

VTS NEWSLETTER

Editorial

Dr Jim Noble

Last weekend I had the rather rare opportunity of spending some time relaxing and reflecting. As a group who advocates reflection amongst our registrars, we seem to allow precious little time for ourselves to follow our own advice.

My contemplation was on "How things have changed", not upon whether for better or for worse but just that they have changed. Perhaps it would be good to hear from some of you out there as to whether you feel it is for good or bad.

Gone are the days where quality, quality, quality were firmly nailed above our doors but now our driving force is numbers. Never mind the quality feel the width or let's not be too particular about all the details of the training but let's clock up the numbers.

Joining us on a Wednesday lunchtime when the groups are enjoying lunch together will leave you in no doubt about the change in the male to female ratio. Have you ever thought

why that is or indeed what effect that will have on the future of General Practice?

It used to be that we, like most other specialties, would train our Registrars in an orderly composite and planned fashion. Perhaps like a sculptor who takes the freshly hewn stone and by effort and time transformed it into a



unique work of art – or perhaps not – as the case may be. However, it does seem that we are being advised to be jobbing agencies with a bit of half day release education thrown in. The law may allow, and even encourage, pick and mix type programmes where the GP education time is dubious to say the least, but I would suggest that a GP is the last of the very wide ranging generalists whose

role in the survival of the NHS cannot be overstressed and whose training must be of the highest standards. Are we in danger of going back to where we were as a specialty 30 years ago, full of people who could not succeed in other specialties?

There are many things outside our control but we should at least be true to those things within our grasp. We should make sure our standard of training and learning is of the highest. Our assessment or self-assessment has to be honest and acted upon. And above all we should at least be honest and tell it to the powers that be how it really is. Interestingly enough we have a visit from PMETB in April and I personally intend it to be a frank and honest discussion of what life is like in the real world.

Please forgive me if I have gone on a bit but your Course Organisers face these issues on a daily and weekly basis and sometimes it is cathartic to share it with your colleagues. Thank you.

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Issue No. 3
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If you have any comments, articles, notices, etc that you would like including in the next issue of the VTS Newsletter, please email: Karen.Kirkland@derbyhospitals.nhs.uk

NEWS & GOSSIP

Welcome Back to Dr Mufaza Rashid who rejoins the scheme after her maternity leave.

Congratulations, Goodbye & Good Luck

to Dr Munesh Mistry and Dr Rama Rao who completed their training in February and are now fully qualified GPs.

Please keep in touch and let us know how you're getting on.

Sorry—no gossip in this issue. Please try harder for next time!



Derby VTS
Half Day
Release
Teaching

FORTHCOMING TEACHING SESSIONS

Please contact the office if you have any questions about the teaching programme.

1st YEARS

21/03/07	Emergencies in General Practice	CALAMUR
04/04/07	Irregular Bleeding & Smears	RASHID
18/04/07	Psychiatric Emergencies	SHARMA
02/05/07	Chronic Fatigue / Appropriate Use of X-rays	REGAN
16/05/07	Failure to Thrive	POOLE
30/05/07	Aches & Pains	ARNOLD

2nd YEARS

14/03/07	More Paediatric Issues	BADHE
28/03/07	Prescribing for the Elderly / Patient with co-morbidity	ALDERSON
11/04/07	Appropriate Use of Microbiology	KUHAN
25/04/07	Contraception in General Practice	MCGUINNESS
09/05/07	Wheezing—Is it Asthma or COPD?	GOLDING
23/05/07	Preparation for GP Registrar Year	(SANSOME)

3rd YEARS

14/03/07	Obesity	MC'OBEWA
21/03/07	TBC	MILLS
28/03/07	TBC	FULLER
04/04/07	TBC	BIRDI
11/04/07	Planning & Reflection	N/A
18/04/07	TBC	WRIGHT
25/04/07	TBC	BRADLEY
02/05/07	TBC	SAROHA
09/05/07	TBC	WILTON
16/05/07	TBC	OMODARA
23/05/07	TBC	SWAMY
30/05/07	TBC	DAS

If you are unable to attend any of your group's teaching sessions, please remember to let the VTS Office know in plenty of time.

SHO Column

Unfortunately, nothing has been received from any 1st or 2nd Year SHOs for your new column.

Dr Emily Poole has kindly "volunteered" to be the 1st Year to provide us with an item for the next issue.

2nd Years — please can you let us know who will be sending us an item for the next newsletter?

Alternatively, would you prefer us to draw up a rota for each year group so that everyone has a turn?

PLEASE LET US KNOW!

What Lies Behind Bird Flu

by Dr Liz Augustine

Bird flu is making the news again after nearly a year. The media is full of speculations and comments on how the dreaded pandemic has reared its head in Britain. Academic journals are talking about how best to contain and prevent the spread to human beings, and this includes developing a vaccine.

This might be a good time to explore reasons why bird flu is happening on such a large scale worldwide. A few newspapers have mentioned modern poultry practices, or in other words, mass farming. Maintaining large numbers of any species, including human beings in a contained environment is bound to facilitate the rapid spread of most diseases. Outbreaks of cholera and measles are not uncommon in refugee camps. So, it is not surprising that animals reared in an unnatural environment rapidly succumb to

outbreaks. The outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease among cattle in Britain in 2001 is another example. We are still experiencing the consequences of BSE. Mass farming involves forced feeding, forced reproduction, and use of hormones, antibiotics, and other practices that we would rather not know about, not to mention the effect on the environment. It just goes against nature.

