

Honorary Secretary Newsletter October 2023

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Annual Scientific Meeting, Dublin, Wednesday 22nd to Friday 24th November

Rachel's theme for the Dublin ASM is compassionate leadership. We will be joined by Dr Alan Lumsden (Houston Methodist, USA), Prof Kak Khee Yeung (VU University Medical Centre Amsterdam, The Netherlands) and Dr Anahita Dua (Massachusetts General Hospital, USA) as guest speakers.

We will also have sessions with updates from Prof Andrew Bradbury on the Basil trials and Prof Chris Imray on his ASPIRE 2022 polar expedition.

There are new joint sessions with allied vascular societies and an interactive session on the Friday exploring to the future of vascular service delivery, including the impact of artificial intelligence.

The Society received over 250 abstract submissions. These will be presented at the PAD, Aortic, Academic and Venous sessions (Wednesday morning) or as electronic posters (judged on Thursday).

For the first time we will be using the **Slido app** at the ASM to allow delegates to pose questions electronically, and for voting.

Rachel Bell and Douglas Orr have tasted the venue coffee and assure me it is of high quality and that members attending the Dublin ASM will not be disappointed!



Convention Centre Dublin

The ASM will be held in the Convention Centre Dublin with the Gala dinner at the Guinness Storehouse.

It is not too late to register: https://www.vascularsociety.org.uk/asm/vsasm_2023.aspx

Vascular GIRFT Leads Appointed

It is with great pleasure that I can announce that **Rachel Bell** and **Jon Boyle** have been appointed by NHS England with the Vascular Society as joint Vascular GIRFT Lead from December 2023. Their joint appointment ends a 2 ½ year hiatus since Professor Mike Horrocks stood down from this role.

Under the leadership of Prof Tim Briggs, GIRFT (now a part of NHS England), has an ambitious work programme. The first workstream for vascular services is **Clinically led Speciality Outpatient Guidance**. This document will be a template for standardisation of clinical prioritisation, optimising outpatient capacity and resources in outpatients to improve patient pathways and experience.

Vascular Society Elections 2023

President

Nominations have now closed for the position of Society President 2025-6. For the first time the nominated candidates will be voted for by ordinary members in a ballot. This ballot will be run alongside the shortlist for new Elected Council members.

Elected Council

The nomination window for Elected Council is open until **Sunday 15th October – this Sunday!**

The Vascular Society is only as effective in its many roles as the members and invited colleagues from other specialities on its committees and councils. I

If you have an interest in service delivery, education and training, safety and quality improvement, research or professional issues then please consider standing for elected Council.

Three current Elected Council members have shared their experience of standing for election:

Marco Baroni, Consultant Vascular Surgeon in York “I thought long and hard before standing for Council as no one likes to be rejected! I was really surprised by the volume of support that I received from old friends and colleagues when my name appeared on the ballot paper and found the whole process much less stressful than I expected. Don’t be put off by the election process, if you think that you have something to offer put yourself forward, you won’t regret it.”

Kaji Sritharan, Consultant Vascular Surgeon in Liverpool “Serving as an elected member of Council has been a privilege, a challenge and a huge amount of fun. I would recommend anyone who wants to drive change nationally and work within a team of diverse, like-minded and inspirational individuals, to apply.”

Prof Sadasivam Selvakumar, Consultant Vascular Surgeon in Stevenage “I never imagined how much work is done by the Members of the Council and its President towards the Standards of Vascular Service, Education and Training, Research, Audit and Quality, Work Force issues, ASM, helping in curriculum and negotiating with various bodies and Institutions by the President to retain the position of Vascular Surgery at high level.

I am very proud to be part of this Council for the last 3 years, which I enjoyed thoroughly. As a result, I felt that I wanted to contribute more and hence I have accepted ASM Chair post from November 2024. I will strongly recommend this to members to consider.”

Mr Ian Hunter, Consultant Vascular Surgeon in Taunton, “Until I was elected I had no idea how much work the Vascular Society is doing to support our profession, it has been a real pleasure to be involved.”

Member engagement & New Website

Member engagement

One of the focuses of Council for this year is growing our membership by having a Society to which every vascular specialist in the UK and Ireland chooses to belong to. This means sharing their aspirations and removing barriers to belonging. This includes having a representative Council for the membership and better communication. The VS is not a ‘club’ for those who choose to join.

Website

Good communication is key to good engagement. Council has long been aware that the Society website is outdated and does not work well on mobile devices. Money was set aside for new Vascular Society and Circulation Foundation websites. This project is progressing well with our supplier, Light Media, and we are on track for a new VS website launch prior to next year’s March membership renewals.

Over the next six months you will be hearing more about the improved functionality of the new websites, including updated content and an improved members area with bulletin board.



