



GLOBAL HEALTH • LOCAL ISSUE

medsin – uk

Medsin-UK Annual Report

2005-2006

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Administrative Details

Charity number: 1111824

Address: 117 Cross Farm Road, Harbourne, Birmingham, B17 0NZ

Bank: The Co-operative Bank plc, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M60 4EP

Mission Statement

Ideology

Medsin-UK promotes humanitarian ideals among healthcare students, seeking to contribute to the creation of responsible future healthcare professionals.

Objectives

- **To promote health for the benefit of the public** by reducing inequalities in health and healthcare, in the UK and abroad.
- **To advance health education** by increasing awareness of global health issues amongst healthcare students and the wider community, aiming to improve the quality and standard of global health and healthcare.

Methods

- **Empowering healthcare students** to use their knowledge and skills for the benefit of local, national and international communities.
- **Offering advice, guidance and support** to future healthcare professionals in the UK
- **Providing a forum** for healthcare students throughout the UK to discuss topics related to individual and community health, education and science, thereby informing themselves and others about local and global inequalities in health and the causes of those inequalities.
- **Promoting and facilitating professional and scientific exchanges, projects and extra-curricular training** for healthcare students, thereby sensitising them to other cultures and societies and their health problems.
- **Providing a link** between member branches, medical students' associations and international organisations, and encouraging co-operation between them for the ultimate benefit of society.
- **Providing training opportunities** for student members to realise their vision of improved health for society.

Get involved

If you would like to know more about Medsin-UK and its network, please visit our website. If you would like to receive our free weekly E-Newsletter you can register on our homepage. If you have any queries please feel free to contact us.

<http://www.medsin.org>

committee@medsin.org

President's Summary

The many successes and achievements of Medsin-UK this year have reflected its increasing maturity, as it approaches its 10th anniversary.

Medsin-UK works to raise student awareness of health inequalities, and equip students with the skills necessary to tackle these issues. Using our national network of healthcare and other students, we aim to improve public health both in the UK and internationally. Throughout the year, our members have worked within the Medsin network to achieve this aim, resulting in huge successes of which we are very proud.

Locally, we have started three new Medsin branches in Durham, Hull-York and Swansea medical schools allowing hundreds more healthcare students to get involved in our projects, events and campaigns.

Our activities continue to attract thousands of students, with many choosing to campaign for changes in health policy. This passion has been reflected in the development of three new campaigns and a new project, the Global Health Advocacy Project. We responded to government consultations, published magazines, organised sponsored events and involved an increasing number of students in advocacy, both nationally and internationally.

On a national level, Medsin-UK achieved Charity Status at the beginning of the year, reflecting the maturity of the organisation. Our reputation continues to grow with coverage in *The Lancet* and other publications and we are proud to have appointed Richard Horton, Editor-in-Chief, *The Lancet* to be our patron.

The National Committee have successfully achieved their four goals to develop the national Medsin network over their one year in office, which will be explored in more depth in this report.

Our National Conference and Global Health Conference welcomed over 400 students from around the country, who attended talks by expert speakers on a broad range of global health issues and participated in many thought provoking workshops.

Internationally, Medsin-UK continues to be a prominent member of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA), and will be hosting the IFMSA General Assembly in August 2007. Over 700 international student delegates will convene to address issues surrounding Access to Essential Medicines.

2005/06 has been a turbulent year in global health with many uncertainties ahead. Medsin-UK enters a new year in an increasingly unstable world with vast global health inequalities. We await a new leader in global health – the Director General of the WHO and at the same time are seeing the reality of the commitments made by governments at the G8 summit last year. Despite this, increasing numbers of students are rising to this global challenge. Through the Medsin network, they are using their voice as advocates for health and acting to improve the health of all people.

