

# ***JASME e-Newsletter***

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## Editor's note

JASME is a constantly evolving organisation, aiming to provide accessible and comprehensive information in the field of medical education and research. This is the fourth issue of our monthly e-Newsletter and we hope that you find it useful and interesting. Our newsletter is also available online at <http://www.asme.org.uk/jasme/whatsnew.htm>. If you would like to write for the JASME e-newsletter, please send your ideas and articles to [jasmenewsletter@googlemail.com](mailto:jasmenewsletter@googlemail.com).

*Good luck with the exams!!!*

## Hot stuff

### Conferences & meeting

- ASME (Association for the Study of Medical Education)
  - ASME Annual Scientific Meeting 2009 – Medical Education: in pursuit of excellence
  - 15 to 17 July 2009
  - The Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, UK
  - [http://www.asme.org.uk/conf\\_courses/2009/asm.htm](http://www.asme.org.uk/conf_courses/2009/asm.htm)
- AMEE (Association for Medical Education In Europe)
  - AMEE Conference
  - 29 August to 2 September 2009
  - Malaga, Spain
  - <http://www.amee.org/index.asp?lm=108>

### Useful websites

- Medical Research Council (MRC)
  - <http://www.mrc.ac.uk/index.htm>
- MedSin
  - <http://www.medsin.org/>
- Money 4 Medical Students
  - <http://www.money4medstudents.org>
- IFMSA (International Federation of Medical Students' Association)
  - <http://www.ifmsa.org/>

### Resources

- Medical Education
  - <http://www.mededuc.com/>
- Understanding Medical Education
  - A booklet series published by ASME
  - [http://www.asme.org.uk/pub\\_ume.htm](http://www.asme.org.uk/pub_ume.htm)

### Don't forget to keep an eye on...

- ASME
  - <http://www.asme.org.uk/index.html>
- JASME website
  - <http://www.asme.org.uk/jasme/>
- JASME Facebook group
  - <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?sid=0dc9b4672d1ec00b69050706ccc888d5&gid=2222238701>
- Foundation Programme website
  - <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home>

## Five steps to building a career in academic medicine

By Dina Fouad, 5th year medical student, University of Aberdeen

Academic medicine is exciting and challenging. As soon as you realise that you are interested in this as a career, it is important to start building your CV. Although this can be difficult, try to become involved in some form of research early. For example, you may: do an intercalated BSc; write case reports for publication; carry out audits; participate in poster presentations; enter competitions; or become involved in a larger project. During holiday breaks there are also opportunities to carry out research with various organisations, such as the Wellcome Trust, or you can even organise an individualised placement locally or internationally.



Ask the people who have pursued academic careers about their experience, what is expected and their advice on what you can do at your stage. Do not be afraid to ask questions or to set up meetings with superiors! There are also many useful online resources and weblinks, such as the NHS academic foundation programme website, the royal college websites and many more. Understandably, you may not know exactly which speciality you want to pursue. Nevertheless, if you have narrowed down your choices, carrying out research in directly or indirectly related areas will be very useful for your future. Even if you cannot do research within your preferred speciality, it is always helpful to participate in projects and the experience you gain is invaluable.

Your elective is also a good opportunity to create and complete your own research project. However, ensure that you do not choose complex or large projects, as time is often shortened by paperwork, ethics, data collection and other complications.

With any research you attempt to do, whether it is a small case report or a large cohort study, having a good supervisor is the key. Take your time when choosing supervisors! It is important that you have chosen someone who is supportive, encouraging and interested in what you are doing. Speak to other colleagues who have been supervised by them and ask their opinion before making your final choice. Research can be supremely difficult and frustrating, but it is worth it! Even if you decide that you do not wish to pursue an academic career, research is an essential skill and will allow you to stand out from the crowd!

## Hands trembling.....hair falling out!

By Vincent Wong, 4th year medical student, University of Aberdeen

Stress is one of the commonest complaints of medics, especially when exams are just round the corner. We've all had that moment of deafening silence when asked a question in ward/operating theatre and most medics would have, at some point, wondered if they can absorb more knowledge by following a strict textbook-only diet. As intrinsically lazy and easily-bored cut throat medics of the 21st century, we are always on the search for the fastest, easiest and most productive way to revise.



