

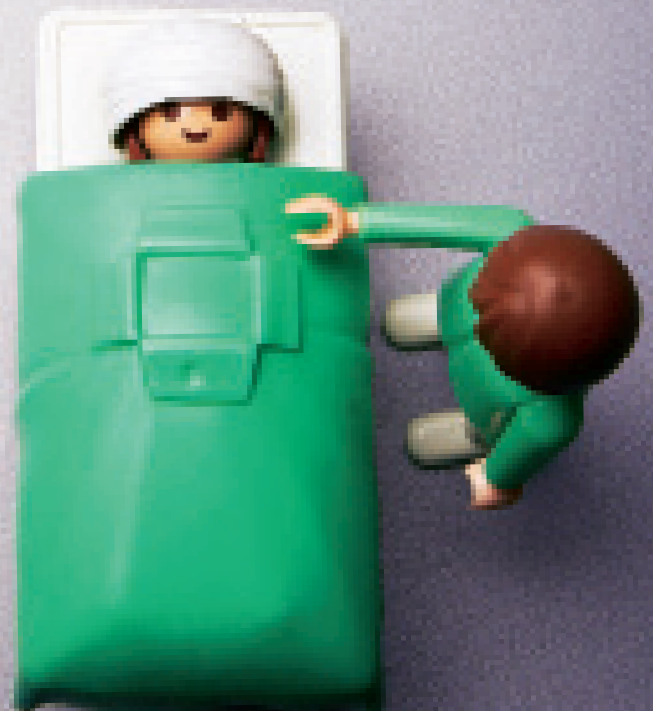
# Britain's TOP DOCTORS

Dr Mark Porter introduces our special issue

British doctors have been at the vanguard of medical science for more than two centuries, and our hospitals and universities are home to some of the brightest minds in the business. When it comes to medicine, the best in Britain is still the best in the world.

There has never been a definitive list of the UK's leading specialists, and there probably never will be. Deciding whether a specialist is at the top of his or her game isn't just about their academic prowess, diagnostic skills or clinical outcomes – it's also about more subjective qualities such as empathy, dedication and drive. And what works well for one patient can be awkward for another.

But there are few things more important than having a good doctor, and there has ▶



never been as much opportunity to choose which specialist you see. People who have gone private will be used to consulting whoever they want, but in recent years choice has become an increasingly important part of the NHS, too. But that ability to choose is useless unless you have the knowledge to make the right decision.

At the moment, patients simply don't have the information required to make fully informed decisions about where to go to have their hip operation or gall bladder removed. The NHS Choose and Book system offers patients a variety of different specialists and hospitals, but, in my experience, decisions are all too often made on the basis of geography – which hospital is closest? Or the patient simply says: “Where would you go, Doc?”

Asking your GP is very sensible. They should know who the best specialists are in their locality, and whom to avoid. But good regional knowledge is of little benefit when looking at a national picture, and this is where our list may help.

Over the past six months, a team of *Times* researchers asked charities, specialists and professional bodies and associations to come up with a list of leaders in their particular field. Our first

---

## Being at the top isn't just about academic prowess, but more subjective qualities

---

discovery was that if you asked ten different people, you got ten different answers, such is the depth of expertise at the top of every area. But there are some names that appeared on everyone's lists and it is these specialists that we have recommended. From the fertility specialist responsible for the first “breast cancer gene-free” baby to the pioneering heart transplant surgeon who hates the sight of blood, from the anaesthetist who braves the front lines of Afghanistan to the doctor who performed the first laser surgery in the womb, they are not just extraordinary doctors, but extraordinary people.

The list is by no means exhaustive. There are lots of doctors who are regarded as key leaders in their fields who aren't featured simply because there isn't room, and there are some specialities that we haven't even covered. Just because your consultant doesn't appear on this list does not mean that he or she isn't world-class – all we can say is, if they do feature, then you are likely to be in the right hands.

