

**JCST  
35 - 43 Lincoln's Inn Fields  
LONDON  
WC2A 3PE**

**6 June 2010**

**Dear Mr Munsch,**

ASiT is concerned to read the recent Medical Programme Board paper (enclosed) regarding the progression from core into higher specialty surgical training.

There appears to be a new bulge rapidly developing, with several hundred core trainees failing to progress into higher surgical training each year.

In 2010 the overall likelihood of progressing to ST3 from a CST post is approximately 36%, varying according to specialty. This is largely unchanged from 2007, and equates to more than 500 core surgical trainees with no higher training place in August 2010.

The factors behind this are clearly multifactorial. Progression into higher surgical training was never easy, and should remain competitive. Nonetheless, we are concerned that post-MMC trainees still have little chance (and unrealistic expectations) of continuing into higher surgical training.

Core trainees are investing more than ever into their training, with JCST fees in addition to the courses and exams now being taken from Foundation Year 1 onwards. We are therefore expecting considerable disquiet from the growing numbers who are unable to progress, despite meeting all necessary curricular objectives.

We will be publicising the current figures to ASiT members this week in order to keep them informed of the situation in surgical training.

We would like to invite the JCST to comment on this issue on behalf of the SACs, together with the actions being taken to address this, and the timeline for these.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Ed Fitzgerald, Past-President**

**Charlie Giddings, President**