Luckily, the advance in Information Technology has become a breath of fresh air in medical education. From basic video clips to advanced medical games, the internet provides medics with fun and innovative revision methods. Some websites are so well designed that each patient simulation is different for every user. What is more interesting is the fact that the "patient" changes every second, just like a real human, and the "patient" will eventually die if the user does nothing to help. These challenging scenarios will keep medics occupied and help them identify areas of weakness without risking the life of a real patient. As if that is not good enough, some of the programmes even come with notes and explanations.

Sounds too good to be true? Wait till you come across websites that do all that for free! One good example is a website developed by a Dutch medical school (Leiden University Medical Centre) [www.medicaleducation.nl](http://www.medicaleducation.nl), which provides notes, games and patient simulations in English and Dutch for free. Remember, textbooks are revision companions, not food!!!

## If music be the food of love, play on

By Aishwarya Ravishankar, 4th year medical student, University College London

Humour and music can provide an alternative and innovative teaching method to the passé PowerPoint lecture format, which medical students have become accustomed to. Lecture slide after lecture slide can make even the most interesting of topics seem dry and leave even the motivated students wishing they had never left their beds! In fact, humour appears to be widely used in medical education. For instance, Ziegler noted that almost 80% of physicians, at the Sydney Children's Hospital, used humour in their teaching.<sup>1</sup> Ware *et al.* also demonstrated that humour and an enthusiastic style positively influence students' test performance following a lecture.<sup>2</sup> Add music into the equation and one has the perfect formula! Parody songs to entertain and teach a range of medical concepts, especially those that are more difficult to grasp. This has been demonstrated by the success of medical parody music bands, such as "Pseudolytes" and the "Amateur Transplants". The benefits of using parody songs for teaching purposes are two-fold. Firstly, the students are familiar with the tracks and they are immediately drawn to this creative and fun format. Secondly, the recordings are brief and amusing. While this offers an attractive revision aid to students, emphasis must be placed on the content of the songs to ensure that the teaching is of high-quality. Despite its popularity, few studies have adequately assessed the use of humour and music in medical education and thus more research is required into this area. Only time will tell if laughter really is the best medicine.

### References

1. Ziegler JB. Humour in medical teaching. *Med J Aust* 1999;171:579-580.
2. Ware JE Jr, Williams RG. The Dr. Fox Effect: A study of lecturer effectiveness and ratings of instruction. *J Med Educ* 1975;50:149-156.

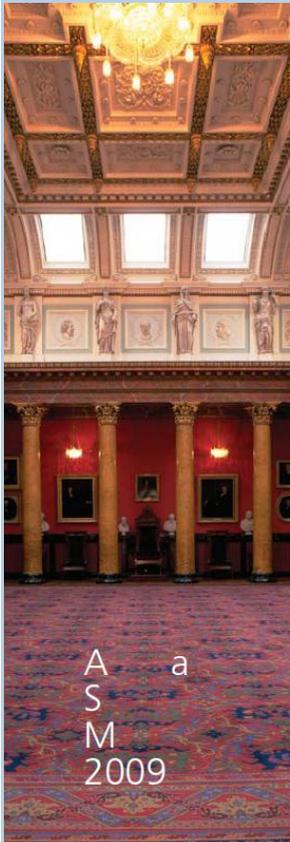


## UPCOMING CONFERENCE:

This year's ASME annual scientific meeting will be held in Edinburgh on the 15-17<sup>th</sup> July 2009. The conference will include the usual excellent opportunities for attendees to discuss innovations in medical and healthcare education.

Come along to meet other students and doctors interested in medical/healthcare education, and to see the latest research being conducted in medical education. This is a great opportunity to for all levels from undergraduate to consultancy levels, with delegates from the UK and abroad; all with the same interests.

The conference programme includes pre and intra conference workshops, large group sessions, lectures, presentations and competitions, the AGM and a social programme. Check out the ASME website for more details- [www.asme.org.uk](http://www.asme.org.uk)  
**NOTE: JASME provides all medical schools with a BUY ONE GET ONE FREE offer for students. So if you want to attend the conference, ask your medical education department, because for each place that the medical school pays for, they receive another place free of charge.**



## Medical Education: in Pursuit of Excellence

The Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, UK  
15 - 17 JULY 2009

The programme will include pre and intra-conference workshops; keynote presentations, in particular The Lord Cohen Lecture; parallel/concurrent sessions; posters, policy fora, the award of the Sir John Ellis Student Prize and the Richard Farrow Gold Medal.

For more information and call for papers please visit the ASME website:

[www.asme.org.uk](http://www.asme.org.uk)

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