

AMSA ThinkTank Bulletin – August 2010



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Welcome to the August AMSA ThinkTank Bulletin

As the weather remains cold through August, the political scene is heating up with less than two weeks to go until the Federal election. Whether we have the first elected female Prime Minister, or the only first-term government to be kicked out in almost 80 years, the 21st of August 2010 is shaping up to be an historic date.

Health reform, at the forefront of Kevin Rudd's campaign only months ago, has dropped off the radar and is now competing with numerous other issues (such as the economy, population, asylum seekers, workplace relations and taxation) to receive political oxygen. Two of the bodies providing much of that precious O₂ are AMSA and AMA, both of whom have recently released their election priorities, which may be found later in the bulletin.

Of particular relevance to medical students is AMSA's push for more investment in post-graduate training. With 1000 extra medical graduates between 2009 and 2012 alone, significant additional funding and structural changes are required to avoid a bottle-neck of junior doctors entering further training. There is even a risk that this problem may extend to intern positions, with over 30 Tasmanian-trained medical students missing out on internships in Tasmania just last month.

Another initiative of AMSA's occurring throughout August is the **Vampire Cup** – all blood donations in August may be registered online to count towards Monash's tally. Full details may be found under '**Upcoming Events**'.

AMSA ThinkTank here at Monash remains busy as ever, with many students hard at work to produce a fact sheet outlining the poor access to healthcare and health outcomes within refugee populations. Others are working towards the first ever AMSA TV episode to be produced in Victoria, looking at the important and ever-increasing issue of Online Professionalism.

In this bulletin:

- Details for the August ThinkTank Meeting
- Top 5 Articles of Interest
- Exciting Upcoming Events
- Minutes of July meeting

Next ThinkTank Meeting

6pm Monday 23rd August, Meeting Room 1 (Building 64) Monash Clayton campus.

Please RSVP to Michael Loftus at mjlof3@student.monash.edu.au

The doors to Building 64 are often locked after 6pm, please put Michael's number in your phone (0409 962 061) and call him if you're unable to get into the building!

Top 5 Articles of interest

1. AMSA election priorities list

AMSA has released its election priorities in regard to medical training, including key areas such as quality training and supervision, clinical capacity and

workforce, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and rural and remote medicine.

This can be found at: www.amsa.org.au/press-release/medical-students-release-election-priorities

2. **AMA election priorities list**

In comparison to AMSA, the AMA looks at health reform and the structure of the health care system.

Available from: www.ama.com.au/keyhealthissues

3. **More than luck**

More than luck is an e-book produced by the Centre of Policy Development, a collection of ideas for citizens who want real change and a to-do list for politicians looking to base public policies on the kind of future Australians really want.

Available at <http://morethanluck.cpd.org.au/>

4. **Myhospital website**

Similar to the MySchool website, the proposal for MyHospital, which will provide health care consumers a comparison of hospitals.

Available from:

www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-nr-nr150.htm

5. **Alcohol: the forgotten drug in HIV/AIDS**

An interesting article on the relationship between alcohol and HIV/AIDS, which can be found at:

www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140673610608847/fulltext?rss=yes

Upcoming Events

Walk Against Warming



The climate change message is being taken to the streets on Sunday 15th August at 12.30pm . There are three locations to participate, so see the website for more information.

www.environmentvictoria.org.au/safe-climate/walk-against-warming

AMSA National Blood Drive

Every year AMSA runs a competition between the universities of who can donate the most blood. The competition began on the 12th of July and is continuing through to the **31st of August**. So far, Monash is being beaten by Griffith and James Cook Universities. It's an easy thing to do, and one of the few times as a medical student that you can save a life, and not just observe.

Monash is making it EVEN easier for the pre-clinical students. There will be a blood van on campus on August 13th specifically for med students. Information is available at www.mumus.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=162:amsa-blood-challenge&catid=16:amsa&Itemid=123 ,but **any blood donations in the month August can count**. Simply log on to www.amsa.org.au/content/amsa-national-blood-drive after you have donated and follow the prompts.

Castan Centre Annual Lecture

A free public lecture by Andrew Demetriou on "A matter of leadership: the AFL on the field and in the community."

When? 17th August at 1pm

Venue: State Library

For more information: www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/events/2010/annual-lecture-10.html

Burnet Student Info Evening

A student evening to learn about the Burnet Institute and its focus of infectious diseases of global significance, as well as the opportunity to speak to some current students working there.

19th August 4-7pm, RSVP by 17th to reception@burnet.edu.au.

Details at : www.burnet.edu.au/home/general/events/studentnight

Climate Change, New Diseases and Parasites

A panel discussion including a WHO representative and Sir Gustav Nossal on the 17th August from 6-7.30pm at the Melbourne Recital Centre, Southbank.

