

## **Diversity in Trauma and Orthopaedics: A Survey of Prospective Trauma and Orthopaedics Surgeons in the United Kingdom**

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Diverse teams perform better. Trauma and orthopaedic surgery has historically been associated with the “old boys club” mentality. This is particularly alarming as it is the second largest surgical specialty contributing 28% of the consultant surgical workforce (9)(10). NHS digital data from 2020 revealed that the specialty has the lowest representation of females across all grades (7% consultant and 19% specialist registrar) when compared to all other surgical specialties. The aim of this study was to determine the importance of diversity in trauma and orthopaedics and how to improve diversity.

**METHODS:** This is a prospective, qualitative cohort study. An 18-item questionnaire was designed and disseminated to all delegates registering for a free orthopaedic webinar teaching series via email and social media. Inclusion criteria for this study were responses from anyone who was not in higher specialty training and with an interest in pursuing an orthopaedic career.

**RESULTS:** Of the 307 survey responses, 175 met the inclusion criteria. Of which, there were 61 (34.9%) females and 114 (65.1%) males. On a Likert scale of 1 (not diverse) - 10 (extremely diverse), participants gave orthopaedics an average score of  $5.2 \pm 1.3$ , with regard to diversity. Ninety-six (55%) participants felt that orthopaedics had a welcoming environment for members of all races, genders, beliefs, and sexual orientations. However, 96 (55%) did not think the orthopaedic field was representative of the community in which it provides care for. A total of 138 (78.9%) thought orthopaedics should prioritize inclusion of women and underrepresented minorities in selection of leadership and faculty positions. Furthermore, 109 (62.3) thought orthopaedics should require a certain number or percentage of diverse individuals as part of leadership and faculty positions.

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:**

Diversity is a key aspect of a healthy and happy society. Prospective surgeons recognize that there is limited diversity within orthopaedics. Key stakeholders such as medical schools, royal colleges, post-graduate training programs should recognize the importance of diversity and continue to enable and encourage a diverse working force.