

The search for little SMEs

As a paediatric trainee, near to collection of my prized certificate of completion of training from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, I find myself a hidden resource within the Defence Medical Services (DMS) and recently I have begun to feel that I am not alone. As a reservist, my job title of specialty trainee year 8 in paediatric

emergency medicine is found confusing to many, and troublesome to fit into a standard personal identification device.

I have no issues adapting, but I believe that there is a large resource of paediatric skills and knowledge held by hidden paediatricians, such as myself, and among many others within the DMS: by anaesthetists working in paediatric centres, general surgeons with dedicated paediatric lists, nurses working in mixed adult/child emergency departments, orthopaedic surgeons with significant paediatric training, physiotherapists with paediatric qualifications, dentists working in child directed surgeries to name but a few. Many of course will be reservists.

I am aiming to highlight the strength of the resource the DMS has in paediatrics and catalogue the baseline of paediatric expertise. Knowledge of these paediatric subject matter experts (SMEs) could then be used to enhance the military medical capability as we prepare for contingency operations. I recognise that our primary role is the provision of medical care to our

Service personnel and that we must be clinically current within a field that ensures we are capable of providing utility to this traditional cohort, but in this time of ever increasing change we must be able to adapt our skills and make the most of the resources that already exist. I can think of few scenarios where a future medical deployment will not involve the management of paediatric patients. Once identified, these SMEs could work towards coordinated paediatric clinical guidelines for operations, equipment procurement and training for all UK Military personnel.

If you feel you, or someone you know, has paediatric skills or experience please forward your name, contact details, current role and the extent of your paediatric experience and/or qualifications. Furthermore, I am currently working towards a military paediatrics conference in the spring of 2014, with the aim of formulating a plan for future development of paediatrics within the British Military. If you feel such an event would appeal to

you, and especially if you feel you would be able to contribute, please get in touch. I am interested in hearing from personnel from all three Services and all medical, nursing and allied specialities.

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