



# Health Education England

## **National Spine Fellowship opportunity**

Within the West Yorkshire Locality there are two spinal surgery units with established reputations for the range of their practice and the quality of their training.

In Leeds, at Leeds General Infirmary, there is an established orthopaedic spinal unit within the Academic Unit of Orthopaedic Surgery dealing with a full elective, acute, adult and paediatric orthopaedic spinal surgery service. The unit has an international reputation, in terms of surgical expertise and research into spinal deformity and spinal trauma.

Also at Leeds General Infirmary, the regional neurosurgical unit provides a service to the whole of Yorkshire and has an international reputation for cervical and lumbar microsurgery and treatment of complex cervico-thoracic disorders.

The West Yorkshire Locality has a population of almost 5 million people, including a diverse mixture of social and racial groups in both urban and rural areas. Accordingly, the range of spinal conditions that present to the two regional spinal units is extremely wide. In particular, the multi-cultural nature of the population is reflected in the large numbers of spinal infections and congenital abnormalities presenting to the spinal surgery unit.

The close cooperation between the orthopaedic spinal unit and the neurosurgical spinal unit ensures an effective coordination of spinal services across the city and will provide similar coordination of training for a sub-specialty specialist trainee.

## **Spinal Surgery Unit at Leeds General Infirmary**

During the past twenty-five years, the University unit has developed a major spinal service attracting patients from a wide area. In recent years, only 40% of the patients treated within the units came from the Leeds conurbation, with 40% arising from the remainder of the Yorkshire Locality and 20% representing referrals from across the UK and beyond.

The department has an international reputation for the treatment of adult and paediatric spinal deformities. Mr R A Dunsmuir, Mr A S Rao, Mr Almas Khan, Mr Nigel Gummerson, Mr Loughenbury, Mr Rudol and Mr Borse are the seven full-time Orthopaedic spinal surgeons in the department. The Unit also comprises of neurosurgical spinal surgeons undertaking a variety of complex spinal procedures. Mr Pal, Mr S Selvanathan, Mr Chris Kellett and Mr P Sinha form the team for neurosurgical spinal surgery.

Although simple procedures such as microdiscectomy are commonly performed, the vast majority of procedures are more complex and include single stage and two-stage scoliosis surgery, and single and multiple stage procedures for tumour, infection and trauma. There is a strong emphasis on anterior spinal procedures and a substantial number of subsidiary procedures including costoplasty and metalwork removal. The Unit provides a major role for Leeds and Yorkshire in terms of adult reconstructive low back surgery, including instrumented stabilisation of spondylolisthesis and degenerative spinal disease. In addition to the busy schedule of elective surgery, there is also an emergency workload that results in acute spinal surgery being performed on an almost daily basis.



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The hospital has strong support from allied departments, and in particular the radiology department under the guidance of Dr J Rankine, Dr Richard Fawcett and Dr E Rowbotham. The radiology facilities of the department include, in addition to the usual services, a dedicated musculo-skeletal CT scanner with 3D reconstruction facilities and an MRI scanner.

The Department of Anaesthesia has a number of Consultant Anaesthetists who have a specialist interest in adult and paediatric spinal anaesthesia. Intensive care facilities under their direction are freely available and in addition to this the orthopaedic unit has its own six-bed high dependency unit to which most spinal surgery patients are returned post-operatively. Within the University Department of Anaesthesia, a major interest in chronic pain management is maintained with an active clinic. The physical proximity of this department to the Academic Unit of Orthopaedics has encouraged close cooperation between the two departments.

The University Unit carries a major undergraduate and postgraduate teaching load, and training and experience would be available in these skills and would be encouraged.

The Unit maintains an extensive collection of teaching materials and trainees would be encouraged to develop their own teaching collections with the assistance of the Medical Illustration Department. Facilities are available for the computer generation of slides using a variety of software packages, and a dedicated image capture and digitising system.

It is intended that experience in the Academic Unit should provide a six-month module undertaken by all holders of the post.

There is free exchange of patients between both units and combined procedures between orthopaedics and neurosurgery are undertaken on a regular basis. This inter-hospital cooperation has been greatly strengthened since, and as a result of, the establishment of the specialty fellowship in spinal surgery.

### **Research**

The facilities of the University Unit are extensive with full laboratory and technical support, access to excellent animal facilities and extensive availability of mainframe and micro-computers including CD Rom literature search facilities. The department maintains its own extensive library of orthopaedic and spinal literature. In addition, facilities at St James's University Hospital library (which is affiliated to the libraries of Leeds University and the main University libraries) are available. The holder of the post will be encouraged to take part in the research programme of both the orthopaedic department and the neurosurgical departments. If required, a period of full-time research would be available as one module of the training programme. The Academic Unit includes a full-time non-clinical Senior Lecturer in Bioengineering, who together with colleagues in allied departments such as Mechanical Engineering, Medical Physics, Statistics and Applied Mathematics, coordinates interdisciplinary research.

The scheme is intended to be flexible and further modules may be created to allow the needs of the holder to be met by local facilities.



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### **Further Information**

This post is recognised for specialist training and accreditation. The salary will be in accordance with specialist training scales. It is anticipated that holders of this post will be allowed leave of absence from their substantive specialist training appointment, for a period of up to one year.

Candidates are encouraged to visit each of the units. Initial enquires should be made to Mr Abhay Rao, telephone 0113 3923569.

These arrangements are fully supported by the BMA.