Publishing a medical book: Authorship from a medical student perspective

George Collins, James Davis & Oscar Swift

powerpoint teaching with teaching with 3-D animation on topic 'pathophysology of jaundice'. One-hundred forty-two 1st year MBBS students (92 females) were divided into two groups (73 in 3-D animation group) by the table of random numbers. Surprise MCQ test consisting 20 questions covering both basic and applied aspects was conducted on the above-mentioned topic and there was no significant difference in marks, while after intervention the 3-D animation group outperformed the control group ($p = 0.006$). One of the recent study also supports our view (Hoyek et al. 2014). Feedback from students also showed it as a useful learning tool. So, we recommend to consider usefulness of 3-D medical animation in integration of medical curriculum.

Nitin Pandey, Eqbal Anwer, Abdus Salam, Shashi Pandey, & Sushma Gupta, Department of Physiology, Era's Lucknow Medical College, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India. E-mail: drnitinpandey@gmail.com

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Dear Sir

During our time at medical school we were keen "near-peer" educators who coordinated teaching programmes for our junior student colleagues. As a natural extension to both our teaching and revision materials we have delivered "near-peer" education through the novel medium of a single best answer question book. We would like to share our thoughts with readers, to provide advice to students considering writing a textbook and to encourage seniors to support them.

Students may better appreciate the latest undergraduate curricula, textbook marketplace and examination formats. They are exposed to different books and teaching styles, providing them with unique perspectives on the successes and failures of each.

Authoring a textbook has taught us much about clinical medicine, academic writing and medical publishing. Embracing such forms of personal and professional development is a duty of a doctor. Learning and demonstrating these core professional competencies at an early stage places student authors in a strong position for life as a doctor, job applications and other clinical and non-clinical projects (McKenzie et al. 2009).

However, there are challenges. The practice of clinical medicine and textbook writing demands experience that students lack. They should seek appropriate seniors to support them and edit the book; these seniors should be enthusiastic and experienced in medical publishing. Before investing significantly in a project, undergraduates should extract commitment from a publisher and a senior. Writing with a group of other students is advisable, but individual roles and a project timeline should be defined at an early stage. Writing a sample chapter, devising a structure for the book and drafting a proposal for a publishing company are recommended first steps.

Writing a textbook as students, for students, was a rewarding and enjoyable process. During the project our enthusiasm for medical education and our profession has grown immensely. We would strongly encourage motivated students to follow suit and for seniors to support them.

George Collins, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridge Biomedical Campus, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 OQQ, UK. E-mail: collinsgeorge@gmail.com

James Davis, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 9RS, UK. E-mail: js.davis1989@gmail.com

Oscar Swift, Lister Hospital, East and North Herts NHS Trust, Coreys Mill Lane, Stevenage, Hertforshire, SG1 4AB, UK. E-mail: o.swift@ucl.ac.uk

Declaration of interest: We are three Foundation Year 1 Doctors currently working in the NHS. We all are qualified in Medicine from University College London in 2013. During our final two years at medical school we wrote a medical book, which is due to be published in late 2014.

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