2015 was another busy year for the Medical Education Fellows, culminating in our National Medical Education Conference ‘Past Lessons, Future Innovations’. The MEFs have been organising the conference since 2005 and our 10th event was an opportunity to look back over ten years of changes in education and forward to what lies ahead.

As well as an update on MEF activity, we hope that the newsletter provides a bit of inspiration and highlights opportunities to get involved in medical education. As a MEF, one of the commonest questions that I am asked by other trainees is ‘should I do a postgraduate course in education and which one should I do?’ In addition to news about our recent conference, we therefore wanted to highlight some of the courses in postgraduate medical education that some of the MEFs have done with a personal perspective. There is a huge range of options available, so it can be difficult to know which to choose.

This edition provides some personal perspectives on the different courses undertaken by some of the MEFs. It is nowhere near an exhaustive list and certainly not intended to advertise any particular course. However, we hope it provides a taster of what is on offer in postgraduate qualifications and perhaps a little inspiration for those interested.

Dr Sophie Price
Lead Medical Education Fellow
The 10th Wessex National Medical Education Conference:
‘Past Lessons, Future Innovations’

The 2015 Conference ‘Past Lessons, Future Innovations’ gave us an opportunity to look back over 10 years of medical education and ahead to what the future holds. There were three superb keynote speakers; Professor Tim Dornan started the day with a critical appraisal of outcome based education and a look at medical education past, present and future. Dr Phil Hyde gave us an inspiring perspective of education in the context of multi-professional working. Lastly Dr William McConnell gave us his characteristic theatrical presentation and a brilliantly entertaining conclusion to the speakers. The workshops were, as always, very well received and this year’s sessions included the Simbulance, Professional Support Unit, ‘Incorporating Education into a Job Plan’ and ‘Presentation Skills’.

The day is a real inspiration, in particular hearing about the fantastic work that is happening both across the regional and more nationally in the poster and podium presentations. The winner of this year’s podium prize was Mr Howard Tribe, who presented his work on a simulation programme aimed at changing behaviours around knife crime: ‘Can a sequential simulation of a stabbing scenario be used to create a lasting impact on teenagers about the topic of knife violence?’ This felt like an exceptional year, with an incredibly high standard of podium speakers. It was clear that we can look forward to another 10 years of inspirational conferences.

A few highlights from the day:
Teaching and Learning For Healthcare Professionals

Course Structure:
The course at Bristol is a modular, part-time, postgraduate Medical Education course allowing accreditation with the Higher Education Academy. The PG Certificate is awarded after the completion of 5 units (60 credits) and candidates can then enroll on the PG Diploma (120 credits) and subsequently complete an MSc (180 credits).

Modules
The course is designed to fit around the varied work schedule of practising clinicians. After successfully completing the first module, which comprises three study days, students can then navigate their way through the remaining modules; each consisting of a single study day. A fast track option is offered and would allow completion of the entire PG Certificate in nine months.

Syllabus
The first module is designed to arm candidates with a grounding in educational theory. Other mandatory modules cover topics such as learner diversity, assessment and feedback. Students complete preparatory work before each study day and are encouraged to actively participate in practical sessions which include planning and delivering a teaching session on a non medical topic of their choice.

Students are taught how to critically appraise educational research as well as analyse and reflect on their own performance. Each module involves a written assignment and students are encouraged to submit a draft prior to the deadline in order to receive feedback. Whilst the nature of the assignments is fixed, students are encouraged to frame each assignment in an area of their own interest permitting a degree of personalisation.

Dr Ben Sieniewicz
Cardiology Specialty Trainee
PG Certificate in Medical Education 2015

Postgraduate Qualifications in Medical Education

The table below details some of the Institutions where the MEFs have completed Postgraduate Qualifications in Medical Education, although this is by no means an exhaustive list of the courses available. Different courses vary considerably in content, format and style, so it is worth considering which will best suit your learning style. If you would like to speak to someone who has done one of these courses, please do get in touch. The following articles feature some personal accounts of a few of the courses listed.

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<tr>
<th>Institution / Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cardiff University - PgCert / PgDip / MSc</td>
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I completed this part-time, modular taught course alongside my urology specialty registrar training. It is designed for healthcare professionals involved in the delivery of teaching and training (most students were doctors or dentists).

The degree comprises on-site taught elements supplemented with self-directed study. Students undergo the master’s in a modular fashion, first gaining the certificate and then the diploma or master’s programme. Each module comprised a week of taught days at the medical school in Coventry (a mixture of seminars, lectures and group work) followed by a 5000 word assignment completed at home. Supervision was available for the assignments and further face-to-face help was available at other times (for example library and IT support) although living far from the university I was not able to use this service fully. For those living further away web-based seminars were arranged to help plan and write up the dissertation which kept you engaged during the year.

I enjoyed attending the taught parts of the course to share experiences with peers interested in education (and to feel like a ‘real’ student back on campus again). Teaching was of a high level and inspiring. As would be expected the course covered the principles and methods of teaching and learning; as well as assessment and feedback.

Reflective practice was encouraged, our individual teaching styles were analysed and feedback was given (for example a teaching session was videoed and replayed during one of the modules). Having not undertaken a research degree I welcomed the challenge of literature reviews and the undertaking of clinical research during my dissertation. In conclusion, I would recommend this degree!

Miss Angela Birnie
Urology Specialty Trainee
Master’s in Medical Education 2014

The MA (Ed) in Winchester was a really different and stretching experience for me. As an Orthopod I am very used to things being black and white (quite literally looking at x-rays!). Either something is broken or not, it needs fixing or not. I don’t remember ever having been asked how something makes me feel or why it made me feel that way, but that is what the MA asks you to do on a weekly, and even daily basis if you spread the reading out. The course starts very philosophically and gradually brings you closer to the actual nuts and bolts of teaching. It encourages you to look at yourself as a learner and teacher and work out why things are working or not working and really helps you to consider the meanings of words that we throw around in our daily work and the value of all of our educational activities.

I like the fact that it is face to face, my co students really helped to stretch me and deepen my understanding. The tutors are hugely supportive and stretch you even further. There is, without doubt, a lot of reading and a lot of writing in a style that I certainly haven’t visited before, but it really has affected every aspect of my practice and not just my professional education practice. I think I am a much more cognisant practitioner and it has helped to keep me focused on the educational opportunities that we experience daily.

Miss Nikki Kelsall
Orthopaedic Consultant
MA Medical Education 2015