

Kevin Windebank Bio 2020



Since joining the Board of OMA I have really enjoyed revisiting my time in Oxford. I followed my brother Tony to St Catherine's and as he started medicine after completing a four year biochemistry degree we ended up only a year apart on the course. He was the serious graduate student and I was the less serious undergraduate.

I thoroughly enjoyed clinical medicine at the Radcliffe Infirmary and after house jobs with Truelove, Beilin and Burke and Theo Schofield in Bath, I left to follow a path to surgery possibly even neurosurgery. However, during my year as a "dem and trauma" SHO, I realised surgery was not for me, so followed a long term plan to travel to Australia and work in Sydney for the GP deputising service. It was late at night on the Parramatta highway when I had my Damascus moment. A call came through to visit a family whose two year old son was unwell. Instead of a feeling of "more work", I felt excited and found myself really enjoying the consultation. I returned to England and began paediatric training in Southampton.

In 1982 I returned to Oxford and spent four happy years, initially working in the neonatal unit and then on to the general paediatric wards. At this point in time children with cancer were starting to be treated with increasingly aggressive chemotherapy and many were

surviving. It was whilst looking after these children with Martin Moncrieff and Pauline Emerson that I realised this was the area where I wanted to train. As there was no formal training available in the UK in 1986 I successfully applied and was selected for a three year fellowship in Paediatric Oncology and Haematology at the Mayo Clinic. Taking the ECFMG exam ten years post qualification was an interesting experience, especially relearning basic anatomy and pharmacology.

In 1989 I returned to the UK and started working in Newcastle upon Tyne with Sir Alan Craft. During the following 25 years I developed my clinical interest in lymphomas, acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and Langerhans Cell Histiocytosis (published Chapters in The Oxford Handbook of Paediatric Oncology). My non-clinical research interests included cloning and studying human Natural Killer Cells. I was the Course Director for Child Health at Newcastle University and worked closely with the Teenage Cancer Trust to set up a dedicated unit at the Royal Victoria infirmary, an experience helped by having many rebellious teenagers of my own. Latterly, I served for five years as the RCPCH Officer for Examinations and remain a council member as the representative for Senior Members and Fellows. Shortly after retirement I was persuaded to join the commissioning service for Cumbria and was the Secondary Care Doctor on the Governing Body of the North Cumbria CCG until this year. It is an exciting time in the NHS, especially in Cumbria where we have gone from chronic underperformance to one of the leading Integrated Health and Social Care Systems.