



A WORD FROM DR MARIANNE COBHAM

APMJ Career and Mentorship Coordinator

Welcome to the August APMJ newsletter!

I'm Marianne, an IMT in Wales and I'm the new Careers and Mentorship Coordinator.

August is always a big month for medical students and junior doctors, I hope changeover goes as smoothly as possible and best of luck to those starting their first jobs as doctors. Though it can feel daunting, you know more than you think and remember that you're not expected to know everything.

This month we have a new website for you to explore. We wanted to highlight a resource page on 'Palliative Care for FY1s' including webinars on symptom control, guidelines and general advice for those starting their careers. Palliative care is an essential skill for all doctors and sometimes new doctors, who tend to be on the ward most, utilise these skills very early in their careers.

We're highlighting some interesting reflections on PalliSIM, an initiative set up to improve palliative medical education via simulation from two Foundation doctors, Dr Sally Barker and Dr Rachel Boscott.

If you're interested in palliative care as a medical student, there is also an undergraduate essay prize for 2024 titled 'Palliative care can be called the "heaven for the few": how can we improve access to good palliative care?'

If you have any thoughts on anything mentioned in the newsletter, or would like to submit an article or reflection to us, please get in touch!



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How can palliative and end of life care be improved? Complete Marie Curie's survey to shape future research.

Palliative and end of life care is an under-researched area. Currently, too many people are dying without getting the care they need at the end of life. We want to help change that.

Marie Curie is launching a new survey asking people living with a serious life-limiting illness, those close to them, and health and social care professionals involved in their care to help us pinpoint the key issues that need to be addressed in future end of life and palliative care research.

Once we identify and prioritise the issues that people highlight in the survey results, researchers and funders can better direct their resources, bringing evidence-based improvements to people with a serious life-limiting illness.

Your views could really make a difference.

To take the survey, please visit: <https://palliativecarepsp.wordpress.com/survey/>

To find out more about the project visit: <https://palliativecarepsp.wordpress.com/>

Palliative Care Resources for FY1s

This new page contains webinars and resources to help newly graduated medical students feel prepared to provide palliative and end-of-life care as foundation doctors.

<https://apmeducationhub.org/palliative-care-for-fy1s/>



Submissions for the 2024 Undergraduate Essay Prize are now open!

Entries for this year are invited to answer the following question 'Palliative care can be called the "heaven for the few": how can we improve access to good palliative care?'

If you are interested in submitting a piece of work and to be in with a chance of winning the top prize of £250, please visit the links below for more information.

[Undergraduate Essay Prize 2024 Rules](#)

[Undergraduate Essay Prize 2024 Entry Form](#)

The deadline for submissions is the 29th November 2024.

Good Luck!



ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

REFLECTIONS ON PALLISIM

By Dr Sally Barker and Dr Rachel Boscott are Foundation doctors working in London and Thames Valley respectively. They have chosen to share their experiences of working to improve palliative care education for Foundation doctors through simulation training.

Recognising the dying patient:

As was the case for many, our first months as doctors were shaped by the presence of COVID-

19. Alongside the usual FY1 learning curves of ward round etiquette and discharge paperwork, we were also mastering the art of doffing, the one-shot ABG and the correct pronunciation of tocilizumab.

Sally recalls her first experience of breaking bad news and dealing with death: "It was on my second day on the COVID ward when a patient was assessed by the consultant as 'acutely dying'. My registrar offered to call the family but was called away to clinic almost immediately as the ward round finished. I was left with no escape when three members of the patient's family turned up at the ward door.

I explained our impression to the family as best I could. My panic drove out any sense of compassion or care. I concluded with 'there's nothing more we can do' - untrue, unhelpful and more likely to have been borrowed from an episode of Scrubs than the result of any communication skills' learnt at medical school. I distinctly remember thinking that, I should have practiced this conversation beforehand, as I would have unquestionably done so for a chest drain or lumbar puncture".

Simulation-based medical education (SBME) is increasingly recognised as an integral part of training for all healthcare professionals 1,2 . Foundation SIM sessions can be fun - a chance to catch up with colleagues, revisit the grooves of med school knowledge and gain confidence for when a medical emergency occurs on the wards.