More information at:

<http://thatmelbourne.com.au/Whatson/LearnandSee/LecturesandForums/Pages/6ac010ed-a31d-45aa-bcc8-7c1f3baaf65c.aspx>

Minutes of July ThinkTank Meeting

AMSA ThinkTank Committee Meeting

Meeting Rm. 1, Bldg. 64, Monash University, Clayton - Monday 26th July 2010

1. Procedurals

1.1 Welcome & Opening Remarks (*Meeting opened at 6.03pm AEST*)

Meeting Goal:

1.2 Introductions

1.3 Members Present

Michael Loftus - ML (Chair, 4th year), Peter Stark- PS (4th year), Marcel Bolout - MB (2nd year), Kunal Luthra - KL (1st year), Liv Leahy- LL (3rd year), Steph Parish - SP (3rd year), Flick Rees- FR (3rd year), Hugh Stevens - HS (3rd year), Amy Body - AB (4th year), Cara Fox - CF (4th year), Jess Dean - JD (2nd year), Raamvi Vivek - RV (1st year), Sarah Green – SG (4th year). n=13

1.3 Apologies

1.4 Correspondence

None

2. Standing Items

2.1 AMSA TV: National Registration for Medical Students

Available to view from: www.amsa.org.au/content/amsatv

2.2 Presentations on Contemporary Issues

Think Global (AB and CF): 3-day pre-GHC conference focussed on increasing awareness and advocacy on climate change. Concept from IFMSA.

Action: aim to continue with Code Green campaign, including:

- Collaborate with DEA and students from other unis
 - o Eg. attempting to get climate change into the curriculum
 - o Code green website on the way
(sites.google.com/site/climatecodegreen2010)
- Use ideas from the healthy planet campaign (UK)

Y.E.A.H- youth empowerment against HIV/AIDS (JD and HS):

Monash medical students have been involved with the Y.E.A.H program in its beginnings. The “agents of Y.E.A.H” is a group of 17 students who were trained to educate others (especially young people) about HIV/AIDS.

There is also an option to do a CBP (for 2nd years) placement there.

The program is going national soon, and the “agents” have been attending national youth week events, musical festivals and schools to promote the cause. Other initiatives include a condom negotiation program, red aware parties, and being involved in the writing of government policy.

If you are interested in getting involved, check out the website (www.yeah.org.au), or email Jess Dean (jmdea1).

2.3 Report from AMSA council (ML)

1. Corporate governance review

AMSA has reviewed its structure and decided to change to a board set-up

- The board will probably include: 3 current members, 3 AMSA reps, the immediate past president, convention and GHC convenors, the AMSA Executive Officer as the secretary (they will not have a vote) and an independent chair.
- Voting for next year's executive will also occur earlier – July not October. This will reduce litigation concerns of the executive and allows newly elected members greater time to plan and shadow their predecessors.

2. New policy

A large number of new and/or updated policies were adopted, including:

- IT and health
- Rural leadership
- Complementary and alternative medicine
- Climate change and health
- Global health in medical curriculum

2.4 Reports back from individual policy groups

• Refugee health

- Document is being finalised. Plan is to produce a PDF to inform medical students – to be distributed amongst the AMSA network. Aims to be quite neutral and factual. It includes Australia's obligations to its refugee populations, as well as health outcomes and access to health care amongst refugee populations.
- Suggested inclusion: difference between refugee and asylum seeker, in both status and rights. For instance, asylum seekers are not subsidised any health care outside of hospital care, making it an unsustainable model. Andrew Block, the Clinical Dean at Dandenong has a specific interest in the subject, so perhaps email him.

• Nuclear weapons and technology

- Policy was viewed on projector
- Topics discussed: too focused on health profession, need to separate direct effects from health profession response, whether it was too emotive or not emotive enough, inclusion of number of "almost-firings" that have occurred (6), nuclear power as compared with nuclear technology not dealt with adequately, position on testing (and whether we want to align ourselves with an "extreme" view such as MPAW), potential threat without weapons launch, needs more quantitative estimates of effect specific to Australia including economic effects, need to define 'hair trigger alert,' and more assertively stating that we can't advocate duty-of-care after an attack, so need to do it prior.
- Further actions:
 - Policy group needs to meet to discuss those issues
 - Send it to Helen Caldicott before it is released?

- Email to Cat P (GHN), Bjorn (Global Health member on the AMSA executive), etc.

- **Online Professionalism**

- MB has written a script for an AMSA TV episode, based on the recently released AMSA document on the subject
 - Undecided whether to be produced by ThinkTank or AMSA executive
- Extremely positive response, main suggestion to include actual or joke examples of inappropriate (or potentially inappropriate) comments

2.5 MSCV (Medical Students Council of Victoria) Event

Events run jointly between Melbourne, Deakin and Monash.

Monash in charge of organising a lecture:

- ML: Election results effect on health- mental health, refugee health, hospital system.
- LL: Patrick McGorry on refugee health? Health reform? Government funding?

If anyone is interested in helping, please let Michael know.

3. General business

3.1 Volunteers sought to present on a contemporary issue at next meeting

3.2. Volunteers sought to look for 'Articles of Interest' for next bulletin

Open Invitation

4. Business without notice

None

5. Action Items

None

Close of meeting and date of next meeting:

Next meeting – 6pm Monday 23rd August, Meeting Room 1

(Meeting closed 7.49pm AEST)