

# ***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 academic research. This is the fifth 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).

## 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>

## The newly elected JASME committee for 2009-10

### Co-Chairs

Jennie Sherman  
Alison Ventress

### Courses Co-ordinator

Ashley Newton

### Conference Co-ordinator

Lina Fazlanie

### Recruitment Co-ordinator / JLLOs

Lucie Wright

### Publicity and Marketing Officer

Ourania Varsou

### Members without portfolio:

#### *Courses*

Paul Wilson

#### *Publicity*

Hannah Watson

#### *Website*

Rachel Smith

#### Past Chair

Andrew Bright

For more information on the new JASME committee for 2009-10, please visit our official website on: <http://www.asme.org.uk/jasme-committee.html>.

## Announcement: publication opportunity!!!

Hello everyone!

We are currently looking for enthusiastic medical students and junior doctors, to write articles for our monthly e-newsletter. These can include announcements (maximum 150 words), viewpoints (maximum 200 words), short editorials (maximum 400 words) and interviews (maximum 1,000 words). We will welcome all types of submissions, on any topic that has attracted your interest, especially articles related to medical education and academic or scientific research.

You can submit your work as often as you want, even on a one-off basis. All submitted articles are peer-reviewed by the editors and the committee.

This is an amazing opportunity to get published!

If you want to write for us, please send your ideas or articles to: [jasmenewsletter@googlemail.com](mailto:jasmenewsletter@googlemail.com) and [o.varsou@googlemail.com](mailto:o.varsou@googlemail.com).



Thank you 😊

## **The ultimate dilemma: to audit or not to audit?**

By Dr Paschalis Kapsomenakis, FTSTA in Paediatric Surgery, Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital & Ourania Varsou, 4th year medical student, University of Aberdeen

The very first time we were involved in a clinical audit was almost four years ago. Back then, we were not very sure what audits were about or what was the exact point of conducting such research. Since then, there have been many points in our careers that we had to participate or even carry out our own audits. At this moment, we have realised their importance and significance for the national health system.

Audits are used to systematically review care and therefore improve current health systems, by implementing reasonable and appropriate changes when needed. The ultimate aim is to provide high standards of care to patients. Most medical students and junior doctors may be under the false impression that audits are only performed in general practice. This is actually not the case, as audits are invaluable tools that are continuously used in secondary care.

If you want to evaluate a system or assess the effects of new changes, audits are the ideal research design for you! They are also an easy start to develop your research skills and gain experience, especially if you have never been involved in any type of research in the past. But be careful, audits do require hard work and careful planning. You should not be disillusioned that they can be a quick fix to gain points for your CV.

So, how do you conduct an audit? The first step is to find an area that interests you and of course a supervisor who is willing to help you! After this, you need to identify a topic that needs to be reviewed. The vital part of an audit is to compare the collected data against set standards, which can be derived from resources such as the NICE and SIGN guidelines. From there, you will decide with the rest of the team what changes are required, if any, to improve the delivery of care even further. Certain areas require frequent re-audits to maintain the high quality of care delivered to patients.

Our personal view is that the research skills and experience you gain by carrying out audits is invaluable. So, what are you waiting for then? Now, is the time to participate or even construct and conduct your own audit!

**Good luck with your audits!**

## **Academic foundation programme application process: interview with Dr Judith E. Ritchie**

By Lina Fazlanie, 3rd year medical student, University of Sheffield

Congratulations for passing your finals. Can I begin by asking you to tell us a bit about yourself?

I have taken a rather unconventional route into medicine. I excelled at languages and literature at school, but I knew somehow that I wouldn't pursue it – I felt that something was missing. A short stay in hospital at 16, just weeks before I started my A-levels, started me thinking about medicine. But it wasn't until much later that I finally knew I wanted to do it, and it was a big shock for everyone I knew when I finally committed myself to pursuing this! I did the six-year medicine degree with the "pre-med" year. My first clinical placement in general surgery was a defining moment in my undergraduate career, and from that point I knew I was destined for surgery. I undertook an intercalated

BMedSci in surgical oncology, in 2006, which gave me excellent insight into clinical academia that led me to pursue this challenging and rewarding career pathway, beginning here with the academic foundation programme. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as an undergraduate, and I have developed so much during my time as a Sheffield medical student – I've studied Urdu at night school, taught yoga for two years, I spent four years on the Sheffield Students



Surgical Society committee (nine months as president before maternity leave), taught basic anatomy and physiology to yoga teacher trainees, written a crash course guide, as well as presenting work at local, national and international conferences. I'm also a very proud mother to my one-year-old son Daniel, who has been such a blessing to my life!

What jobs have you got for your FY1 and FY2 years?

I am delighted to have a predominantly surgical academic programme: I start with four months of ENT / otolaryngology, then general / HPB surgery and then diabetic medicine. F2 starts with A&E, then my research period and general surgery again.

Why did you choose a job in an academic foundation programme (AFP)?

The BMedSci programme at Sheffield is fantastic – a one-year project-based programme with additional statistics and ethics teaching and coursework. It moulded me into an inquisitive thinker and the challenges and rewards that research gives to you have helped me to develop academically in so many ways. I knew not long after I finished my BMedSci that I wanted to take research further, and that is why I applied for the academic foundation programme. I am currently writing this from Memphis in the USA where I am spending time in the laboratory of one of the world's leaders in my research field, and I am so excited about the fantastic opportunity the academic programme gives to get people actively involved in learning about research.

