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## Journal of Pediatric Surgery

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## Correspondence

**In response to “Never the same – a commentary on surgical trainee well-being in the COVID era”**


Dear Editor,

It was with great interest that we read the commentary by Lopyan et al. [1] regarding the well-being of surgical trainees during the COVID-19 pandemic. As final year medical students in the UK with a keen interest in surgery, it has given us insight into our own training and what the future holds.

The toll of the COVID-19 pandemic across the world cannot be understated, from the loss of patients and colleagues, its effects on their families, increasing burnout among junior doctors [2], and a surgical backlog of over 3-million cases [3]. The pressure for surgical training to catch up while maintaining trainee wellbeing, is immense. Although nothing can beat hands-on exposure, the pandemic has also opened new avenues for training by pushing online platforms into the spotlight and highlighting the importance of integrating technology with traditional training. With the advent of interactive live-streaming of procedures, online video-recordings, simulations, and new technologies such as 3D printing or virtual reality [4–7], the return of surgical training comes with tools we can use beyond the operating theater. With the global reach of online conferencing platforms [8,9], and the pandemic refocusing us on the importance of our own wellbeing [10], we have the ability to re-establish those lost connections and forge new ones. The sense of belonging that COVID-19 took away has paradoxically paved the way to make the surgical community something more than it was before. While we remain acutely aware of what we have lost, we should also look forward to what we can gain.

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