*Dr Mark Porter is medical correspondent of The Times and a practising GP in South Gloucestershire.*

*Can't find your favourite doctor? Go to [thetimes.co.uk/magazine](http://thetimes.co.uk/magazine) – we want to hear who you think should be on the list*

## Who contributed to our top doctor guide

### **NHS Trusts (NHST) and Foundation Trusts (FT)**

Addenbrooke's NHST; Alder Hey Children's FT; Basingstoke and North Hampshire FT; Birmingham Heartlands & Solihull NHST; Central Manchester University Hospitals FT; Chelsea and Westminster FT; Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology FT; Great Ormond Street NHST; Guy's and St Thomas' FT; Heart of England FT; Imperial College NHST; James Cook University Hospital; King's College FT; Leeds Teaching NHST; Oxford Radcliffe NHST; Lothian; Mile End; Moorfields Eye FT; Nottingham University Hospitals NHST; Papworth FT; Queen Victoria FT; Royal Brompton & Harefield FT; Royal Free Hampstead NHST; Royal National Orthopaedic NHST; Royal Orthopaedic Birmingham FT; Southampton General; St Bart's NHST; St George's NHST; University College London FT; University Hospitals Birmingham FT; University Hospitals Bristol FT; University Hospitals of Leicester NHST; Walton Centre FT; plus leading universities and private hospitals throughout the UK.

### **Charities, organisations and professional bodies**

Alzheimer's Society; Association of British Neurologists; Asthma UK; Beating Bowel Cancer; Breakthrough Breast Cancer; Breast Cancer Care; British Acupuncture Council; British Association for Sexual Health and HIV; British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons; British Association of Dermatologists; British Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons;

British Association of Urological Surgeons; British Dietetics Association; British Elbow and Shoulder Society; British Fertility Society; British Heart Foundation; British Lung Foundation; British Medical Acupuncture Society; British Medical Journal; British Nutrition Foundation; British Orthopaedic Association; British Osteopathic Association; British Sleep Society; British Society for Rheumatology; British Society of Gastroenterology; British Thoracic Society; Cancer Research UK; Centre for Reproductive and Genetic Health; College of Chiropractors; College of Emergency Medicine; Diabetes UK; General Chiropractic Council; Harley Medical Group; Harris Birthright Research Centre; Institute of Psychiatry; Journal of Laryngology & Otolaryngology; London Allergy Clinic; London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games; Macmillan Cancer Support; Macular Disease Society; Ministry of Defence; Oxford Osteopaths; Pelican Cancer Foundation; Premier Podiatry; Royal College of Anaesthetists; Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists; Royal College of Ophthalmologists; Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health; Royal College of Physicians; Royal College of Psychiatrists; Royal College of Radiologists; Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh; Royal College of Surgeons of England; Royal Opera House; Society for Cardiothoracic Surgery; Society for Endocrinology; Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists.

# Our A-Z of Britain's top doctors

*From A&E to Urology, a comprehensive guide to the country's medical experts*

## ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY

### Jonathan Bengier

Professor of Emergency Care at the University of the West of England and consultant in emergency medicine at University Hospitals Bristol. Helped establish the Great Western Air Ambulance in 2007, which has since treated more than 5,000 patients, and now acts as its medical adviser. Has been awarded 22 research grants totalling more than £7 million, including 3 to improve ambulance services for the 2012 Olympics.

### Matthew Cooke

Professor of Emergency Medicine at the University of Warwick, involved in teaching, research and setting national emergency guidelines. Formerly directed the UK ambulance service, co-ordinated the national emergency medicine library and acted as clinical lead for the Darzi Review of the NHS. Now National Clinical Director for Urgent and Emergency Care for the Department of Health.

### John Heyworth

Consultant in the emergency department at Southampton General Hospital and President of the College of Emergency Medicine, responsible for overseeing clinical standards, training, examinations, safety and quality. Previously president of the British Association for Emergency Medicine and Editor of the *Journal of Accident & Emergency Medicine*.

### Kevin Mackway-Jones

Professor of Emergency Medicine at Manchester Metropolitan, Medical Director of the North West Ambulance Service and co-editor of *Emergency Medicine Journal*. One of the UK's foremost emergency experts, whose information website, BestBETs, has become an invaluable tool for the staff of emergency centres throughout the UK.

