



University of St Andrews

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### Proposal of Activities

- All third year students complete a research project. There is an early evening 'research awareness' reception to enable students to talk to potential supervisors and discuss potential research ideas in an informal setting before making their choices and embarking on their projects.
- Display of research posters in the café area. These are partly provided by staff or PhD students, but also medical students who have completed summer research projects. This exposes new first year students to the concept that medical school is not purely a teaching environment, but also encompasses research.
- Working closely with the Dundee Research and Academic Medicine Society, DRAMS, which are our nearest neighbours. Each year there is an evening event, 'Discovering Research' which comprises a keynote staff speaker and 4 student speakers who talk about their research experiences... This is an opportunity for students from two universities to get together and mutually encourage each other.
- Also jointly with DRAMS there are tours of research facilities such as the MRC phosphorylation unit, followed by research talks. The opportunity to tour the facilities and break down the barriers between research staff and students is much appreciated. Further visits are planned to the digital pathology unit in St Andrews and the Jacqui Wood Cancer Centre in Dundee
- Rather than setting up an independent 'research and academic medicine society' we intend instead to work with pre-existing student societies. The student societies are encouraged to engage with research by INSPIRE offering to cover the cost of speakers expenses when they are contributing to research focussed events or the cost of producing student posters and providing some prizes.
- Working with student societies at partner schools. Students on the BSc medicine course spend 3 years in St Andrews and then transfer to one of six partner schools for more clinical training. We propose to facilitate more exchange of information about INSPIRE events run by the partner schools and encourage students to attend them by providing a travel budget. There are three aims behind this activity:
  - To help the individual student build up friends and network, giving them more confidence before transferring to the new environment.
  - Linking partners with a wider range of INSPIRE activities available, thus students are more likely to find something that interests them.

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- To show that research is a shared endeavour and occurs in many different environments.
- St Andrews students graduate immediately after completing their research projects and it has in the past been difficult to tap into the enthusiasm they have and truly celebrate their achievements. We propose to instigate a new event designed at encouraging immediate past students to return to St Andrews, and present either the research work they have done as part of their BSc or at their partner medical school to existing St Andrews students.
- The plan would be to ask St Andrew's Alumni to complete a short recording to describe their work and the career decisions they made as illustrations of potential routes to consider. There is no one size fits all for a research career and we hope that this resource will be helpful for students as they try to make career choices. This is new activity, but an extension of 'Saints connect' which is already running in St Andrews.
- We plan to provide workshops to encourage students to write articles for the 'Inspire Student Health Sciences Research Journal', and provide them with the skills to do so. This builds on our existing INSPIRE activity of 'medicine in the news', where students were exposed to some simple critical appraisal skills and encouraged to see behind the headlines. Additionally graduating students are encouraged to consider summarising their dissertation and submitting it for publication.
- The school already has regular interactions with Dundee School of Nursing and Robert Gordon School of Pharmacy. Indeed there is a ward simulation teaching event that involves students from all three schools. We plan to further build on this compulsory event by providing further opportunities for the students to interact socially together and consider research areas that might be of mutual interest for research by running a reading hub/journal club.
- We request funding for two studentships per year to specifically support students who wish to undertake research studentships at their partner school. While the students could apply for external funding (e.g. Biomedical vacation scholarship from Wellcome Trust) the availability of INSPIRE funding would give confidence for both the student seeking the experience when approaching potential supervisors with whom they have previously had no contact, and reassurance to the supervisor that the project can go ahead.
- We request funding of one studentship per year to support graduate entry students who wish to complete a research project. The school has recently

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commenced a graduate entry medicine programme (ScotGEM). The second intake is just about to start. Most funding bodies will not consider graduates for the funding of summer studentships, even if their first degree is in a completely different subject. Many of the graduate entrants come with significant interests and enthusiasm for research which the school wishes to promote. Through the 'Agents of Change' projects which are part of the course there will be opportunities to explore research opportunities with third sector organisations or NHS authorities in Highlands and Islands/Dumfries and Galloway

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