

Nadine Coull

BY UROLOGY NEWS

We were delighted to chat to Nadine Coull, the new President of the Royal Society of Medicine Section of Urology about her career so far and aims for the year ahead.



Nadine Coull,

Can you tell us a little bit about what led you into the field of urology and what have been the highlights so far?

I always wanted to be a surgeon, and I liked urology because I enjoyed the broad variation of patients referred to a general urology service. Most surgical specialities at the time were becoming very subspecialist, but the variety of urology kept me on my toes. And although within urology we have of course, subspecialised, we still retain that general interest. And I think the highlight has to be my election to the role of President of the Urology Section of the Royal Society of Medicine which is a huge honour.

Who has inspired you in your career and why?

I have been fortunate to be trained by some amazing people and I can honestly say I've learned from all of them. The person who has probably had the most impact on me has been Tim O'Brien, who instilled in me the sense of always doing the single best thing for the patient – from definitive decision-making and surgery, to helping them get through to the right place on the telephone if they happen to call the wrong place and I pick up the phone.

What has been the best piece of advice that you have received in your career and what advice would you offer to those following in your footsteps?

Gosh, where to start with this?! So many things:

- "The enemy of good is better." If you've finished an operation, you've finished. Don't be tempted to just put in an extra stitch or take one more loop. Because sure as night follows day, that will be the one that bleeds!
- "You're not responsible for the pathology." All you can do is your best for your patients. But pathology is pathology, and you can't always reverse it.
- "It's ok to show a bit of emotion." You're only human, and if you stop caring, you probably need to think about a different path!

In terms of advice, I would say 'be flexible'. It's perfectly OK to have a clear idea in your head about what you want to be, where you want to work – but life is complex, and sometimes the path you end up on is different to the one you thought you would take. It's important to keep an open mind, and not close yourself off to opportunities that present themselves, just because they don't fit in with your ideal. I don't want to use the cliché 'everything happens for a reason' ... but often it does!

What one paper or book would you recommend every urologist should read?

Everyone should read the paper 'Alternative to prophylactic antibiotics for the treatment of recurrent urinary tract infections in women: multicentre, open label, randomised, non-inferiority trial' published earlier this year in the BMJ (<https://www.bmj.com/content/376/bmj-2021-0068229>).

Do you think more needs to be done to make urology, and other surgical specialties, more inclusive?

I think it is a natural progression. There is more representation from women in leadership positions within urology these days, and more awareness now around diversity and we are certainly more consciously planning with that in mind; for example, the avoidance of 'manels'. But we do have to be careful that we don't create another marginalised group when what we are striving for is inclusivity. I am very clear that whether we are talking about speakers or interview candidates, that we have the best person for that position, not someone who has been chosen because they have a protected characteristic.

You have just taken on the position of President of the RSM Urology Section – many congratulations! What would you like to achieve during your time in the role?

Thank you! I'm very excited for the year ahead. What I would like to achieve for the section has in part been covered already – I'd like to see us be more inclusive with our speakers and our audience, from a regional perspective as well as from a clinical

perspective – recognising that holistic urological care involves a multi-professional approach, backed up by effective leadership. I really wanted to use my year to support urological training, to make colleagues aware of some of the more holistic aspects of care, and to demystify medical management.

I have always been very proud that urology has always been at the forefront of surgical development, so I am keen that we reflect that by showcasing some of the ground-breaking work being developed in translational research.

I am also really keen to reintroduce face to face meetings, and I'm delighted that I've had such support from the Dean of the RSM in this. Virtual working was a necessity at one point, and whilst it's very convenient, it really doesn't compare to the energy and enthusiasm of face-to-face interaction, so I'm keen to promote this as much as possible, although not, of course, to the exclusion of regional colleagues who would find it difficult to travel.

Would you encourage your colleagues to get involved with the RSM?

Absolutely. It has been a very positive influence on my career. And like most things, you don't realise just how good it is until you are a

part of it – it's got the most amazing library and they organise some fantastic teaching with key opinion leaders from around the world. We are hugely welcoming and supportive to trainees, and it's a great, friendly environment for them to present in.

Do you enjoy being involved in training newer members of the profession?

Of course – they are the future. And there is honestly nothing better than watching a trainee improve week by week – taking them from being hesitant and anxious to being confident and competent. It's a very rewarding experience.

And finally, if you have any spare time, how do you like to relax?

I'm a single mum and I work full-time, so I don't have to worry about spare time! Joking aside – I love to cook and entertain, I'm a very social person.

Many thanks for your time!

Visit <https://www.rsm.ac.uk/sections/urology-section> for further information.