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- > Deep brain stimulation for intractable trigeminal autonomic cephalalgias – www.nice.org.uk/IPG381
 - > Hand allotransplantation – www.nice.org.uk/IPG383
 - > Percutaneous retroperitoneal endoscopic necrosectomy – www.nice.org.uk/IPG384
 - > Laser correction of refractive error following non-refractive ophthalmic surgery – www.nice.org.uk/IPG385
 - > Transaxial interbody lumbosacral fusion – www.nice.org.uk/IPG387
 - > Endovascular stent-grafting of popliteal aneurysms – www.nice.org.uk/IPG390
 - > Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation for severe acute respiratory failure in adults – www.nice.org.uk/IPG391
 - > Endoscopic radiofrequency therapy of the anal sphincter for faecal incontinence – www.nice.org.uk/IPG393
 - > External aortic root support in Marfan syndrome – www.nice.org.uk/IPG394
 - > Percutaneous tibial nerve stimulation (PTNS) for faecal incontinence – www.nice.org.uk/IPG395
 - > Trabeculotomy ab interno for open angle glaucoma – www.nice.org.uk/IPG397
 - > Trabecular stent bypass micro-surgery for open angle glaucoma – www.nice.org.uk/IPG396
 - > Endoscopic radical inguinal lymphadenectomy – www.nice.org.uk/IPG398
 - > Percutaneous endoscopic catheter laser balloon pulmonary vein isolation for atrial fibrillation – www.nice.org.uk/IPG399
 - > Thoracoscopic exclusion of the left atrial appendage in atrial fibrillation (with or without other cardiac surgery) for the prevention of thromboembolism – www.nice.org.uk/IPG400
 - > Percutaneous cryotherapy for renal tumours – www.nice.org.uk/IPG402
 - > Open femoro-acetabular surgery for hip impingement syndrome – www.nice.org.uk/IPG403
 - > Endoluminal gastroplication for gastro-oesophageal reflux disease – www.nice.org.uk/IPG404
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Fellowships and scholarships at NICE

PETER LITTLEJOHNS

Clinical and Public Health Director, NICE

NICE is committed to offering opportunities for frontline health professionals to engage in the development of its guidance and share examples of best practice; this is so that we can help those working for the NHS deliver the highest possible quality of care that is evidence-based and cost-effective.

NICE already relies on surgeons and other clinicians to join the various committees that develop guidance on NICE's behalf, so that they can input specialist expertise. More locally, clinicians can also submit success stories of how they have put NICE guidance into practice to our shared learning database. By working closely with health professionals, NICE can learn from them and publish guidance that reflects best clinical practice and so be of the greatest benefit to patients.

NICE recognises that motivated and influential clinicians across the NHS deliver high-quality healthcare day to day within their local communities. For the last two years NICE has awarded fellowships and scholarships to a select number of these exceptional health and social care professionals who are actively involved in improving the quality of care locally or nationally within their profession by supporting the principles that underpin NICE's work.

The fellowships and scholarships are marks of professional distinction as they recognise achievement and promise. The positions carry great importance as the fellows and scholars are ambassadors for NICE, each using their experi-

ence and networks to advise their professional peers and support the implementation of NICE's guidance and quality standards, where appropriate. They also promote the wider benefits of high-quality research and evidence-based care.

NICE seeks to support the continuing professional development of those recruited into the programme; such as through one-to-one mentoring, structured workshops and opportunities to network with likeminded colleagues and share examples of good practice. NICE is currently recruiting for its third intake of fellows and scholars and is interested in receiving applications from surgeons.

NICE fellowships

NICE fellowships are awarded to senior health and social care professionals for fixed terms of three years. Given the responsibility that comes with this position, within medicine NICE usually awards its fellowships to medical directors or those at consultant level.

The fellows undertake a broad range of activities to maintain an ongoing dialogue between NICE and frontline staff. This can include promoting the latest guidance among their peers relevant to their speciality, helping their patients understand the importance of NICE and how the organisation works and highlighting any barriers to implementation so that they can be addressed appropriately. They can also be a point of contact between NICE and their professional

bodies, such as the Royal College of Surgeons. For instance, when NICE invites its stakeholders to comment on its draft recommendations, the fellows can be a useful point of contact locally and can help to engage their relevant professional bodies in the consultation processes, particularly when there may be differing opinions regarding best clinical practice. Other fellowship activities can include attending conferences, education and training, policy development, commissioning, clinical audit and research.