The Organisation

Trustees – The National Committee

- **President** - Katharine Garman
- **Vice-President Branches** - David Biles
- **Vice-President Projects** - Abigail Smith
- **Treasurer** - Gerard Millen
- **Secretary** - Flora Ogilvie
- **Publicity Director** - Catherine Sikorski
- **Training Director** - Natalie Sibbald
- **Technology and Communications Director** - Thomas Taylor



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Structure and Decision Making

Medsin-UK is a student-run charitable organisation, consisting of an elected 'National Committee', who work to facilitate the Medsin network. Previously consisting of eight members, the work of the national committee has expanded such that at this year's spring general assembly the network voted to create two additional national committee positions. From next year, the national committee will be complimented by a vice-president for external affairs, whose job will predominantly be to source and liaise with external funders, and a campaigns director, who will facilitate the network of campaigns, taking some of the work away from the overworked vice-president for projects.

The network consists of Medsin branches at universities throughout the UK, and projects and campaigns which are run within the local branches. Each branch has a branch president, and each project / campaign has a national coordinator. Our vice-president for branches facilitates dialogue and idea sharing amongst branch presidents and our vice-presidents for projects does the same within the network of branches and campaigns.

Our members are individuals who participate in any of the activities run locally or nationally by Medsin branches or projects. Our members are predominantly but not exclusively medical students. We have increasing participation from other healthcare and non-healthcare students with an interest in the local and global promotion of health.

Decision making takes place biannually at our autumn and spring general assemblies. All members are free to bring issues to the general assemblies for voting. Each member branch and nationally recognised project has one vote, and our campaigns share a vote between them. The national committee are elected at the Spring General Assembly.

The international network - The International Federation of Medical Students (IFMSA) – is an organisation which works to facilitate cooperation and dialogue between like-minded students around the world. As the UK's National Member Organisation, Medsin has access to the IFMSA's exchanges, projects and conferences. A delegation of Medsin members attend biannual IFMSA general assemblies, in order to share knowledge and input into the objectives of the international organisation.

Our Partners are organisations with whom Medsin-UK believes it shares its ideology and objectives. Previously selected by the National Committee, it is now our policy that all new proposed partnerships must be approved by a vote at a general assembly.

- Alma Mata
- British Medical Association (BMA)
- Christian Aid
- International Federation of Medical Students Association (IFMSA)
- International Health and Medical Education Centre (IHMEC)
- International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)
- Jamkhed
- Medact
- Medcins du Monde
- Mediciens sans Frontieres (MSF)
- Nuffield Trust
- Student Partnerships Worldwide (SPW)
- UK Public Health Association (UKPHA)
- UNAIDS

Our Patrons are people who believe in the work of Medsin and to whom we are extremely grateful for their ongoing support.

Richard Horton, Editor in Chief, The Lancet

Priorities for the Year

At the beginning of the year the following were identified as areas on which we hoped to focus our energies:

- Improving Branch Sustainability and Training
- Increasing Participation and Accessibility
- Facilitating the Project-Branch Relationship
- Moving the 'Being Political' Debate Forwards

Improving Branch Sustainability and Training

Planned Strategies

- To promote a training culture by providing workshops at branch level, concentrating on recruitment, team-building and handover.
- To encourage use of the Branch Resource Pack.
- To encourage mutual support between branches through the 'buddy system'.
- To maintain regular contact between the branches and the National Committee.
- To initiate a forum for idea sharing amongst branches.

Successes

Branch Sustainability has been the priority of our Vice-President for Branches this year. He has worked hard to build up good relationships with the network of branch presidents, emphasising from the beginning of the year the importance of good record keeping, and early sourcing of successors in order to facilitate a smooth handover from one year's branch committee to the next. Extensive support has been provided to branches who felt they were not functioning as well as they would like.

Training has been a huge success this year. Our Training Director, with her team of trainers, ran branch training locally in new branches in Swansea and Hull-York, teaching them how to set up and successfully run a brand new branch. Regional training in Scotland brought together branches which have been less active in the network, and offered a great deal of support to our Dundee branch which successfully relaunched itself.

