



I hope you have all had a good Easter break. We've had a slight expansion to the team here at Medic to Medic, with Imperial student Tamsin Cargill doing regular administrative work, and my retired father Dr Nick Mandeville being successfully persuaded into doing one day a week. Don't be surprised if you see Tamsin or Nick signing off emails!

Nick recently went to Malawi to interview our sponsored students and select the new students for this year. In this issue (page 3), we profile one exceptional student, Gideon Chimtukuta, who has managed to get to medical school despite his background as a streetkid in Blantyre.

Our students have been mentioning the need for laptops for several visits now. Access to computers at the College of Medicine is limited, with the computer lab closing after 5pm and on weekends. Stu-

## Laptops for students

Although Medic to Medic sponsorship provides financial stability by paying for students tuition fees, the financial hardships faced by these students means they are still disadvantaged when accessing learning resources and equipment to aid their studies. In recognition of this, several kind donations have enabled Medic to Medic to provide laptops for some of the students, allowing them easier access to the faculty ICT system and the vast collection of medical resources available on the internet.

In a letter of thanks, Lyson Gwesele who received a laptop through



*Donated laptop gratefully received by Mwayi Madanitsa*

the scheme remarked "with a laptop studying will be very easy and communication with you will also be very easy". In true testament to the programme he went onto say: "You may underestimate how these provisions have impacted

upon my life here at school, but let me tell you that Medic to Medic has really changed my life. What interests me most is the realization that there is somebody thousands of kilometers away who cares about

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dents have to give case presentations regularly in Powerpoint and the majority prefer to review lecture notes online as the cost of printing is expensive. It certainly wasn't on our initial list of ways to help out our students, but after several generous donations, we have decided to buy modest laptops for our

second years (see leading article). We have also been lucky enough to receive old laptops from several doctors at the London Hospital, which we have taken out to our recently qualified Malawian doctors. If you are in the London area, have recently upgraded your laptop, and have no

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## New branch at the University of East Anglia

I first read about Medic to Medic in the Student BMJ about a year ago. I immediately felt passionate about the cause as I've always had an interest in International Health. At the time, I'd recently taken a step back from being on committee for the university climbing club and I decided I needed something to occupy my time so I became enthused about forming a branch of Medic to Medic at UEA!

Although it's taken a while to set up I feel proud of what we've achieved this year. In November, 6 of us ran the City of Norwich Half Marathon and raised over £650. I was very daunted about running it as I couldn't actually remember the last time I'd ran anywhere...(I think I was about 9!) It was a great personal challenge and I enjoyed all the aches, pains,

sweat and training, knowing that it was for a good cause! Next year we're thinking about being more extravagant and maybe run it in costumes...suggestions would be welcome!!

We've set up an on going mobile phone recycling scheme for staff and students to donate their old mobiles. Over the last 6 months we've col-



The UEA team

lected about 25 phones and raised around £200. We've also distributed charity boxes around the campus shops and collected and run games at the University club nights and Norwich City Centre.

More recently, we've been trying to spread the word about Medic to Medic by running raffles and speaking at Medic society events. Over June and July we're hoping to run some Revision Lectures for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Medics as a fundraiser.

After originally thinking I needed something to occupy myself with, running UEA Medic to Medic has done just that! Next year, we're hoping to build upon our successes and organise more social fundraisers that all students can get involved with.

By Tamsin Lillie  
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## Reporting from the field...

Cambridge medical student **James Winchester** gives an account of his time teaching anatomy to students at the Malawi College of medicine last summer.

My trip to Malawi was the first time that I had travelled outside Europe and was certainly a very exciting, worthwhile and eye-opening experience. I was based at the College of Medicine in Blantyre, the largest and most populous city in Malawi. I was involved in teaching anatomy to first year medical students. I was pleasantly surprised by both the high quality of the facilities available at the medical school and the quality and depth of the medical course. I shared a room in the College with a Malawian student and we soon became good friends and I learned much about the culture of the country from him. Teaching took the form of lectures and dissection sessions, and we also provided extra revision sessions to help the students prepare for their upcoming end of semester exams.

The medical school was co-located with the Queen Elizabeth Central



Anatomy at the College of Medicine

Hospital, the largest referral centre in the country, and this gave me the opportunity to follow several ward rounds and gain insight into the very different spectrum of diseases seen by doctors in Malawi to in Europe. Next door was a children's orthopaedic hospital run by the charity Cure International, and a tour around the ward with an orthopaedic registrar showed me several severe cases of diseases seen only in textbooks by UK doctors and students.

Weekends gave me the opportunity to explore more of the country, and I was able to visit Cape Maclear on Lake

Malawi, get close to elephants at the National Park at Liwonde, and climb Mount Mulanje, the highest mountain in the country and supposedly where JRR Tolkien drew inspiration for the Lonely Mountain in his book *The Hobbit*. It also gave me the opportunity to see, if briefly and from the window of a fast moving bus, the rural areas of Malawi in which the majority of the population live. The country is amongst the very poorest in the world and many city dwellers live relatively privileged lives. The poor living conditions of the majority of the population contribute greatly to the high prevalence of infectious and parasitic diseases, malaria and tuberculosis being of particular significance. Unfortunately, the small numbers of locally trained doctors staying in the country after graduation means that the hospitals are dependent to a considerable degree on doctors from Europe or the US. The people of Malawi were exceptionally friendly and welcoming, and I have made many friends who I would very much like to meet again.