NICE fellows typically devote around one day a month for their activities, alongside their existing professional responsibilities. Within medicine, NICE has appointed fellows across a broad range of specialties, including ENT, obstetrics, acute medicine, paediatrics, radiology, psychiatry and general practice.

Nigel Beasley is a NICE fellow, ENT consultant and Deputy Medical Director of Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

'In 2009 I was asked to take on responsibility for the implementation of NICE guidance across my trust. A three-year fellowship with NICE seemed the ideal opportunity to learn about how guidance is produced and the criteria by which NICE's independent experts judge the value of new treatments.'

'I started in March with an introduction to NICE methodology and in June we discussed health economic evaluation. As a NICE fellow, my aim is to create a series of measures that will track patients along evidence-based clinical pathways, highlight unwanted variation and evaluate patient outcomes. I have also started working with speciality associations, commissioners, clinical commissioning groups and patients to prioritise key areas for evaluation.'

'The fellowship has allowed me to meet likeminded and enthusiastic individuals across healthcare communities and share ideas with a member of NICE's senior management team. I have recently joined NICE's commissioning outcomes advisory group and hope that my contribution from a surgical perspective will add to others already linked to NICE.'

NICE scholarships

While NICE awards fellowships to senior health and social care professionals who have made a demonstrable impact on improving the quality of care locally, the institute is also keen to engage with more junior clinicians and recognise what they have achieved towards promoting and delivering high-quality care.

NICE awards scholarships to a select number of qualified health professionals every year, who are in their advanced training. Within medicine, these clinicians are typically specialist registrars who undertake research projects as part of their development. These projects can cover a wide range of topics that meet an identified local need around care excellence, for example, the implementation of NICE guidance, clinical audit, cost-effectiveness and affordability research, patient safety, patient experience, and quality and productivity.

Each scholar's project supports his or her professional development and is agreed with employing organisations

and training supervisors beforehand. Scholars typically devote around one day a week for their activities over the 12 months that they are in post, alongside their existing professional responsibilities.

Although scholarships are more project-based than fellowships, those appointed similarly champion the institute among their peers, for instance, by promoting the principles and recommendations of NICE guidance where appropriate and through teaching activities.

NICE has awarded scholarships to professionals across a number of medical disciplines, including oncology, radiology, nephrology, anaesthesia, paediatric emergency medicine and surgery.

Riaz Agha is a former NICE scholar and Core Surgical Trainee at Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

'In late 2009, while developing a project that looked at standardised metrics for national surgical surveillance, I saw the adverts for NICE scholarships and so jumped at the chance to give my research a much-needed boost. Since becoming a NICE scholar my project has flourished. Not only did the scholarship give me access to a mentor and a variety of experts but my research gained the credibility of being supported and endorsed by a nationally recognised and well-respected institution. This helped me to develop broader relationships and links with Dr Foster, the National Patient Safety Agency, Hospital Episode Statistics and others.'

'My achievement was recognised by my trust with interviews and press releases courtesy of the PR department and my trust's Chief Executive invited me to group meetings on leadership and management issues. During my scholarship NICE also allowed me to observe a guideline development group meeting for peripheral arterial disease and I attended workshops on health economics and evidence-based medicine. I was introduced to NHS Evidence for which I became an advisor; I attended NICE's annual conference last May and even a NICE board meeting where I had the opportunity to present my work in progress, to meet and network with other scholars and fellows, as well as board members.'

'The scholarship served as an excellent introduction to NICE and its people. To date I am the only surgeon to have been appointed a scholar so I would strongly recommend surgeons apply for this fantastic opportunity.'

Interested in applying?

Surgeons and other health or social care professionals wishing to play a greater role in promoting and delivering clinically and cost-effective practice have until Friday 25 November apply for NICE's fellowships and scholarships. The programme offers a unique opportunity to work with NICE and to make real changes to how healthcare is delivered at a local level. Unlike other fellowship and scholarship schemes, clinicians can nominate themselves for these positions. To find out more about how to apply and about the current appointees, please visit <www.nice.org.uk/fellowsandscholars>.