


Debriefing for medical students in a virtual age

Dear Editor,

The Prehospital Care Programme (PCP) is a flagship longitudinal student selected component founded in 2008 at Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry.¹ The opportunity to see patients alongside prehospital clinicians is a privilege yet presents medical students with unique challenges. We read with interest the article by Martin et. al. discussing the recent formation of a debriefing programme for their PCP.² Similarly, Death & Disability (D&D) meetings at Barts and The London PCP have been a successful forum to discuss clinical cases in which students faced moral injury.³ Through D&D meetings, students are supported by both clinicians and senior students to review the challenges they faced. From our perspective as students, we have valued the ability to discuss these issues in both the formal D&D meetings and more informally with peers. With the move to non-essential activities being conducted online, we have been acutely aware of the loss of opportunities for informal debriefs that are so important. As such, our cohort of Prehospital Medicine iBSc students have set aside protected time to have informal 'catch-ups' online to mitigate this. We feel the current restrictions in place due to the pandemic compound our anxieties due to the lack of informal 'pressure-release chats' with our student colleagues. COVID-19 restrictions have impacted on students' access to peer support; actively providing a virtual space for informal debrief may be one way of providing this support particularly to students volunteering in this time of crisis.

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Duncan T. Ritchie¹ 
Omar Elhalwagy²

¹*Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London, Institute of Prehospital Care, London's Air Ambulance, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, UK*

²*Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London, Institute of Prehospital Care, London's Air Ambulance, London, UK*

Correspondence

Duncan Taylor Ritchie, Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London, Mile End Road, London, E1 4NS.
Email: duncan.ritchie@nhs.scot

ORCID

Duncan T. Ritchie  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0751-1391>

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