



Message from John Hallett, Deputy Chair, Education

As we approach Christmas I am privileged to be able to introduce this month's MSC newsletter. The New Year brings with it many important events for medical students, the publication of Tooke's final report into Medical Training. The Doctors and Dentists Review Bodies ruling on whether junior doctors will be compensated for their loss of free accommodation and on January 9th final years will discover what foundation school they have been allocated to.

The whole process of applying for the foundation programme this year has been made unduly stressful by the application forms inability to allow applicants to truly demonstrate their unique abilities and achievements. Throughout this process the MSC has been working tirelessly to have mistakes corrected and have improvements

made and we are not letting up now that the process has closed.

This is one of the most challenging periods the medical profession has ever faced. The BMA is on the front line in the battle to ensure medical students can be safe in the knowledge that after all the sacrifices we have made we have a career to aspire to once we graduate.

It is imperative as we go forward to face these challenges that the representatives who attend these meetings know the views of the students they represent - and with the deadline for submission of motions to the medical students' conference fast approaching there is no better time to get involved in the BMA.

To find out more visit: www.bma.org.uk/students

Foundation Programme Places – success for MSC

The UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO) recently announced that all UK graduates in 2008 will be matched up with a 2 year foundation programme. This announcement comes after talks between the MSC and UKFPO to secure extra places to allow every graduate to start the two year programme.

Accommodation Update!

As we let you know in earlier editions of the *MSC Newsletter*, as of July 2007, the requirement for pre-registration doctors to be resident at the hospital was removed from the Medical Act 1983. This means that there is no longer a requirement for pre-registration doctors first year foundation house officers (FHO1s) to live on site, which in turn means that hospital accommodation no longer needs to be provided without charge. The BMA has always opposed any moves to remove the entitlement to free accommodation and is incensed that the government has taken away a contractual benefit

without negotiating with us. With the support of the MSC, the Junior Doctors Committee has escalated its campaign to the Review Body on Doctors and Dentists Remuneration (DDRB) for a significant increase in salary for pre-registration doctors to compensate for the lost accommodation and we await the DDRB's report, due in early 2008.

To find out what we are doing now visit:
<http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/fhoaccom1207>

MSC Conference 2008

This year's conference is being held at Churchill College, Cambridge and is the perfect opportunity for you to have your say on issues affecting medical students and help shape MSC policy for the 08/09 session.

If you would like to attend or submit motions for debate look out for more information in your Medical School or contact your MSC rep via

<http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/MSC0708>

Medical Students Committee Meetings

2008	
Friday 1 February	Executive subcommittee
Wednesday 12 March	MSC/Subcommittees
Friday 4 April	Medical Students Conference
Saturday 5 April	Medical Students Conference
Tuesday 22 April	Executive subcommittee
Saturday 7 June	MSC/Subcommittees

The response to Modernising Medical Careers (MMC)

In response to the review of MMC conducted by Sir John Tooke, the BMA expressed its strong opposition to the idea of a new grade of NHS doctor, who would have a specialist qualification, but not the same expertise as a consultant.

This warning is just one part of the BMA's response to Sir John Tooke's interim report on the UK-wide Modernising Medical Careers reforms. Other issues raised by the BMA include the need for proper workforce planning.

BMA Medical Students Committee Chair Ian Noble said: *'We would like to see some clear workforce planning, which the Department of Health has failed to do effectively in the past. We are just at the end of an expansion of medical student*

numbers, and I would be concerned if we just slashed our numbers because of the problems with specialty training this year.'

He added: *'the government wants [the UK] to become self-sufficient in doctors and is looking to [achieve this] by reducing the numbers of people coming in from non-European countries. 'It would be daft to have a peak and trough system [in which] you produce too many doctors, then reduce them and then don't have enough.'*

The final report is due to be published in January 2008.

View the full BMA response to the Tooke inquiry at: <http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/Tookeresponse>

Bullying & Harassment

The Medical Students Committee recently published guidance to help students who feel that they might be the victim of Bullying or Harassment at their medical school. The guidance outlines examples of what can be considered harassment, more importantly it gives clear advice on what medical students can do to resolve the situation. The document also provides information on the various sources of support available whilst the situation is resolved.

For more information on the guidance, or to view it visit

Interest rates on student loans - E mail your MP to sign Early Day Motion 263

MSC has launched a new campaign to raise awareness about student loans to MPs in the Westminster Parliament.

MPs have tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) in the Westminster Parliament expressing concern that interest payable on student loans has now doubled from 2.4 per cent to 4.8 per cent – the EDM suggests that the interest charged on student loans should be either abolished as the New Zealand government has done or pegged at a maximum of one per cent to give a fairer deal to students and maximise recruitment to higher education.

We want to highlight to the government the serious implications of high rates of interest payable on student loans and we need your help, Email your MP now. Just use the link below. It's easy and won't take long but remember that you will need to be logged in to the BMA website.

<http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/content/polwizstudentloans>

Join the British Medical Association

With 175 years' experience of supporting medical students and doctors, we understand the issues that are important to you and provide essential benefits that really make a difference. The BMA provides support and guidance to help in your progression from medical student to qualified doctor... and throughout your medical career.

Membership is FREE for first year students*, £30 for second years, and £36 for third years and above.

Don't miss out!, Join the BMA today at
www.bma.org.uk/join



*only available to those paying by Direct Debit