

Welcome to the eleventh issue of the New Zealand Medical Student Journal (NZMSJ). The Journal aims to not only publish the educational writing of medical students but to also support the professional development of medical students and be a forum of opinions and discussion. In addition to our regular articles, this issue we have assembled together several articles and guest editorials examining medical student stress in the New Zealand context, and explore some of the ways in which we as medical students can improve our mental health and wellbeing.

In this issue we reprint a 2010 Medical Journal of Australia article by Hillis et al. which explores medical students' views on support services, stigma, and teaching of wellbeing in light of their experiences of stress and distress. Thank you to the Australian Medical Publishing Company for allowing us to reprint the article in its entirety. We are also grateful to the New Zealand Medical Association for allowing us to reprint a New Zealand Medical Journal article by Henning et al, which demonstrates that quality of life issues are not limited to medical students alone. Potential solutions are explored in the article, beginning with changes at the undergraduate level.

Thanks also to Dr Antonio Fernando, Elizabeth Carr and Dr William Perry for their guest editorials. Dr Fernando looks at the issue from a personal perspective and outlines techniques that medical students can utilise, as well as small changes we can make to enhance our emotional and mental wellbeing. Elizabeth Carr and Dr William Perry, the current President and Immediate Past President respectively, of the New Zealand Medical Students' Association (NZMSA) outline the NZMSA's policy on student wellbeing and introduces the development of a national Wellbeing Action Plan.

Although at times it can be stressful, medical training also provides students with many rewarding opportunities such as working in exciting areas or undertaking research in fields of personal interest. The students who completed the inaugural Hutt Valley District Health Board (HVDHB) Summer Studentship scheme in 2009 write about their experience working in the Hutt Valley. Medical students interested in deferring clinical study for a year of research would be interested in reading Sultan Al-Shaqsi's article entitled 'To intercalate or not to intercalate?' Sultan addresses some of the issues faced by students thinking about undertaking the BMedSci(Hons) or BHB(Hons) year, and highlights some of the pros and cons that students should consider.

Congratulations to all the authors who contributed to Issue 11. Special congratulations to the winners of our prizes. The winners of our Academic Writing Prize this issue are Leehe Vardi, Yan Yi Chuah, William (Vui) Lu, and Ashton Ellison for their systematic review on Alzheimer's disease. The Features Prize this issue goes to Libby Dai, Natasha Perinpanayagam, Victoria Dol, Clarence Kerrison and David Grant for their article on the HVDHB Summer Studentship experience.

We hope that you find this issue of the Journal informative, and invite you to submit your views and opinions for publication in our next issue.

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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