## Lecture notes: Gideon Chimtukuta

Every issue, we aim to give you the view from Africa with a short column from one of our sponsored students. This issue, we have the pleasure of a few words from Gideon Chimtukuta, one of the new students sponsored by the programme.

**H**ello! I am Gideon Chimtukuta, a 21yr old and I have just finished my second year of medical school at College of Medicine.

I was borne in a family of six children, three brothers and three sisters. I lost my mother and my father in 1998 and 2002 respectively. After the death of my mother the first borne dropped out of school and went to Lilongwe where he ended up being a minibus conductor. The rest of us went to our Mother's home village Mdeka, Blantyre where we stayed with our Uncle. Unfortunately my uncle who was not working at the time misappropriated our property and then married a lady in the neighbouring village, taking my two youngest siblings with him.

My uncle rarely came to help us with basic needs like food and soap not to mention school materials. Luckily primary education was free but when I went to secondary school in 2001 my Uncle could not afford the fees, forcing my younger brother and myself to drop out.

We left the village and we went to Blantyre City, where we spent 6 months as streetkids, until people from the Samaritan Trust approached us and took us to one of their centers in Bangwe. They sent us back to



**Beneficiary: Gideon Chimtukuta**

school, but initially I had to go back to primary school as they could not sponsor somebody already in secondary school. After this I went to Pius XII Minor Seminary for my secondary school education, during which time my Uncle passed away. Although I passed well, Samaritan told me that they could not afford to pay for my fees if I got a place in the University of Malawi.

Fortunately I was among the best 20 in the College of Medicine aptitude test I got the National AIDS Council (NAC) scholarship to cover my fees but it has been a real struggle to afford my stationery and other requirements. Medic to Medic has enabled me to cover these costs, helping me on my way to achieving my dreams of becoming a Doctor to help my family as well as my country.

## Kate's column

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need for your old one, please do consider donating it to us – we will gladly come and pick it up.

Finally, we have a new outpost at the University of East Anglia (p2), and we are hoping to start a pilot programme at Makerere University in Uganda from September.

Thank you as ever for your continuing support and sponsorship – it really makes all the difference.

*Kate*

## Laptops for students

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what I am doing here in Malawi and that alone is a great force behind me that keeps me working harder and harder.”

On the back of the success of the laptop project, Medic to Medic hopes it can run similar schemes in the future to support the wider learning needs of the students.

Tamsin Cargill

## Cambridge update



**Cambridge ceilidh**

On the 30th October the Cambridge branch of Medic to Medic held their first charity Ceilidh. Around 100 students arrived at Emmanuel College to the sound of Cambridge's very own Ceilidh band. Like many of the guests I'd never been to a Ceilidh before and wasn't sure what to expect. Once the old hall was full, Caoimhe, the 'caller' of the band demonstrated a few of the moves and then we were off! The group of seven played cheery folk tunes and skillful calls directed the hall into a twirling frenzy. It was great fun and by the end of the night we were all proficient Ceilidh dancers! The event raised over £400; we would like to thank those who supported Medic to Medic. The next fundraising event we have planned is a formal meal for students on the 27th April at Clare College.



**The band play on...**

## the medic to medic programme newsletter

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For comments, questions and errata regarding this newsletter, please contact the editor, Tim Bartley, at the general email address given above.

Every effort has been made to credit contributors to this newsletter. Where omissions have occurred, please advise and they will be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity.



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PROGRAMME

Part of:

IMET2000

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Company No. 3931085

The Medic to Medic programme was founded in 2008, as part of IMET2000, to address the problems of training and retaining medical students in some of the world's poorest countries.

For our first country, we chose Malawi. Like so many sub-Saharan countries, Malawi is desperately short of doctors. It has just two doctors per 100 000 people. The UK has over 230 per 100 000.

Since the founding of the Malawi College of Medicine (the country's first and only medical school) in 1991, only 50 doctors are being produced per year for a population of over 10 million. Simply not enough medics are being trained.

Medic to Medic will help in two ways: to guarantee the tuition fees until graduation for poor students and to increase the number of doctors being trained each year. We have 25 students currently under our sponsorship scheme at the Malawi College of Medicine, selected for their academic potential as well as their need for financial aid. We aim to sponsor another 5 students every year.

If you feel you can sponsor a medical student, current tuition fees are only £8 a month. Please note that although you will be linked with an individual student, our donations are pooled so that no one student is disadvantaged if a donor needs to pull out.

Please set up a standing order to Medic to Medic at Lloyds TSB:

Account no: 00401305

Sort code: 30-95-36

Branch no: 309536 (Maidenhead)

For more information or to request a direct debit form, please contact us (details above left).

# M2M does Paris marathon

by Tamsin Cargill

Tired, muddy and painful, my legs are not at their best. I have just got back from a three hour run. This was not quite what I envisaged when I signed up for the Paris marathon back in October. I was imagining myself triumphantly bounding across the finish line beneath l'Arc de Triomphe after a pleasant jog around the Eiffel tower. I've got plenty of time to train I thought – how hard can it be?

Six months and many miles later I have come to the realisation that training your body to run 26.2 miles is no mean feat. But what keeps me going when my mind and my body are pleading me to stop moving is the knowledge that the money I am raising for Medic to Medic will make a real difference to medical students who are in real serious need of support to enable them to keep studying. Please support me at <http://www.justgiving.com/Tamsin-Cargill>



*All roads lead to....Paris*