advocates for trainees. My role included liaison and collaboration with all members of the executive committee and our achievements together included; election of a fantastic Subcommittee, inception of the National Teaching Programme, scoring and awarding numerous grants and prizes and running two highly successful events - to name but a few! PLASTA is the friendliest, most welcoming, diverse and inclusive organisation that I have been delighted to be a part of over the last couple of years and I hope that it continues to go from strength to strength in 2022.

### **Treasurer & Sponsorship Report**

Joseph Ward - joseph.ward@icr.ac.uk

It has been a privilege to contribute to the PLASTA executive committee during 2021 and support the hard work of committee colleagues tirelessly advocating for the best interests of plastic surgery trainees at all levels of training. I wish to put on record my thanks and good wishes to the outgoing president, Dimitris Reissis, who has adeptly led PLASTA with enthusiasm and ambition – well done Dimi!

The stand-out success for 2021 has been the National Teaching Programme. I have no doubt that this ambitious initiative (generously supported by our parent organisation, BAPRAS) will set the bar for specialty teaching across surgery in the years to come. PLASTA is (and should be) rightly be proud of this amazing achievement!

Once again, I am pleased to report the finances of PLASTA have never been healthier with the 2021 committee leaving a bank balance £7,500 greater than inherited. Over 50% of PLASTA's income comprises a generous grant from BAPRAS providing us with a high level of financial stability despite inflationary cost pressures. In light of this, I document the committee's gratitude to BAPRAS council for their committed and substantial financial support.

From a sponsorship perspective, we have certainly not rested on our laurels though and obtained over £12,000 in sponsorship from organisations including the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Stryker, Thieme, Chase De Vere, Sandison Easson, Polynovo, Stryker and PRASIS. This is another exceptional achievement,

the largest annual sponsorship haul PLASTA has ever seen, and once again, something we should be hugely proud (that also acts as a proxy for our profile)!

PLASTA's relative financial health has allowed us to support a number of undergraduate events in 2021 including KCL Women in Surgery, iPRAS, Imperial College Surgical Society Plastic Surgery Conference and UPRAS. From a postgraduate perspective, we have supported the PLASTA-ASiT Prize, the PLASTA Innovation Prize, the PLASTA Essay Prizes, 4 taster week grants, the St Thomas' hand fracture course and awarded 2 conference presentation grants. In my opinion, PLASTA is functioning at its best when supporting members through grants, prizes and awards and hope the extent of such activities can prudently increase over coming years.

I wish the future committee every luck for 2022.

Joseph Ward

### **SAC Representative Report**

Poonam Valand

[Sac.plasta@gmail.com](mailto:Sac.plasta@gmail.com)

2021 has seen the continuation of incredibly challenging training issues facing our specialty not least, the severe impact that COVID has had and continues to have, on the quality of training. Through close collaborative efforts and regular interaction with the Specialty Advisory Committee, we have continued our efforts to tackle these problems head on.

Key developments this year that PLASTA have been engaged in at SAC level have been the smooth implementation of the new curriculum, the creation of the National Teaching Programme and the National Selection Process. During the tenure of my position, three National SAC meetings were attended over the course of the year out of which, two were also attended by regional plastic surgery training programme directors across the UK. Prior to each meeting, the SAC committee were sent my progress report detailing PLASTA's numerous achievements in all domains, as well as updates on key training issues that had come to the forefront during PLASTA executive and regional committee meetings. During each SAC meeting, a verbal report was given allowing further targeted and strategic discussion which generated robust dialogue. It has been my absolute pleasure to have engaged with SAC members who, over the course of my two years in post, continue to welcome and support the PLASTA voice.

The second meeting of the year also involved the presentation of the National Training Survey results by Vice President, Vik Sharma. The results of the survey continue to be powerful in negotiating change and supporting issues that PLASTA bring to the forefront on behalf of its membership.

In addition to my SAC role, I have also represented PLASTA on the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh Specialty Surgical Board during meetings held virtually throughout the course of the year.



## National Selection

I have been fortunate enough to have witnessed the sheer amount of time and effort that the National Selection Leads, the SAC and consultants across the whole of the country, consistently put into trying to achieve the best possible process to recruit the brightest and most deserving applicants. The process is by no means perfect, but given restriction and limitations imposed upon the SAC, it remains the best iteration of what it can be and what it has been.

