

Welcome to the 2020 C4ME Special Supplement

Editorial

Welcome to the second annual C4ME Special Supplement of *The BSDJ*!

Julie Browne

Honorary Editor of The British Student
Doctor
Cardiff University School of Medicine

Address for Correspondence:

Julie Browne
Cardiff University School of Medicine
The Cochrane Building
Heath Park, Cardiff
CF14 4YU

Email: BrowneJ1@cardiff.ac.uk

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2712-3812>

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This is another exciting, eclectic and scholarly mix of papers showcasing the high quality and wide range of research work that Cardiff's intercalating medical students generated during 2019-20 as they undertook an additional year of study and hands-on research experience sandwiched between years 3 and 4, or 4 and 5, of the Cardiff MBBCh course.

The articles in this supplement provide evidence that Cardiff's intercalated courses offer students research experience in an astonishing range of academic topics. Far from reflecting work conducted in a remote ivory tower, these articles bear witness to the students' deep encounters with evidence-based medicine – "*where the rubber meets the road*" (Greenhalgh 2003). That is to say, the place where academic study and research evidence directly intersect with practical questions such as how patients experience healthcare, how new treatments can be devised using rigorous research and evaluation, how healthcare advice is understood and implemented in practice, and how guidance may be improved in specific areas of healthcare. Many of the papers in this issue have a passionate concern for social justice at their heart: a number address the important issue of how medical students can be better prepared to become the innovative, skilled and principled doctors of the future.

The context in which this excellent work was undertaken needs to be remembered. In early March 2020, just as the authors of these papers were preparing for their final assessments, the Prime Minister of the UK, Boris Johnson, stated that COVID-19 "*is the worst public health crisis for a generation*" and everything changed. Many of our students stepped forward immediately, volunteering their services wherever they were needed; all displayed amazing professionalism and pushed forward undeterred to complete their studies with yet another set of outstanding results. We could not be prouder of them.

In this world of uncertainty, one thing is clear; more than ever the world needs innovative, accomplished and principled doctors and medical academics, equipped with the practical and intellectual skills to lead the research endeavours of the future and to interpret and implement scientific evidence to the benefit of patients and populations everywhere. We are proud of the part our intercalated programme plays in this endeavour and wish to pay particular tribute to the Programme Lead, Dr Hollie Thomas, under whose leadership the programme has gone from strength to strength.

As always, we thank the editorial team of *The BSDJ* for their tremendous energy and support in producing this special supplement. Thanks also go to the staff and faculty who worked behind the scenes to support the research projects, advise the authors and review the manuscripts. We're confident that readers will enjoy this fascinating glimpse into the work of the iBSc 'class of 2020' and we wish its authors every success as they continue their medical studies.

References

Greenhalgh T. Doing an intercalated BSc can make you a better doctor. *Medical Education*. 2003;37:760-761.

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