

## **EDITORIAL**

Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure that I announce the first issue of the *Journal of Medical Education Research (JMER)* from the University of Buckingham Medical School. On behalf of the *JMER* editorial team, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the readership of *JMER*. I would like to thank our authors, editors and anonymous reviewers who have volunteered to contribute to the success of this journal.

*JMER* is a peer-reviewed, open access journal which is published annually. It encourages articles on innovative methods and preliminary research in undergraduate medical education. We invite contributions from medical educators, medical students, junior doctors and healthcare professionals. We are very happy to have a unique team of editorial board members who are clinicians, biomedical scientists and medical students with a passion for innovation and a special focus on curriculum, assessments, professionalism and evaluation. We welcome research articles, invited commentaries, letters to the Editor and ‘Watch this space’.

Medical education research is a relatively new domain and *JMER* hopes to address a niche that was hitherto unaddressed by a medical education journal. There are very few journals which encourage early medical education researchers to publish preliminary research findings. Our ‘Watch this space’ section encourages researchers to share novel ideas and preliminary findings from research in curriculum design and delivery, assessments or evaluation of teaching programmes. Undergraduate medical students and junior doctors are often keen to be involved in medical education research but as they are relatively naïve, we would like to encourage them to consider our Letters to the Editor section. We would like to invite experts to share their perspective through our invited commentaries. The contents will be of interest to medical educators, researchers and learners.

The first Issue of *JMER* has focused on innovations in undergraduate medical education curriculum design and delivery, specifically prompted by COVID-19. The pandemic has disrupted the traditional

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structure of medical education, prompting the development of virtual learning environments and innovative methods of student assessments. But it has encouraged rapid dissemination of evaluations of novel methods and promoted an ‘evidence-based’ approach in medical education. It has had an impact on students’ learning and morale as they lost on the face-to-face interactions with peers, teachers, clinicians and patients. However, this also prompted many students to take self-initiative to volunteer in the clinical environment and the community to support the most vulnerable affected by the pandemic. Junior doctors trained in evidence-based medicine, volunteered to carry out rapid critical appraisals of emerging evidence regarding management of the new disease through journal clubs.

Further, the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities has prompted an awareness on health inequalities. So, while the pandemic has caused disruption, I would like to think it has been a catalyst for innovation in medical education highlighting the need for integrating research methods, public health, health inequalities and social accountability into training of future doctors.

We will welcome your feedback! We hope you will find JMER informative.

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*Editor-in-Chief*