So why does mass farming exist? It is now common for families to eat meat and meat products several times a day. The demand for meat continues to rise in the West and sadly, this culture is successfully spreading to the rest of the world. Mass farming is also heavily subsidised making it cheaper to eat meat on a daily

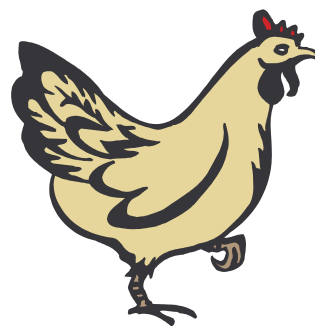
basis, and in a way this is a case of supply driving demand, rather than the other way around. Meat is consumed too often and too much. The outbreak of bird flu in Suffolk does not seem to have deterred

people from eating poultry as evident from the very small drop in sales in supermarket chains.

This is because people are aware that bird flu is very difficult to contract from cooked meat.

What this says is

that, people want to be able to continue their lives unchanged even if it has consequences for other species. It seems that it has become a right to eat meat everyday and not a luxury anymore. This does have its consequences, and perhaps it is time to put on our thinking caps.



TRAINERS' COLUMN

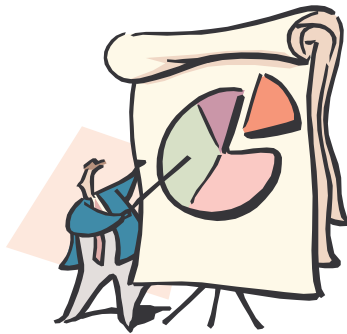
Next Trainers' Workshop ...

VTS Consultants & Trainers Forum

28 March 2007, Devonshire House

- 6:00pm—Assembly Area
- 6:45pm—Boardroom

*The meeting should close
at around 9:00pm*



AGENDA

- 1). PMETB Visit
- 2). Feedback from Specialties
- 3). nMRCGP & GP Curriculum
- 4). New Rotations
- 5). Selection Centre Update
- 6). AOB

PMETB Visit—25 April 2007

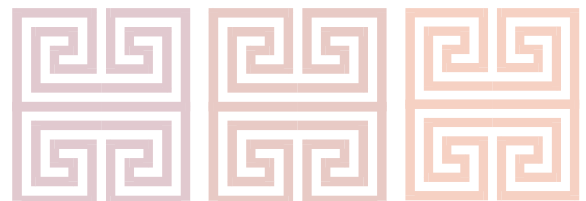
All Derby VTS GP Trainers should have received a letter from the East Midlands Deanery about the impending visit from PMETB. **The Trainers are being asked to attend at 2:00pm** (for about an hour). It may not be possible for all of you to attend but we are keen that **at least one Trainer from each Practice** attends.

Can you please let Viv know as a matter of urgency whether or not you will be coming along? (Email: Viv.Thompson@derbyhospitals.nhs.uk)

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

- What?** Derby Trainers' Course
When? Thursday 10th & Friday 11th May 2007
Where? Makeney Hall Hotel, Near Duffield
Time? 9:00am to 10:00pm (Thursday)
9:00am to 5:00pm (Friday)

*Further information and
programmes to follow.*



PLEASE NOTE:

We are keen to receive any articles or comments that trainers would like to submit for publication in the next VTS Newsletter.

Please email your items to:
Karen.Kirkland@derbyhospitals.nhs.uk

NOTICES & REMINDERS

1st Years

Please can you make sure that you have returned:

- ◆ 5 Weeks Assessment Form for your new post (on CD and website)
- ◆ Any outstanding assessments from your previous post

How are your practice visits coming along?

2nd Years

Please can you make sure that you have returned:

- ◆ 5 Week Assessment Form for your new post (on CD and website)
- ◆ Any outstanding assessments from your previous post

Have you visited your Training Practice?

3rd Years

Please remember:

- ◆ MRCGP Exam Course in Wakefield—15 & 16 March 2007
- ◆ Any outstanding claims/receipts for study leave
- ◆ OOH Form from 01/01/07 to 31/03/07 is due on 10/04/07

General Reminders!

This year's **VTS Summer Social** will be on the afternoon & evening of **Wed 11 July**. It is traditional for the 3rd Years to organise this event. So **3rd Years** ... please put your thinking caps on and decide what you would like to do / where you would like to go. Please let the VTS office know if you need any help with arrangements.

PMETB Visit—25 April 2007

2:00pm—GP Trainers and Consultants (VTS Educational Supervisors)

3:15pm—VTS SHOs and GP Registrars

Derby Trainers' Course—10 & 11 May 2007

Makeney Hall Hotel, Near Duffield

PLEASE REMEMBER

The Derby VTS Consultants and Trainers Forum (pka AGM) is at 6pm on Wed 28 March 2007 in Devonshire House. If you have not already done so, please let the VTS Office know whether or not you will be attending.