This year saw the first virtual interviews take place where applicants were first shortlisted using portfolio scores. Both myself and the PLASTA President were invited to attend the portfolio scoring and virtual interviews in order to ensure transparency. PLASTA remained at the forefront of the process with awareness of key developments and were able to step in on numerous occasions, particularly when extra communications were needed urgently. PLASTA's position and close engagement with the National Selection Leads and the SAC allowed for many issues to be resolved swiftly and efficiently and for this, PLASTA remains very grateful on behalf of its membership.

PLASTA's involvement with the National Selection process is a solid testament of how the relationship between PLASTA and the SAC has gone from strength to strength. The SAC members are without a doubt, committed to the quality and development of Plastic Surgery Training. They remain extremely inclusive of trainee engagement at the highest level of decision making and my time spent in post has been not only been rewarding, but extremely inspired.

## Examinations Rep Report

Dan Jordan

This years achievements:

I took over the exam representative role from Bernie Robertson and have been able to continue his great work in representing trainees sitting the exam and raising issues as needed. It is in respect to my predecessors in this role that PLASTA has a voice at this table and my thanks goes to the examination board for listening to the concerns and queries raised by the trainees and PLASTA as a committee.

Covid has affected trainees greatly over the last two years and this year we were able to have successful sittings of all the Section 2 examinations although in a new format and without patients. Covid has allowed a review of how all the FRCS examinations are sat, and it is hoped that patient involvement will be brought back by the second half of 2022 and with it a new approach for the clinical examinations with changes to the content and structure of the viva and clinical scenarios. My hope is this is fair and maintains the high standards that we as a profession expect from our trainees and peers. 2022 will also hopefully allow the rotation of the exam around the

country again as this last year has been predominantly hosted in Scotland due to covid restrictions limiting location and sites.

This year has already seen the migration of Section 1 to SBA based papers and so far this appears to have transitioned cleanly although full assessment of this change will come this year after a full cycle of exams in this format.

The introduction of the national teaching programme will hopefully allow all trainees to gain the fundamental knowledge needed in sitting these examinations successfully and it is with great pride that the PLASTA committee has led this project to fruition this year.

### **Fellowship Representative**

Natasha Wielogorska

PLASTA Fellowship Summary: 2021-22

Over the past year, fellowship opportunities for trainees have continued to be affected by the pandemic. Although this has been most relevant to abroad fellowships, knock on effect has been observed nationally.

Tig fellowships have changed from pre CCT to post CCT for 2021-22. The decision was support by HEE and the GMC. Generally, the trainee perspective was against this transition and was raised appropriately by PLASTA to the STC and BAPRAS. In the 21-22 cohort, some TIG fellows were pre-CCT and some post-CCT. All applications for 2022-23, and going forwards will be post-CCT. It has been predicted (and raised to BAPRAS and the TIG committee) that this is likely to have an effect on applications. Many trainers (across all supporting specialities) are still not fully aware of this transition.

Following setting up the live PLASTA fellowship Google sheets, we have provided a real time record of fellowships available as raised to PLASTA or visible on NHS jobs. The advantages of this sheets document was access for PLASTA members to enable knowledge of active fellowships and to be able to look at past advertisement dates. The challenges have been finding out about the available fellowships, whether to include international fellowship and more recently, changes to google sheets access making access intermittently inaccessible.

ICOPLAST as an organisation wish to team up with PLASTA to share fellowship information. ICOPLAST have a summary spreadsheet of fellowships which includes some UK fellowships and many international fellowships. Sent from my iPad

### **Research Representative**

**Matthew Murphy**

Summary for Research Representative 2021-22:

Research Tab on PLASTA website updated to include: Research Institutions, Conferences, Academic Pathway Guidance, Funding Sources.

Research Bulletin Published Annually.  
Annual PLASTA Essay Competitions successful.  
Joint BAPRAS-PLASTA Research committee meetings allowing for collaboration.  
Masterclass Research Series to be continued with the incoming Research Representative (to be handed over).

It was an absolute pleasure to work alongside so many enthusiastic, committed and professional PLASTA committee members this year (2021). Working alongside such a great team has been such an honour while at the same time enjoyable allowing professional friendships to develop. I know that under the Leadership of Kirsty PLASTA will continue to grow from strength to strength in 2022.

### **BBA Representative**

#### **Sophia Opel**

This year we have made real progress with the development of an educational platform for Burns via the British Burn Association. A significant grant awarded to the BBA means that a platform can be funded. A designated e mail address means that educational material can be sent to the BBA for approval. ([education@britishburnassociation.org](mailto:education@britishburnassociation.org))

### **BAAPS Representative**

#### **Rebecca Rowlett**

Summary of BAAPS rep role for 2021.