Medsin-UK also hosted the prestigious IFMSA 'Training New Trainers' event in which 5 international delegates came to be trained by professional trainer Audun Melaas from Norwegian training company Solvpilen Project Design. Medsin-UK benefited by enabling 12 UK members to attend, including a number of experienced trainers, who were involved in both the planning and running of the event. As a result, Medsin has 10 brand new trainers and 2 who have now improved the level of training they can offer. Several of our new trainers have already trained internationally for IFMSA in the recent meeting in Serbia. Our new trainers will continue to work to ensure the benefits of training are shared around the network.

Increasing Participation and Accessibility

Planned Strategies

- To increase the transparency of Medsin-UK to its members
- To develop a recruitment strategy to help branches boost membership
- To encourage discussion outside of meetings, using email discussion lists
- To increase representation at general assemblies

Successes

Participation in this year's Medsin Global Health Conference, hosted by London's GKT branch, was the highest ever, with over 400 delegates in attendance. We have seen the creation of two new member branches and the relaunch of an inactive branch. Promotional flyers have been designed and will be sent to all new entrants to medical school in the autumn. This should facilitate member recruitment at branch level as new students will already have heard of our organisation. The increased range of projects and campaigns affiliated with Medsin will hopefully attract a wider range of members.

Accessibility to decision making was improved as we were able to offer unlimited places at our spring general assembly (places have previously been restricted to 2 per branch or project due to space constraints. Our webmaster has been busily working to reinvent our website in order to make information more accessible to our members. We also distributed postcards to all branch presidents and national project coordinators, reminding them that the role of the National Committee is to help them, and outlining the ways in which we can be of use.

Facilitating the Project-Branch Relationship

Planned Strategies

- To promote understanding of the reciprocal benefits of working together
- To provide local training days for branches and projects
- To encourage interaction and sharing of ideas amongst projects as to how the project-branch relationship can be improved

Successes

The Project-Branch Relationship was a topic of discussion at a weekend-long project and campaigns meeting which was run by our Vice-President for Projects. The weekend also served to emphasising that even very well established projects can still benefit a great deal from using the network. This priority is something which our incoming committee have chosen to continue with as one of their priorities for the coming year.

Moving the 'Being Political' Debate Forwards

Planned Strategies

- To suggest a way of tackling the issue

- To consider potential solutions in light of the concerns of our members
- To reach a conclusion as an organisation without alienating members

Successes

The 'Being Political' debate has been a long running discussion within the Medsin network about how Medsin students can use their collective voice to advocate for political change on global health issues without misrepresenting any of our members who might not feel the same about an individual issue. The debate has now come to a satisfactory conclusion with the creation of a new project – the Global Health Advocacy Project (GHAP). Students who wish to speak out collectively can now do so through GHAP, without claiming to speak for all Medsin members.

National Events throughout the Year

- Autumn General Assembly – Newcastle - August 2005
- National Conference (*Global Health, Local Issue*) – Leeds – October 2005
- Global Health Conference (*Poverty and Health in the New Millennium*) – London - March 2006
- Medsin Delegation to IFMSA General Assembly in Chile – March 2006
- Spring General Assembly – Leicester - April 2006
- Training New Trainers – Manchester / Leicester – April 2006
- European Regional Meeting (*A European Partnership: Challenging Barriers to Health*) – Leicester – April 2006
- Medsin Delegation to IFMSA General Assembly in Serbia – August 2006

Other Successes

Medsin in the Lancet

Medsin's reputation was further extolled by the publication in *The Lancet* (368 (2006) pp 103-104) of an article by Katie Garman (Medsin President) and Rob Hughes (Medsin's Global Health Coordinator). The article outlined the importance of organisations such as Medsin and the IFMSA in promoting global health education, thus empowering a future generation of doctors to understand and tackle the broader determinants of health in our increasingly globalised society.

Medsin to host IFMSA General Assembly in August 2007

Medsin has successfully won the bid to host the upcoming IFMSA 56th General Assembly in August 2007. The UK's organising committee – a team selected to put together the bid – have been working hard since April this year and will continue to do so in the run up to the conference. The General Assembly will see Medsin-UK welcome over 700 delegates from the IFMSA's 90 member countries to discuss how we can work together to improve health and healthcare globally. The week-long conference will be held in Canterbury, and will be themed around the issue of Access to Essential Medicines, aiming to promote education and action on this important global health topic.