In managing her first dying patient, however, Sally was not alone in feeling 'thrown in the deep end' 3 . Recognising dying, breaking bad news and prescribing controlled medications for symptom management are challenging tasks 3 . The efficacy of SBME is well-established 1,2 , However, there is a lack of rigorous evaluation of using SBME to train junior doctors in the core skills of palliative care 4-7 .It is the Foundation doctor who is most likely to be present on the ward at visiting time and thus most likely to update a patient's friends and family. A palliative care simulation programme has been designed for Internal Medicine Trainees 8 . However, no such equivalent exists for Foundation doctors, despite recognised inconsistency in the provision of palliative care education in the undergraduate curriculum 9,10 . The skills required to care for palliative care patients map directly onto the 'Higher Level Outcomes' of Foundation Professional Capabilities and teaching on 'End of Life Care' and 'Integration of Acute Illness into Chronic Disease Management' is a mandatory requirement of the Foundation Doctor Core Curriculum. SBME provides the safe environment for developing these essential skills using a teaching modality already recommended by the UK Foundation Programme 11 .

PalliSIM:

PalliSim Network is a collaborative of generalist and palliative medicine doctors, nurses and allied health professionals with a background in medical education and simulation, led by Dr Anna Bradley (palliative medicine consultant) and Dr Tammy Tran (palliative medicine registrar). We found PalliSIM as Foundation doctors and have been members for almost two years. The network seeks to enhance palliative medicine education through simulation and has grown rapidly with members from hospitals and hospices across the United Kingdom.



Foundation SIM Scenario:

As part of our work with Pallisim we developed a palliative care simulation scenario for Foundation doctors inspired by our own experiences of the challenges of caring for dying patients . It has been blueprinted to the Foundation programme curriculum palliative care competencies which include recognising the dying patient, sensitive communication, involving the patient/those important to them and delivering individualised care 11 . Furthermore we acknowledged the widespread appreciation for simulation training and that despite core simulation training days for Foundation doctors, there are currently no scenarios centred on end of life care in the areas we work in. Our scenario was inspired by work that Rachel started at Oxford University Hospitals with Dr Mary Miller to develop an educational resource on simulating a palliative care patient's journey. The scenario we have written together centres on the aim of recognising dying, in which Foundation doctors are expected to assess an elderly patient who is deteriorating despite being at their ceiling of care, assess the patient for reversibility and recognise that they may be entering the last stages of their life. We hope that the scenario will improve Foundation doctor confidence in recognising limited reversibility and using the phrase "sick enough to die", communicating this sensitively with family members, and prescribing anticipatory medications for symptom control.

Next steps:

Our next steps are to look at opportunities for both incorporating the session into the Pan- London Foundation Simulation programme, as well as filming the material, in the hope that this can be used as an educational resource.

If you are a junior doctor and would like more details on this project or to join Pallisim, we would love to hear from you: pallisimnetwork@gmail.com

PalliSim Website - <https://pallisim.wixsite.com/home>

PalliSim Twitter - [@PallisimNetwork](https://twitter.com/PallisimNetwork)



References:

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Association for
Palliative Medicine
Of Great Britain and Ireland

August
2024

APM Juniors Newsletter

UPCOMING EVENTS

4th - 25th September 2024

Virtual Ethics Course

<https://apmonline.org/events/virtual-ethics-course-september-2024/>

26th September - 9th October 2024

APM & PCRS Research Course 2024: Understanding and Applying Research Methods in Practice

<https://pcrs.org.uk/events/apm-pcrs-research-course-2024/>

31st October 2024

Annual Conference of APM Undergraduate Education Special Interest Forum

<https://onlinesales.admin.cam.ac.uk/conferences-and-events/public-health-primary-care/association-for-palliative-medicine/annual-conference-of-apm-undergraduate-education-special-interest-forum-31-october-2024>



USEFUL RESOURCES

APM/ PCRS Research directory

<https://apmeducationhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Palliative-Care-Network-April-2023.pdf>

Palliative Medicine Curriculum

<https://www.jrcptb.org.uk/sites/default/files/Palliative%20Medicine%202022%20curriculum%20FINAL.pdf>

e-ELCA

https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/myElearning/Index?HierarchyId=0_29&programmId=29

PREVIOUS WEBINARS TO WATCH

Palliative Care for FY1 Doctors

Vimeo Link <https://vimeo.com/apmeducationhub/pallcarefy1?share=copy>

Password ZHU5OOyabHZcdGnz



OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

APM Juniors Survey

We want to better understand what you want from an APM Juniors membership and would appreciate your feedback via this survey. It should take no longer than 10 minutes.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdne2yTuwoZsrMljpn3u1C39qkRgEzLz5orrbiWi2UH1HfWmw/viewform?pli=1>