



# Colleges may be held responsible

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**Surgical training colleges** may be held responsible for their role in selecting, training and signing off a surgeon as competent if that surgeon later gets into difficulty in their career, delegates attending the 2016 **RCSI** Millin Meeting were told.

Addressing the Meeting recently (November 11) on the importance of surgical trainee selection into the future, **RCSI's** Professor of Postgraduate Surgical Education, **Prof Oscar Traynor**, said: "Going forward it is really important that we select the right people for a surgical career .....the consequences of getting it wrong are both costly and disruptive, and I firmly believe that the day will come when we

as a training body, will be held accountable for the people that we select, train and sign off for surgical careers."

Prof Traynor, who was expressing a personal opinion, told *IMT* while the vast majority of consultant surgeons performed extremely well, a small number got into trouble, as seen in a number of high-profile cases reported on by the media in recent times. In the vast majority of these cases the issues were rarely related to a lack of technical ability but tended to be associated with interpersonal skills and/or the ability to work as a member of a team.

The problem was that when someone got into problems like these the fallout was enormous, not just for the individual concerned but for the entire department and

local community, as GPs may no longer wish to refer patients to the hospital, he explained.

"The fallout from one individual who is behaving inappropriately is enormous, and I personally believe... that the day will come when people will come back to us and say, you selected that person for training, you put them through an eight-year training programme and at the end of that you signed them off as being competent, and now look what has happened, so where is your responsibility there? And I think we will be held accountable for the people that we send out there to the workplace," Prof Traynor stated.

Therefore, he said, the selection process was crucial, as was the need for robust annual reviews of competence and progression.