

# 2017 - a year dedicated to leading for change

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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 took on the role of Co-Director of the department in 2016. 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.

As the year of 2017 comes to an end, I am counting down the days, limping to the finish line. Am I the only one?

But when I read the incredible highlights and achievements of the onthewards team, it reinforces why we should look back on the year as a whole. The [reflections of our onthewards team](#) inspired and reinvigorated me.

Highlights were not defined by passing individual exams or self-achievement but what was achieved collectively (I am including the birth of children into this category!). There was a strong focus on advocacy from our community with overwhelming support for [marriage equality](#), campaigning for the removal of alcohol sponsorship in cricket and the demand for the provision of medical care for refugees on Manus Island. The awarding of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize to International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a testament to power of Australian doctors working towards a cause that they believe in.

This reflects that by choice or necessity that there has been a change in the “medical establishment” over my career.

***“To try to avoid the political fray through silence is impossible, because silence is now political. Either engage, or assist the harm. There is no third choice”***

***Don Berwick (JAMA 2017)***

Our medical colleges and organisations, such as AMA, are placing a greater focus on advocacy and promoting good public health policy. Proudly, many of the contributors to onthewards are actively involved in leading such changes.

ontheowards provides a platform for you to speak and a community to ensure that your voice is heard. It also provides a sense of belonging; that you are not alone in feeling overwhelmed and the challenges you face are shared across the country. This is a developing focus of our website and will continue in 2018.

Whether you celebrate Christmas, or Festivus, the season is about giving rather than receiving. FOAMed resources such as ontheowards share this fundamental premise. But we only exist from the hard work of so many. To create a podcast and a blog each week for a year is an incredible achievement. There has been almost a hundred individuals this year that contributed to the website. Thank you.

Evangelie, our Chief Operating Officer, receives a special mention, as she is the glue that holds the whole team together. Without Evangelie there would no ontheowards.

Finally, a big thank you to all those of you that have listened to our podcasts or read our blogs this year. Your continued support sustains us. Please take some time to enjoy the company of friends and family during the holiday season.

We will be back bigger in 2018.

(Did I mention that we will run our first ontheowards conference next year? This will be a conference for junior doctors including career planning, wellbeing, radiology and ECG interpretation, and a lot more. **Save the date Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> 2018**).

## Related Blogs

- [Reflecting on the highs and lows of 2017 as told by the contributors of ontheowards](#)
- [Marriage equality - a prescription for unity in health](#)
- [ontheowards - inception, growth and zero to national](#)

## Related Podcasts

- [Self care](#)

**Tags:** #AMA,#JAMA,#mandatory reporting,#marriage equality,#medical advocacy,#medical education