

Surgeon Profile Series

Mr Ed Sideso

James McVeigh¹

¹Medical Sciences Division, University of Oxford, UK



Lead in vascular surgery at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) NHS Foundation Trust, Mr Ed Sideso discusses the importance of viewing all clinical exposure as an opportunity to learn and why treating patients is a privilege for him.

Born in Lagos, Nigeria, Mr Sideso was the youngest of three boys and went to boarding school in the UK from the age of eight. He had always been interested in the sciences leading to him initially completing a degree in biomedical sciences at King's College London before studying medicine at the Royal Free. This pursuit of a career in medicine came about through his desire to utilise the science that he had learnt in a more practical way, which coupled with "the privilege of helping patients at their time of need when they are most vulnerable," was a powerful prospect.

He relished anatomy at medical school, stating that learning through understanding mechanisms and processes was always more enjoyable than learning from lists and mnemonics. Being a top anatomy student at the Royal Free London, he recalls being awarded a day out at the Royal College of Surgeons of England, where he was given a tour of the museum and anatomy labs, before listening to talks from eminent surgeons. After such an experience, he states that he would have needed strong persuasion to choose an alternative career pathway from surgery. His decision to pursue a surgical career was cemented as a house officer, where encouragement from seniors allowed him to gain valuable experience in hepato-pancreato-biliary surgery, transplantation and urology.

In 2004, he was awarded a number on the general

surgical registrar rotation in Oxford, during which he gained experience in general surgery, transplant and vascular surgery. Finding vascular surgery the most interesting, he took on a period of research with the Nuffield Department of Medicine for nearly three years, studying both biochemical and radiological markers of stroke in patients with carotid disease.

The step-up to consultant is widely considered to be a significant challenge in a career in clinical practice. Mr Sideso remarks about his experience of this step-up as a result of one of his consultant colleagues fracturing their ankle. Before he could make any preparations, he was immediately thrown in to cover the consultant on-call weekend for the Thames Valley. "The first case was an acute upper limb ischaemia for a patient who fell asleep over a gate and developed a brachial artery occlusion. I went on to fix it using a reverse saphenous vein graft with great success... This was my first operation as a consultant, it was an eye opener. You are protected as a trainee, even as a senior registrar, but you become exposed as a consultant. You have to own every decision you make."

Mr Sideso has spent some time abroad as a consultant gathering experience. In 2012, he was awarded the Endovascular Fellowship in Munster, Germany, where he learnt how to perform endovascular aneurysm repairs. "In six months, I got the experience that would have taken 18 months in the UK." He then later spent six weeks in the USA at the Cleveland Clinic, to better understand more complex endovascular aortic techniques, which he has since used to head up the vascular complex aortic team in OUH.

Not being one for regrets, he is glad for every experience that he has had. His advice to any medical undergraduate or trainee is "every clinical exposure is a learning experience. Once you have learnt something, it cannot be taken away from you. Occasionally things that appear to be a waste of time, may well be invaluable in the future." While he still uses textbooks such as Rutherford's Atlas of Vascular Surgery, which he has had since his days as a senior house officer, Mr Sideso remarks "there is no substitute for turning up and getting involved." He uses this mantra in his teaching, preferring an interactive approach to more conventional, didactic methods, where he encourages trainees and undergraduates to find answers to questions independently ensuring understanding rather than rote learning. It is the process of working through

problems and developing an understanding that is truly valuable.

Mr Sideso states that his greatest achievement is being part of a strong team in vascular surgery, which translates to outcomes that are second to none. "It is a team process and making that team function is what provides success." Ensuring that the team is "cohesive" and delivers their best is what he is most proud of.