Our Branches

This year saw the addition of Durham, Hull and York, and Swansea to the list of medical schools in which Medsin has branches – making a grand total of 29 Medsin Branches through the UK. All of our branches have had fantastic successes throughout the year. Below are some examples from two of our new branches.

Current Branches

- Aberdeen
- Bart's and the London
- Belfast
- Birmingham
- Bristol
- Cambridge
- Cardiff
- Dundee
- Durham
- HYMS
- Edinburgh
- Georges
- GKT
- Glasgow
- Imperial
- Leeds
- Leicester
- Liverpool
- Manchester
- Newcastle
- Nottingham
- Oxford
- Peninsula
- RUMS
- Sheffield
- Southampton
- Swansea
- UEA
- Warwick

Highlights from some of our Branches

Hull-York Medical School (HYMS)

HYMS has got off to a flying start, growing from nothing to a very active branch within the network. Their Teddy Bear Hospital Project – aiming to alleviate young children's fears about contact with health professionals – has been a huge success, receiving a great deal of publicity in the local press. Medsin-HYMS has been approached by their local council, asking if they would be happy to provide volunteers to run the Teddy Bear Hospital, Sexpression (sex education) and CPR in Schools (CPRiS) projects to schools in the local area.



Swansea



Swansea has enjoyed similar success in their first year, benefiting greatly from initial inter-branch training from their peers from neighbouring Medsin-Bristol. Swansea has successfully implemented five projects from the Medsin network. Of particular note was their success in recruiting 88 people to join the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Register during their first student-run recruitment clinic.

Swansea is currently working to spread the news about Medsin in order to recruit students from non-medical or health-related disciplines.

Our Projects

With an increasing number of local projects interested in becoming part of the national Medsin network we have changed our constitution slightly to allow new projects who are only active in a small number of university to become 'affiliated projects' – they receive all the benefits of using the network, but due to their small number of members they are not able to vote at Medsin General Assemblies. New 'nationally recognised' projects for this year are 'Students for Kids International Projects (SKIP)' and the Global Health Advocacy Project (GHAP). Our new affiliate project is 'Save a Baby's Life'.

Current Nationally Recognised Projects

- **Crossing Borders** - Refugee projects
- **CPRiS** - Teaching CPR in schools
- **Exchanges** - Facilitating reciprocal exchanges between UK medical students and their IFMSA counterparts
- **Homed** - Homelessness projects
- **Global Health** - Campaigning for greater education on global health issues
- **Global Health Advocacy Project** - Giving students a collective voice
- **Marrow** - Recruiting students to the bone marrow register
- **Sexpression** - Teaching sex education in schools
- **SKIP** - International projects working with kids
- **Teddy Bear Hospital** - Familiarising young children with healthcare
- **UKAM07** - UK's bid to host upcoming IFMSA general assembly

Highlights from some of our Projects

Marrow

Marrow works with the Antony Nolan Trust to recruit potential donors onto their stem cell register. The Marrow project operates in universities across the UK, aiming to offer every student the chance to join the stem cell register. Students are seen as ideal candidates for the register, being young, healthy and an ethnically diverse population. At last summers' IFMSA General Assembly, Marrow achieved status as a trans-national project – meaning they will now be branching out to train medical students around the world how to set up projects similar to the one we have in the UK.

CPRiS

CPRiS is a project which works to increase the number of lay people who are trained in CPR, thereby increasing the chance of survival for those who suffer a cardiac arrest in the community. CPRiS takes trained medical students into schools to teach resuscitation techniques to pupils. This year CPRiS hosted it's first ever National Conference, attracting over 50 medical students from around the country. Due to popular demand, an additional mini-conference on 'Setting up a CPRiS Branch' was later in the year, which it is hoped will inspire new branches to set up CPRiS in their own medical schools.