#### **BAAPS webinars**

I ran and co-hosted two series of PLASTA/ BAAPS webinars during lock down to bridge the gap until the return of face to face trainee days (which have now been re-established).

#### **RCS certification Scheme**

Attendance and participation at the RCS cosmetic certification meetings. We are the only speciality to be fortunate enough to be given a seat at the table and voice our consensus on these matters. As an organisation we attended every meeting and had valuable in-put.

#### **BAAPS Mentorship Scheme in conjunction with Marc Pacifico.**

The successful launch of this scheme is about to go live with interviews Feb 2022. As an organisation (PLASTA) we should be proud of this move forward, to maintaining our interest and facilitation toward aesthetic training and protecting our syllabus.

### Attendance at BAAPS conference

It is important that the BAAPS rep and as many trainees as possible attend these meetings, as trainees we are welcomed, the content is relevant for exams as well as for future consultant level work.

### Attendance to CAPSCO conference

This has the potential to be a yearly event, whilst they are not a registered organisation, this has the ability for trainees to attend and liaise with more aesthetic practices to gain further experience and training.

### ST3 BAAPS interview course

I was a facilitator on this course last year and I am proud to say it was so well received it will now be a yearly event (Feb 2022)

BAAPS/ PLASTA training bursary advertisement- ongoing fellowship awards for trainees. We encourage all trainees to apply for these.

PLASTA/ BAPRAS SAC teaching programme.

My personal input was that of aesthetics and sarcoma. I think the delivery of these webinars has been well received on a national level and I know this will continue in conjunction with BAPRAS.

### **ASiT Representative**

**Natalie Johnson**

No submission received

### **BSSH Representative**

**Ralph Murphy**

The BSSH Instructional Courses retained a virtual theme due to COVID, extending into the 8.4 diet in Feb 2022. Planning around hybrid meetings proved challenging due the costs associated with set-up and delivery of an in-person and virtual course. Future courses beyond the COVID pandemic are likely to return to in-person events with recordings made available of the lectures, where possible, at a small fee for those who cannot attend. Maintaining a low cost for both in-person and recordings was considered important by PLASTA given the number of educational courses required and the often, high costs associated, for trainees.

The BSSH Educational Committee met twice, virtually, in Spring and Autumn. There remains uncertainty around post-CCT TIG fellowships from 2022 other than that they will definitely be post-CCT. The BSSH are keen to encourage more junior membership from medical students and junior doctors and a new membership

category has been developed to accommodate those interested in hand surgery at this stage in their careers.

### **Innovation Representative**

#### **Mark Mikhail**

"As the first year for this role there was no blueprint for how it should be structured or what was required; there were also no prior expectations. The role involved liaising with the other fantastic committee members as well as other specialist associations.

The PLASTA Innovation conference in December was a great success and the speakers were well received. They would all happily support PLASTA events in the future as well as others that were unable to attend. The plans to create an innovation document to guide trainees were scrapped as unlikely to offer more than any of the other content that is already easily and freely available and high quality.

The Future of Surgical Training Report is due to be published this year and I was proud to represent PLASTA in this endeavour. A further project looking at blockades to entrepreneurship in surgical training will launch next year on the back of preliminary work carried out."

### **Equality and Diversity Representative**

#### **Ibrahim Ibrahim**

#### **E&D Champion role:**

- To be a point of contact for Plastic Surgery trainees across the United Kingdom.
- To establish a trainee pastoral support network and signpost individuals to appropriate organisations.
- To dedicate a section on the PLASTA website for trainee support, including contact telephone numbers.
- To continue collecting and reporting data on trainee experiences of discrimination and inequality.
- To work cohesively alongside the BAPRAS Professional Standards Committee towards developing progressive action plans and implementing safeguards against negative behaviour in any form.

#### **2021 achievements:**

- Completion of PLASTA E&D statement, for inclusion in official policy.
- Led and coordinated national trainee pilot mentorship programme.
- Explored trainee/trainer attitudes to LTFT training, through analysis of national survey data.

#### **2022 aims & objectives:**

- Finalise PLASTA E&D policy.

*Mentorship scheme:*

- Launch formal mentorship scheme, bring in line with new ST3 recruitment round.
- Explore alternative matching process, e.g., prospective mentor/mentee meet and greet at summer 2022 PLASTA event.
- Consider increasing capacity of participants.
- Liaise with BAPRAS re: consultant mentorship scheme.
- Document experience in report format.

*Less than full time training:*

- Continue collecting data on trainee/trainer attitudes to LTFT training.
- Submit report of trainee experiences.