

FOAM and the junior doctor (Part 2)

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James' interest in medical education, especially that of early career doctors, grew during his role as the Director of Prevocational Education and Training at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, from 2008 to 2014. This led to his current role as the NSW Prevocational Training Council Chair at the Health and Education and Training Institute (HETI). James works clinically as an Emergency Physician at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and is Director of the Department. The need to better prepare students for their first years of practice led James to take on the role of the Chair of the Sydney University Pre-internship (PRINT) block in 2012. James has a Masters in Medical Education from the University of Sydney. When not being a husband, father to two beautiful girls, juggling his multiple roles he loves to watch the Adelaide Crows (AFL) win and play tennis.

AG noted in response to my previous blog on FOAM and junior doctors that education through opinion is not a new problem.

I agree that we have always learnt from our senior colleagues and this is often not based on evidence. However, there are some significant differences between what is discussed on the floor when compared to the world of FOAM. Opinions reach a wider audience through FOAM and words have a certainty and permanency that may disguise the ambiguity and uncertainty of our clinical practice. Finally, there is a phrase favoured by medical administrators; clinical governance. [onthewards](#) invites speakers to talk or write; does the process of publication on our website validate and provide credibility to their opinion?

This segue-ways into the exciting development of goj.ie described by Nick Webb. I will be watching this space for an independent peer-review process that would be of great value to websites such as ours.

The next step is to link the fantastic and diverse FOAM resources to a junior doctor curriculum. A curriculum is “a planned educational experience that encompasses behavioural goals, instructional methods and actual experiences of the learners” (1). In Australia, we currently have the [Australian Curriculum Framework for Junior Doctors \(ACFJD\)](#)

Imagine, if under each learning outcome there was a list of appropriately peer-reviewed quality FOAM resources that were curated to ensure currency. This is not a new concept and has previously been discussed by Chris Nickson ([we don't need no FOAM curriculum - LITFL](#)) and Brent Thoma.

Possibly, a more manageable task would be to create a list of learning resources that supplement existing formal junior doctor education programmes. Lectures still play an important role in hospital teaching programmes because they are an effective, efficient

way of transmitting information and integrating concepts. However, they are quantitatively on a decline because they are prone to produce passive involvement in the learning process, especially if the lecturers lack charisma and speaking expertise (2).

The NSW JMO Forum compiled a proposed unified lecture education series in 2010 with learning outcomes under each theme. Many of the [onthewards podcasts](#) align with the topics listed and provide an opportunity for Directors of Training to use the podcasts in the flipped classroom model. This promotes study by participants prior to each education session and allows the bulk of the valuable teaching time to be devoted to higher-level learning rather than a one-way didactic session.

The flipped classroom model has the potential to shift teaching away from lectures to more interactive case and peer group discussions, team-based learning, role-plays and simulation that promote active learner engagement and are conducive to the development of communities of learners. Asynchronous learning also allows junior doctors to choose when to learn and at a pace that suits them.

There are many useful FOAM resources but are they collated in a way that allows easy access especially for generalist early career doctors (or final year medical students)? Could we crowdsource the collation and curation of resources and link it to the NSW Unified JMO Education Series?

If any of our [onthewards](#) audience would like to attempt to collate existing FOAM resources to a learning outcome listed in the NSW Unified JMO Education Series we could consider publishing it on the website and recognise your contribution.

- [NSW JMO Forum - unified lecture series](#)
- [LECTURE SERIES TOPICS](#)

References

1. Green M. [Identifying, Appraising and Implementing Medical Educational Curricula: A Guide for Medical Educators](#). Ann Intern Med. 2001;135 (10): 889-896
2. McLeod P, Steinert Y. [Twelve tips for curriculum renewal](#). Med Teach. 2015; 37 (3);232-8

Related Blogs

- [FOAM and the junior doctor](#)
- [Interview with DocLife's Vijay Paul](#)

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