



I hope you all have had a great Easter break and enjoyed the seemingly continuous run of bank holidays! We've had a lot going on here at Medic to Medic, with successful selection of our first clinical officers in Malawi (see opposite). We hope to expand the number of students sponsored at the Malawi College of Health Sciences to include nurses, physiotherapists and dental therapists (similar to clinical officers, these health workers carry out most dental work in rural areas). So if you know any colleagues from these professions who might be interested in sponsoring a student overseas, please let us know.

In fact, signing up for a direct debit is now even easier as we have a new online direct debit facility. The timing was fortuitous as the company who handles our direct debit collection (this is commonly done

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Expanding sponsorship to other categories of health workers

Clinical officers perform an important role in Malawi. Due to the current lack of qualified doctors, many of the district hospitals, located in the small towns around the country, are the responsibility of an experienced clinical officer.

The Malawi College of Health Sciences is located close to Kamuzu Central Hospital in the capital city of Lilongwe. It organizes courses for mid-level categories of health workers such as registered nurses, clinical officers, pharmacy assistants and dental therapists. The clinical officers join a 3 year diploma course with tuition, boarding and field trip fees paid for by the



Clinical officers Virginia Phiri (left) and Pemphero Afune

government. In return for this support they are bonded to work in a district hospital for five years after graduating.

Medic to Medic would like to expand its current sponsorship programme in Malawi by supporting other categories of health workers. During a recent monitoring visit in January 2011, two Year 1 clinical officers were identified by senior college staff as suitable

recipients for support: Virginia Phiri from Mzimba District, and Pemphero Afune from Balaka District.

We will support them by providing living, stationery, and equipment allowances for the full period of their diploma course. During the visit medical reference books and a flipchart were also presented to the college library and the two trainees.

Doctors.net.uk support M2M

Medic to Medic were delighted to be chosen as Doctors.net.uk's sponsored charity for September-December last year. Doctors.net.uk's is the biggest online community of doctors in the UK and many doctors use it as their email provider, so it gave us ex-

cellent exposure. Doctors who do market research surveys through Doctors.net.uk are paid in eSR points, which they can donate to their charity of choice. We were lucky enough to receive over £900 in this way! This went towards funding our two new clinical officers in Malawi.

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Elective in Malawi: Toni Mortimer

Malawi was an obvious choice for my elective after having worked with Medic to Medic for several years. I was keen to get a taste of healthcare in Africa and also experience first-hand what it's like to be a student at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital (QECH), Blantyre.

QECH is Malawi's largest hospital where hundreds of patients attend every day, often having travelled a great distance or waiting till their symptoms are very severe. The high burden of TB and HIV in the population meant we often saw patients on ward rounds that were acutely ill. It was not unusual to see more than 25 patients on a ward round and most clinics



Future doctors...?

had about a hundred patients waiting patiently in line.

Each patient had a friend or relative acting as their 'guardian'. The role of the guardian included helping to provide the patient's history, feeding, nursing, administering medicine and even doing physiotherapy! This helped make up

somewhat for the shortage of nurses and also gave the wards a strong community feel.

While I was out there I was able to appreciate how the Malawian students had to balance their learning against working in the busy wards. The shortage of new equipment and medicines meant that they implement management plans according to what is available rather than what is best practice.

Visiting QECH reinforced for me the importance of Medic to Medic's work. Staff at the hospital do fantastic work, but are increasingly overstretched as patient numbers rise. A new wing is currently being built. There are certainly enough patients to fill it; I hope there will be enough doctors!

BMA info fund

The Medic to Medic office is currently feeling rather full as the result of several large cardboard boxes which arrived at the end of last year. They are the result of our successful bid for a portion of the British Medical Association Information Fund, which each year donates medical textbooks in partnership with Teaching Aids at Low Cost (www.talcuk.org/). A record number of applications were received this year, so we were extremely happy with our consignment of Oxford Handbooks, medical and nursing dictionaries, and anatomy flipcharts. These will be taken out to our students over the next few monitoring visits.



Books received by Samantha Musasa

Second M2M student wins award



Award winner: Lyson Gwesele

Following final year Yamikani Mastala's initial award in 2010, a second Medic to Medic student has followed in his steps and won an elective award.

Based on his performance in the exams at the end of the Department of Medicine rotations during Year 3, Lyson Gwesele is one of 16 Year 4 students, that have been

selected from the College of Medicine, to do elective studies in four different universities in the UK. He will be spending four weeks at the University of Warwick Medical School in October 2011.

