

Welcome to the seventh issue of the New Zealand Medical Student Journal (NZMSJ). The NZMSJ was founded in the summer of 2002/2003 by a small group of students who had completed research towards summer studentships and BMedSci degrees at the University of Otago. It has since grown into a nationwide initiative and we are proud that the journal is a member of a small collection of student-based medical journals throughout the world. The early pioneers in this field include the McGill Journal of Medicine, a biannual newsletter started in 1994 by students of McGill University in Montreal, Canada and perhaps the best known student medical journal, the Student BMJ which was established in 1995. Since then a number of other student journals have started up in various formats and we are pleased to observe the recent establishment of a student version of the leading UK medical journal, the Lancet albeit as a solely online publication.

The above history illustrates that, over time, the importance of student research has become increasingly recognised amongst the medical community. This shift parallels many changes in attitude towards medical education, another being the increased focus on the biopsychosocial model of medicine which focuses on a more holistic approach to the treatment of illness. This combines the medical model with other social factors which influence ill-health. Medical students should take this model into account throughout their medical education and throughout their vocational lives when considering patient management. Becoming a doctor is not simply about cramming in knowledge on anatomy, physiology and pathology; it is also about critically challenge existing knowledge, investigate those questions with colleagues and learn how to make improvements through public health and political change.

The NZMSJ aims to help the medical students of New Zealand develop and celebrate this holism by publishing examples of students creating change (see page 18 for Jash Agrawal's thought-provoking piece on the global small arms trade), questioning aspects of current medical practice (as seen in Anna Choi's article on depression and Sarah Peter's look into the role of public health in clinical medicine) and questioning what imparts us with that knowledge (exemplified by our increasing number of book reviews). We encourage all medical students to continue to embrace the goal of becoming a holistic doctor and take up every opportunity achieve this. For those of you who have an issue you feel passionate about, we also welcome letters to the editor for publication

We extend our sincere thanks Professor Iain Martin, Dean of the University of Auckland Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, for his generous sponsorship of this issue's Dean's Writing Prize. Greg Tarr, who is currently a BmedSci (Hons) student at the Dunedin School of Medicine was the worthy recipient of this prize for his research piece on stent thrombosis. Kate Rapson received the runner-up prize for her work on the efficacy of Trastuzumab. Congratulations are also due to Sarah Peters of Auckland School of Medicine who received our Features prize for this issue – a copy of the recently revised Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary. We wish to thank our two academic advisors, Associate Professors David Perez (University of Otago) and Cristin Print (University of Auckland) and our expert reviewers from across New Zealand for their valued contribution which allows us to continue to develop our flagship peer review process. Finally, we congratulate all our contributors on their initiative and efforts and hope you feel deservedly proud on seeing your work in print. We look forward to receiving future quality submissions from our readers both in New Zealand and abroad.

The NZMSJ Executive

The NZMSJ editorial board maintains that the articles published under the heading "opinion" are the personal views of the author and the NZMSJ does not support or endorse these views in any way but respects the author's rights to voice his/her opinions.

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