Front page design for new Vascular Society website (© Lightmedia 2023)

Audit and Quality Improvement

National Vascular Registry Report 2023

The 2023 NVR 'State of the Nation Report' is due for publication on 9th November 2023. Two significant changes from previous years' reports are a new format, as required by HQIP, and the move of iliac branch procedures (IBD/IBE) from the complex to standard EVAR dataset.

NVR data will be validated in 2024 by a team from VASCUNET. This is work deferred during the Covid-19 pandemic and supports the NVR's commitment to international vascular registries.

PAD QIF –CQUIN (England)

In England, the PAD QIF –CQUIN is now running for a second year with revised targets at 45%-65% of admitted patients with CLTI are revascularized within 5 days (endovascular or open surgery).

Results for 2022-3 are available now*: <https://future.nhs.uk/CQUINimp/view?objectId=168188741>

2023-4 results will follow*: <https://future.nhs.uk/CQUINimp/view?objectId=41301232>

* You will need to register for a **FutureNHS** account if you do not already have one.

Research

Clinical Trials Day

The Research Committee held a successful clinical trials day in Leicester on the 21st of June 2023. Funded by the RCS Eng. SSL budget this event was free to attend. There were over 80 attendees from a variety of research backgrounds.

RCS England Research Fellowships

Council was disappointed when neither of our two joint VS and RCS Eng. Vascular Research Fellowship places were appointed for 2023-24. This is despite our research fellows having a strong track record for delivery and a high standard of applicants with both research and quality improvement projects.

Council members are in discussion with RCS Eng. as to changes to the selection process to prevent this happening again.

NEW Joint BSIR and RCR Research Fellowship

The VS has agreed a jointly funded BSIR/CF/RCR research fellowship.

Education

ASPIRE

The ASPIRE programme is up and running with successfully completed ASPIRE 3,4,5,7 and 8 courses. Course feedback has been excellent from all these courses. The Society is grateful to all the faculty members who give their time and specifically to the course convenors; Tim Beckitt (ASPIRE3), Diane Hildebrand (ASPIRE4), Anna Murray (ASPIRE 5), Julien Al Shakarchi (ASPIRE 7) and Kaji Sritharan (ASPIRE 8).



ASPIRE 3 Delegates and Faculty (Photograph by Anthony Anthony)

Joint SVN Education Day (online)

We are continuing to broaden our education reach and we supported an online all-day education session with the SVN in July with over 100 attendees and while we wait the formal feedback the informal feedback was excellent. We are looking to repeat this event again with the SVN in 2024.

Workforce

Conflict Resolution and Managing Difficult Behaviours Course

Following on from the trial of this course in Newcastle in May, the first “*train the trainers*” workshop ran at RCS Ed. in Birmingham on September 18th. Of the twenty places which the RCS Ed. made available on the course, almost half are occupied by VS members.

The Society is looking to support the roll out of this course out so more surgeons can attend.

Workforce

Professor Denis Harkin has written an excellent editorial for the JVSGBI entitled ‘**Repairing the vascular surgery workforce: attract, recruit and retain**’ <https://jvsgbi.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/2-Harkin.pdf>. The workforce committee has put together a recruitment strategy and this will be discussed further by Council with involvement of the Rouleaux Club.

