

Oliver Adebayo

9th May 1988 - January 2026

Obituary by Tricia Campbell and Harry Benjamin-Laing

The orthopaedic community was deeply saddened by the death of Oliver Adebayo, an exceptional trainee, leader and advocate, whose life and career were defined not only by achievement, but by kindness, generosity and quiet strength.

Oliver trained in trauma and orthopaedics in the UK and was a member of the prestigious Stanmore orthopaedic training rotation, long associated with clinical excellence and academic distinction. He stood out early for his technical ability and calm judgement, but it was his character – thoughtful, steady and unfailingly supportive – that truly set him apart.

He served as President of the British Orthopaedic Trainees Association (BOTA), becoming one of the few Black surgeons to hold this office. He represented trainees with integrity and purpose, always focused on how the profession could be fairer, more inclusive and better for those coming behind him. He later served as a National Medical Director's Fellow, reflecting his commitment to leadership and improving systems of care. His trajectory was unmistakable, and many of us believed we were only just beginning to see the full extent of what he would achieve.



Beyond the hospital, Oliver continued to give his time selflessly. He provided trackside medical cover at Brands Hatch and supported the English Boxing Association, caring for athletes with the same dedication he showed his patients.

He was also deeply committed to widening participation. Single-handedly, he established the Achieving Surgical Excellence in Black Trainees programme, sponsored by the Royal College of Surgeons, creating mentorship and opportunity for those who might otherwise have been overlooked. For many young surgeons, he wasn't just a mentor – he was proof that they belonged.

Yet, it is the human side of Oliver that so many of us hold closest. He was good chat, always laughing, never complaining – even when things were hard. He didn't take himself too seriously. He lifted rooms, steadied teams and made people feel better simply by being there.

In the days since his passing, there has been an overwhelming swell of love and support across the profession, a reflection of just how many lives he touched. A fundraising page has been established to support his wife, Bernadine, and their young son, Elijah: www.gofundme.com/f/oliver-adebayo.

Oliver leaves a hole that will be deeply felt, but a legacy that will endure – in the people he championed, the doors he opened, and the example he set for us all. ■



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