

**Royal College of General Practitioners and Warwick Medical School**  
**Annual Education, Research and Innovation Symposium 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017**  
**Abstract Submission Form**

<b>PRESENTER'S DETAILS</b>	
<b>Title</b> (Prof, Dr, Mr, Mrs, Miss) Dr Sarah Mitchell <span style="float: right;"><a href="mailto:Sarah.j.mitchell@warwick.ac.uk">Sarah.j.mitchell@warwick.ac.uk</a></span> Mr Alex Baldock	
<b>Department or organisation</b> Warwick Primary Care	
<b>Category</b> Education Project / Innovation Project	
<b>PRESENTATION DETAILS</b>	
<b>Authors</b>  Alexander Baldock (sixth form student) Dr Sarah Mitchell	<b>Title of Study</b>  Why I did work experience at an Undertakers
<b>What's the problem you are tackling?</b> This work experience placement was organised by a sixth form student, Alex, who hopes to study medicine and who recognises that caring for dying people and their families is a vital role for a doctor.	
<b>How did/will you do it?</b> A one week work experience placement was organised with local undertakers, A Natural Undertaking.	
<b>What did you find?</b> Experiences included researching information about different crematoria, collecting ashes, learning about digital autopsies, and visiting a natural burial ground. The main event of the week was a funeral. Preparation included cleaning the car, collecting flowers, dressing the deceased and speaking to family members. This meant that Alex saw a dead person: "It was a weird experience to see a dead body, as I hadn't seen one before. I felt a sort of chill ... but after a while it just seemed like any other person. We treated her as if she was sleeping didn't refer to her as 'the body' or 'it'."	
<b>Why does this matter?</b> The placement provided a unique experience which included witnessing compassionate care and learning about the skills necessary to run a business; skills which are highly relevant to a future career as a doctor. The week also highlighted the need for open and honest conversation about death and dying in society which would allow people to express their preferences choices about their end of life care and death, avoiding medical treatments, hospital admissions and expensive funerals which they may not want.	