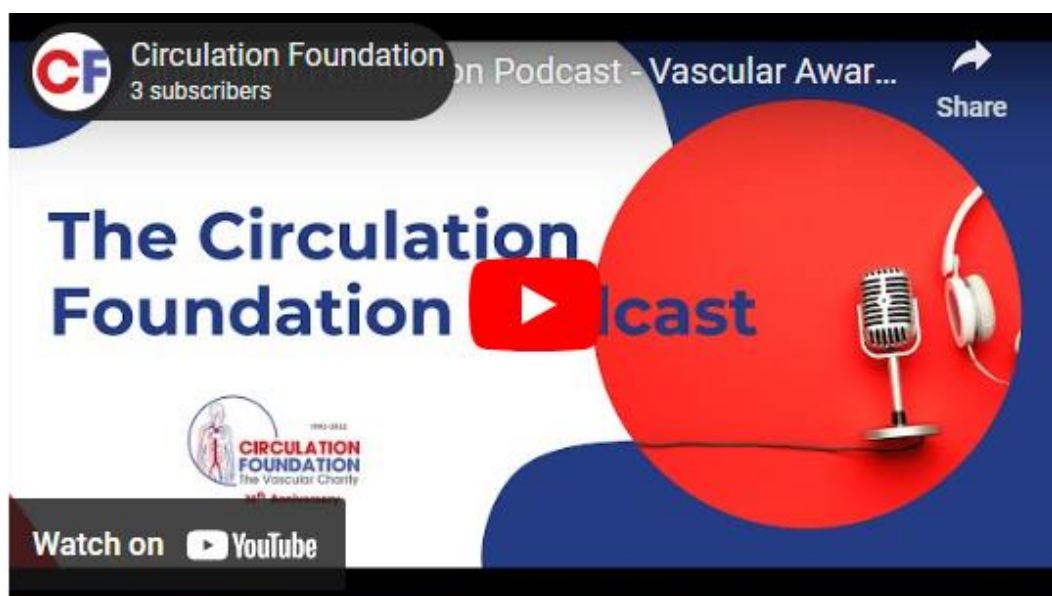
Circulation Foundation

Vascular Health Awareness Month

The CF ran a successful Vascular Health Awareness Month again this year with daily social media output and the **Body Walk**. Congratulations to Kaji Sritharan the top fundraiser with £1,180 raised. Excellent new content has been produced, including the first ever podcast from the CF and translation of the Claudication poster into multiple languages.

NEW Podcast

The CF is grateful to all participants in the podcast and especially **Jai Singh**, a journalism student at Salford University, who edited and produced the podcast for us free of charge.



[The Circulation Foundation](#) | [The UK Vascular Disease Charity](#)

30th Anniversary

This year marks the CF's 30-year anniversary. The CF is keen to share stories and photographs of the CF and/or Vascular Surgery from the last 30 years. Please email info@circulationfoundation.org.uk.

Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)

The CF has agreed MoUs with the SVN, SVTGBI and Rouleaux Club to support it becoming the charity for all specialists involved in the care of people with vascular disease. These changes align with the new Circulation Foundation Board on which the allied Vascular Societies have full representation.

Vascular Surgery SAC

We are delighted to announce that the Vascular SAC has appointed **James Coulston** as Professional Behaviours Lead, **Patrick Lintott** as Workforce Lead, and **Shiva Dindyal / Prof Sadasivam Selvakumar** as CESR co-leads.

For trainees, procedure numbers logged per month remains a concern for both emergency and elective procedures; whilst emergency procedures are at pre-pandemic levels there has not been the same recovery in elective procedures.

SAS/CESR Representation

Ibrahim's and Tatiana's work representing SAS and LED colleagues has been recognised by RCS Eng. You can read about this in on the RCS Eng. Website, with plenty of advice on how to get involved.

Ibrahim Enemosah

SAS doctors and surgical specialty associations

"Within the last year, word of mouth has created an informal network. This has made more SAS doctors aware of the support provided by the Vascular Society – and my work easier."

[Read More →](#)



[SAS Get Involved - Royal College of Surgeons of England \(rcseng.ac.uk\)](https://www.rcseng.ac.uk)

Vacancy – Joint SAS/LED lead role

Tatiana has decided to step down from her lead role. The Council have formally expressed our thanks to Tatiana for all that she has achieved. An advert is out for this post and members working in SAS or Locally employed doctor roles are encouraged to apply.

CESR Process

A new CESR process will be effective from 30th November 2023 with the standard for achieving CESR changing from equivalence to that of knowledge, skills and experience required for practicing as an eligible specialist in the UK. This change is expected to increase the number of CESR applicants.

In Memoriam



The Vascular Society notes the passing this month of **Professor Roger Greenhalgh** (6.10.23 aged 82 years) and **Simon Lau** (1.10.23 aged 32 years).

Prof Greenhalgh is a past President, retired Professor of Surgery at Charing Cross, led the UK Small Aneurysm Trial (UKSAT) and EVAR Trials (EVAR 1 & 2), and founded the Charing Cross International Vascular Symposium.



Simon studied at King's College London, then his career has spanned the United Kingdom via Wales, Plymouth, Glasgow, Scunthorpe, and Sheffield.

Simon was in his ST4 vascular surgery year in Sheffield when he became ill.

Your views matter to us

With **Jon Boyle** and **Rachel Bell** as GIRFT leads and **Prof Rob Sayers** chairing the Vascular CRG Vascular Surgery has good representation within NHS England decision making. There is similar representation within the devolved nations. It is essential that our voice is heard at a national level and leads into healthcare strategy and planning for urgent care.

VS council and committee members want to hear your concerns and suggestions for improvement. The success of a medical professional society is that it serves the needs of both patients and members. We all recognise the significant challenges on members with pressure on waiting lists, industrial action, administrative support and job vacancies. Please let us know when help is needed and please share any initiatives that have had a positive impact.

Engagement survey

The Society will soon be launching an engagement survey. We want to hear from members and non-members on their view of the VS and the changes needed for it to feel like their professional home. **Please look out for the survey launch and encourage colleagues to engage.**