Congratulations to Lyson! Hopefully this is just the start of a trend for other Medic to Medic students to aim for in future years.

Lecture notes: Samantha Musasa

Every issue, we aim to give you the view from Africa with a short column from one of our sponsored students. This issue, we invite Samantha Musasa to share with us her experience of transition from premedical school to medical school.

The premedical sciences program, which is the foundation year, is basically a one year program which, in my view pertaining to my experience, is there to prepare students for their medical school course which takes five years. I did my premed program in 2010 and this year I am in the first year of my medical course. I found the premed program quite a lot of work since I was comparing the workload in the year to the workload I had in my secondary education which was much less than in premed. Soon as I started first year, I realised that premed was indeed just a foundation I had to lay because first year is even more involving than premed and I must say I am expecting more work in the coming years.

The foundation year was significant for my own interpersonal development and it enlightened me on how to handle my work in the medical school. Most of the skills



Beneficiary: Samantha Musasa

I am using when doing my work this year, I must admit that I learnt them from my premed program and they are helping a lot. I have realised that if I were to go straight into the medical program without going through premed I would have struggled with school because my working skills improved in my premed program. I am loving my first year because I know that whatever I'm learning is what my life will be about comparing to premed where I had to do other things which will be irrelevant in future.

Kate's column

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by an external agency, even for big companies) informed us in January that they were stopping their service in February. Luckily we were already in talks with another (more reliable) company, so we were able to push through the change-over and only miss one month. So to all those who donate by direct debit and who have borne with us, many thanks for your understanding!

Nam Thaker has also started as our new part-time administrator,

and some of you may already have corresponded with her. We hope to raise a lot more money this year with her help.

Finally, our umbrella charity IMET2000 is holding a dinner at the House of Commons on July 8th with some well-known faces (see page 3). This will raise money for the work of all its programmes, including Medic to Medic. If you or friends would like to come, do let us know at admin@medictomedic.org.uk.

Kate

Imperial branch update

The Imperial branch has had another successful term building on the success of last year.

Special thanks go to the organisers of the Imperial Cross Country Club's Hyde Park Relays, who nominated Medic to Medic as their charity of the year and donated a generous amount of their profits from the race. Medic to Medic had fun selling cupcakes and bucket collecting on the day.

The charity can scheme is still ongoing and the past month have seen many of our cans, placed by the tills in local shops, filled with loose change. We look forward to continuing to raise money and awareness of the charity in our local area.

We hope that all the money we have raised this year will go towards sending some text books, kindly donated by the BMA, to students in Uganda.

House of Commons fundraising dinner

We're excited to be able to tell you that the International Medical Education Trust Summer Dinner will be held on Friday 8th July this year at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, London. The dinner will particularly focus on the programmes run in Africa both the Uganda and the Distance Learning Tanzania Medic to Medic projects will be announced to receive pledges. Tickets for the event will be sold at £150 each and there will be both a live and silent auction and a raffle held on the night. If you'd like more information about the event or would like to help by donating something for either the auction or the raffle, please contact Nam on n.thaker@imperial.ac.uk

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.



medictomedic
PROGRAMME

Part of:

IMET2000

Registered Charity No. 1081287

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, please visit www.medictomedic.org.uk to set up a direct debit online or download a paper form.

You will be linked with an individual student and receive regular updates from them on their progress. You are welcome to enter into email correspondence with them and many of our students find this very motivating. Please note that although you will be allocated a particular student, our donations are pooled so that no one student is disadvantaged if a donor needs to pull out.

For more information, please contact us (details above left).

Medic to medic marathons

On the 29th May 2011, Alexandra Yarrow, a Canadian librarian and Kate's cousin, will be running in the Ottawa half-marathon in aid of Medic to Medic. We want to say a huge thank you to Alex and good luck from everyone on the Medic to Medic team.

If you would like to sponsor Alex, please go to Virgin Money Giving (www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com) and type in Alex Yarrow. All donations will be hugely appreciated!

If you would like to run for Medic to Medic, here are a few suggestions of upcoming events:

10th July 2011- The Asics 10k British London Run, Hyde Park Corner, London

18th September 2011- The BUPA Great North Run, Newcas-



Marathon effort: Alexandra Yarrow

tle, Gateshead

25th September 2011- The Run to the Beat Half Marathon- O2 Greenwich

9th October 2011- The Royal Pars Half Marathon, Hyde Park, London

Email us at medic-tomedic@googlemail.com if you would like to take part or want more information on any events.