Our Campaigns

With an increasing number of issues being brought to the attention of our member, we have seen three new campaigns voted in as Medsin's nationally recognised campaigns, and a change in Medsin's structure to give campaigns their own 'Campaign Director', who will be a member of the National Committee. The large number of campaigns mean that in the future Medsin-UK will chose to prioritise the promotion of certain campaigns at certain times of year, while allowing all nationally recognised campaigns access to the Medsin network.

Current Nationally Recognised Campaigns

- Fair Trade
- Make Poverty History
- Malaria Campaign
- PharmAware
- Trade Justice
- StopAIDS
- WaterAid

Highlights from some of our Campaigns:

PharmAware

PharmAware was set up in response to a heated debate at the Medsin National Conference in October, in which Professor John Yudkin from IHMEC, Des Spence from the 'No Free Lunch' campaign and Dr Barker from the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry, debated the merits and ills of pharmaceutical companies. The campaign aims to train students to professionally and ethically interact with drug companies, and empower them to educate others about evidence-based medicine and prescription practices. It also aims to campaign for a change in the relationship between doctors and the pharmaceutical industry and a change in the behaviour of the global pharmaceutical industry.

PharmAware's first branch was set up in Leeds, where students produced a questionnaire to explore students' and health professionals' knowledge about the pharmaceutical industry and its relationship with the NHS. The chain of enthusiasm for PharmAware was extended by the running of a workshop at the Medsin Global Health Conference in March. Groups are now currently active in Bristol and Manchester and it is hoped that a further workshop at this year's Medsin National Conference will help to attract still more students to this interesting topic of debate.

StopAIDS

Medsin's StopAIDS campaign is run closely in conjunction with the national Student Stop AIDS Campaign. The StopAIDS National Coordinator works hard to ensure there is good coordination of local and national activities. This year Medsin branches worked together to participate in the national publicity stunt held in Trafalgar Square in December. Campaigners used a visual petition of photographs of their eyeballs to send the message 'We're Watching You' to Tony Blair to ensure promises were kept about providing access for all to antiretroviral drugs by 2010.

Plans for the Future

Next Year's Priorities

The priorities identified by the incoming committee for the following year are as follows:

- Further facilitating the Project-Branch Relationship
- Defining the role of Campaigns within the Medsin network
- Increasing opportunities for UK students to undertake exchanges within the IFMSA network.
- Exploring and securing funding opportunities for the Medsin Network
- Exploring the future direction of the Medsin network

National Events for the Coming Year

- Autumn General Assembly – Manchester – October 2006
- Medsin National Conference – Bristol – October 2006
- Medsin Global Health Conference – Newcastle – March 2006
- Medsin Delegation to IFMSA General Assembly - Australia - March 2007
- Spring General Assembly – TBA
- Medsin-UK to host IFMSA General Assembly – Canterbury – August 2007

Financial Review

Reserves

This year we held an informal policy of keeping a reserve of £1000 in our bank account at all times. This was to allow us flexibility to purchase anything necessary to further the aims and objectives of the charity without having to wait for all of the money to be in place before doing so. We felt this allowed us to work much more fluidly and hence allowed us to gain the maximum benefit.

Deficits

Medsin-UK currently holds no deficits.

Fundraising and Expenditure

Medsin-UK had several main sources of funding this year. The first is through our branch affiliation fees whereby Medsin-UK's member branches at universities around the country pay a fee to the charity which is agreed upon by our General Assembly. The second is through fees that our members pay to attend the International Federation of Medical Student Associations (IFMSA) General Assemblies. Finally, we raised some money this year from our conferences. Medsin-UK facilitates the hosting of two annual conferences, our National Conference and a Global Health Conference. We have agreements in place with our conference organizers whereby any profit made from the running of a conference is split evenly between the Medsin branch organizing the conference and Medsin-UK.

Our main sources of expenditure last year were sending people to IFMSA General Assemblies, IFMSA fees, t-shirts to advertise Medsin and its projects and campaigns and miscellaneous costs which included printing, travel costs for external speakers and banking fees to name a few.

Investments

Medsin-UK currently holds no investments.