How did you learn about the academic foundation programmes?

There was an information talk about it from the Deanery. There is also information available from the MMC and [FoundationProgramme.nhs.uk](http://FoundationProgramme.nhs.uk) website. After this appointment I went to see the head of the local programme and talked to her about what opportunities are available.

How was the interview for the academic posts?

The interviews are twice as long as the clinical interviews that South Yorkshire and South Humber Deanery holds for clinical jobs, as there are two panels: one is academic and one is clinical. The interviewers generally want to ensure that you know what research is and what it involves. It's not essential that you've done research before but you need to demonstrate that you have an understanding of what research means and that you have realistic expectations for the programme - it's not a four month holiday and it certainly isn't easy!

What advice would you give to medical students who want to pursue a career in academic medicine?

Learn what research involves and how it is applicable to clinical training – everything from laboratory research and clinical science to clinical trials and evidence based medicine, the process of designing national guidelines and clinical governance. Seek out opportunities to be involved in all aspects of research from as early on as possible. They are not often readily available. For

those who are in the early years of their degree I thoroughly recommend intercalating to do a BMedSci. One year can seem a long time to add to your program but it flies by and it will completely change you and better equip you to study and excel on the medical course. Otherwise orchestrating research projects alongside the course can be difficult, but is doable. Make innovative use of your time. Seek audit opportunities on placements or SSCs or in your elective. Also, make early contact with the head of the academic foundation programme at your desired deanery and go and see them to find out what opportunities the programme provides. Seek advice, mentorship and support from clinical academics. Find out who is currently on the academic foundation programme and approach them to ask them about the programme and their research background.

## ASME annual scientific meeting 15-17th July 2009: student report

By Rachel Smith, JASME member without portfolio (website)

To be honest, I was quite intimidated by the thought of the ASME annual scientific meeting. I have been to conferences before, but they have all either been entirely student-focused or completely didactic with little or no participation required. Before the conference, my main concerns were that I would find myself to be mainly among “grown-ups” (by which I mean people with years of experience in the field of medical education), and that I would be unable to take part in workshops because of my lack of experience. I later found that I was wrong on both counts.

The conference timetable was my first glimpse of JASME. My first impression was “ASME for medical students” – I later found out that JASME also includes junior doctors. I was hoping that the ASME conference would give me a chance to find out more about a career in medical education, and to meet other students with similar ambitions. I was relieved to find that the JASME committee members were extremely friendly and approachable; they made us all feel welcome, and in a very short time I was feeling less nervous and more enthusiastic and keen for the conference to begin. As Parveen Kumar, the main speaker for the introduction session, was unable to attend, we all took the opportunity to have an extended question-and-answer session about JASME, and all those who were interested in getting involved (myself included) were able to talk to committee members about the roles available.

After a slightly “light” day on Wednesday, Thursday was a bit busier. In the morning we had a workshop run by Dr Bob Clarke (I’d been to one of his revision courses, so for me it was slightly surreal to be within five feet of a “celebrity”). We hardly sat still – Dr Clarke had us up and about working in groups to demonstrate different styles of teaching. For a lot of us, our most pressing concern was how we should go about preparing when asked to conduct a teaching session. We came away with a useful mnemonic for remembering the key issues involved in teaching: AILMENTS! (Aims, Intended Learning Outcomes, Learning Needs Assessment, Methods, Evaluation, Next Steps, Test, and Summary).

Thursday afternoon brought a workshop regarding careers in medical education, which involved a lot more discussion and spirited debate than I’d anticipated. It was also an insight into the fact that the medical education career path has been somewhat re-developed in recent years, and will continue to change in the future. We also had the JASME committee elections on Thursday, which is how I have come to be writing this report! Three new members without portfolio were appointed: Paul Wilson, who will be liaising

with Ashley Newton (courses co-ordinator) to organise courses for JASME members; Hannah Watson, who along with Ourania will be taking charge of publicity this year, and finally, I will be responsible for the website this year.

The last JASME workshop of the conference was Professor Stark's session on projects in medical education. She went through a structured approach for developing a project, and we put it to the test with a fictional research question. It proved to be a popular workshop with a great deal of audience participation. The proforma that Professor Stark used when discussing the development of a project will be posted on the JASME website soon!

In short, I had a great time and met a lot of new people, and I think everyone really enjoyed themselves. I'm looking forward to next year's ASME scientific meeting, which will be in Cambridge in July.



 **ASME**  
Association for the Study of Medical Education

Annual  
Scientific  
Meeting  
2010

Robinson College  
Cambridge, UK

21 - 23 JULY 2010

**Medical Education:  
Innovation in a Traditional World**  
Robinson College, Cambridge, UK  
21 - 23 JULY 2010

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. The 2010 Lord Cohen Lecture will be delivered by Charlotte Ringsted, Professor of Medical Education, Copenhagen University, Denmark.

For more information and call for papers please visit the ASME website:  
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Annual Scientific  
Meeting 2010