### Neil McGuire

Currently the Defence Consultant Adviser in Anaesthesia, Pain and Critical Care to the Surgeon General, having overseen the work of more than 200 anaesthetists in the Armed Forces. Led the formation of the Royal Air Force Critical Care Air Support Teams and has personally been involved in the evacuation of more than 400 critically ill patients from war zones, resulting in several high-profile awards.

## ALLERGIES

### Roger Aldridge

Clinical Lead of Dermatology at the Royal

Infirmery, Edinburgh, having conducted more than two decades of research on allergies, with a focus on nail disease and occupational skin disorders.

### Andrew Clark

Head of the Paediatric Allergy Unit at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge. Earlier this year announced the results of a trial that should offer protection to children with peanut allergy, and currently conducting a larger, more wide-reaching study on food allergy. Lectures, writes and advises on childhood allergies for several national and international bodies.

### Gideon Lack

Leading international specialist on paediatric allergies, Head of the Paediatric Allergy Service at St Thomas' and Professor of Paediatric Allergy at King's College London. Research focuses on the relationship between food allergies, eczema and asthma; this year received the William Frankland Award for work on peanut allergies.

### John Warner

Former professor of child health at the University of Southampton and now Professor of Paediatrics at St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College. Primary research has focused on the early-life origins of asthma and related allergic disorders. Has published more than 300 papers, is Editor-in-Chief of *Paediatric Allergy and Immunology*, and is chairman of the paediatric section of the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

## ANAESTHESIA

### Michael Durkin

Consultant anaesthetist for the NHS South West and Medical Director of the South West Strategic Health Authority. Campaigns for better patient safety and has taught at the University of Bristol and Yale School of Medicine. Recently received a gold Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Award.

### Nigel Harper

Consultant anaesthetist running the Anaesthetic Reaction clinic at the Manchester Royal Infirmary. Has lectured and published widely on anaphylactic reactions to anaesthetics and campaigns for greater recognition of the dangers of adverse reactions to anaesthetics.

### Chandra Kumar

Based at the James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough, with professorships in Teesside and Riyadh. Has an international reputation in ophthalmic anaesthesia and this year received a platinum Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Award. Founded the British Ophthalmic Anaesthesia Society in 1998 and is its president.

### Jerry Nolan

Expert in post-resuscitation care and consultant in anaesthesia and emergency medicine at the Royal United Hospital in Bath. Spearheaded work in therapeutic hypothermia (dropping the body temperature of a patient whose heart has stopped to prolong life in the vital organs) and developed the Immediate Life Support course, which has become standard for health professionals.

### Ian Russell

Champion of pain relief for women in labour, having published widely on obstetric anaesthesia. Controversially called for the use of spinal rather than general anaesthetics during Caesarean sections in the Eighties, a practice that has since become standard. Helped to develop the Isolated Forearm Technique, which alerts doctors to patients waking up during surgery. Based at Hull Royal Infirmary.

## CARDIAC SURGERY

### Roberto Casula

Pioneer in robotic-enhanced and minimal-access surgery at Imperial College. Has operated on several thousand cardiac patients, and performed the UK's first coronary bypass without opening the chest in 2002, carrying out the procedure more than 135 times since.

### Christopher McGregor

One of the foremost heart transplant surgeons in the world. Performed the first successful lung transplant in Europe in 1987, the first successful infant heart transplant in the UK in 1988 and the first successful heart, lung and liver transplant in the US in 1996. Now Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery at UCL, specialising in the surgical removal of thickened heart muscle.

### Neil Moat

Consultant cardiac surgeon and former clinical director of cardiac surgery at the Royal Brompton Hospital, with one of the largest mitral-valve repair practices in the UK.

### John Pepper

Consultant surgeon at the Royal Brompton Hospital. Has performed some of the most advanced heart surgery in the UK, and is known for pioneering new techniques, such as using an engineered, polymeric mesh sleeve to support the aorta (rather than replacing it) in patients with the genetic disorder Marfan syndrome.

*continued on page 37*