

# Medical Education Group Newsletter

*Small Group Teaching: The Things that Make the Difference!*

February, 2019

WARWICK  
MEDICAL SCHOOL

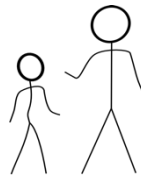
## Notes from Meeting

Thank you to all of those who were able to come to our February Medical Education Group meeting!



Dr Simon Jenkins spoke to us about some of the things you can do in a small group teaching setting in order to make a positive difference. But instead of just telling us what works, he **showed** us what works! He did this by starting a discussion centered around the question "What is meant by ethics?" He immediately turned the floor over to open up a lively discussion where multiple opinions were given and debated. Once key concepts were touched upon, Simon took the floor back and helped to center us with a definition of ethics: *it's how one ought to act, which requires justification, reason and argument.*

Next, we were shown a stick figure drawing where one stick figure was injecting the other with a syringe. From there Simon simply asked "What would you want to know about this?" Again, with our curiosity amplified, we began to discuss. The group decided that we would want to: *know the motivation for giving the injection, was there consent, who are these stick figures, what is being injected, what are the risks/benefits of this act, and what does the law say about the situation?* Once key areas were explored by the group, Simon again took the floor back and rounded out the discussion with a brief lesson on three different ethical theories in the context of the needle wielding stick figures: consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics.



Finally, we played a modified version of the *Pandemic Survival Game* in order to apply some of the ethical concepts just discussed. We were all asked to take a coin from a bag. The coin represented a pill. Simon went on to explain that during the imaginary pandemic we all needed at least one pill to survive, but half of the people in the room actually needed a second pill to live. From there he gave us time to work the room and see how people would go about using the scarce pill resource. While some participants raided Simon's stockpile of pills when he wasn't looking – others came forward to say that they would give their one pill up to those who needed two to survive, especially if that person had skills that would help the post-pandemic world.

After all pills were stashed away for safe keeping, Simon brought our focus back to the front of the room. Bringing things full circle, he talked about how the session we just participated in was a practical example of how a small group session could be carried out in order to teach subjects, that at first glance, may seem like they can only be taught didactically. In the small group setting, Simon encouraged each one of us to:

1. **Be curious. You never know what will the students may say/what their views may be**
2. **Allow any student with relevant contributions to make and take control of the class (for a time)**
3. **Maximize the number of sequential speakers**
4. **Take opportunities to make students move around (with consideration of disabilities)**
5. **Make teaching more practical (For example: instead of just teaching us about ethics, Simon showed us how a discussion about it can be turned into an applied activity!)**
6. **Be dynamic and have back up plans (turn, pair, share)**

It was a great session! One which inspired many of us to think about how to actively make our small group teaching sessions more experiential, practical and applied.

## Upcoming Events

**Next meeting:**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March

13:00 - MTC 005 & 007

Dr. Rob Wise

*"Looking Back at my time as a Warwick Medical Student: My Perspective as an FY2"*

## Quote of the Month:

*"As a teacher, always be curious. You never know what the students may say, or what their views might be!"*

## Research Article Spotlight:

*"I feel like I sleep here: How space and place influence medical student experiences"*

Hawick, et al., (2018).  
Medical Education, 52:10.

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