



WOODHOUSE  
COLLEGE

# Higher Education

MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

2015 -2016

▶ **Iman Paterson** (BSc. biochemistry, MSc. medical microbiology, PhD. Biochemistry)

▶ Chemistry Teacher

▶ Medicine Co-ordinator

**[ipaterson@woodhouse.ac.uk](mailto:ipaterson@woodhouse.ac.uk)**

# Medicine Offers for



## 2014-2015

- ▶ 20 students received offers to study medicine at different universities
- ▶ Some students received more than 1 offer, 33 offers in total
- ▶ 30 students were called for interviews

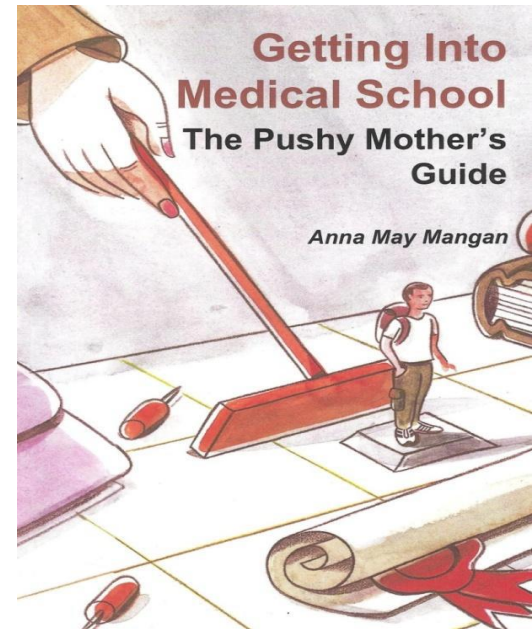
# Medicine offers at Woodhouse



## 2013-2014

- ▶ 18 students received offers to study medicine at different universities
- ▶ Some students received more than 1 offer
- ▶ 8 more students were called for interviews

- ▶ “If they [your children] can’t write and speak fluently about their reasons for wanting to study medicine, or look you in the eye and describe them, then they are not ready to apply .....



# What do students think medicine is?



- ▶ What they see on “Casualty” and “ER”
- ▶ Glamorous
- ▶ Well paid
- ▶ Being greatly respected
- ▶ Totally fascinating with never a dull moment

# Realistically.....



- ▶ Hard work
- ▶ Very hard work !!!
- ▶ Lots of exams – with limited chances to resit
- ▶ Periods of tedium and boredom
- ▶ Stropky, irritable, sometimes violent patients
- ▶ Highly competitive
- ▶ More exams

# Qualities Medical Schools look for.....



- ▶ Genuinely helpful and caring
- ▶ Confident and composed
- ▶ Trustworthy and truthful, with integrity
- ▶ Good communicator (listening and explaining)
- ▶ Organised
- ▶ Emotionally strong
- ▶ Approachable
- ▶ Hard working with stamina
- ▶ Excellent at problem solving



# The framework for applying to medicine



- ▶ Grades – GCSE/AS/A level
- ▶ Work Experience – what type
- ▶ Subject – proving an interest in the subject through the personal statement, references and understanding how medicine is studied
- ▶ Admission tests – UKCAT/BMAT or no test
- ▶ Interview – how to prepare /what type

# What it takes to be a medic



## Grades

- ▶ GCSE: at least 5A\* or 6A passes (different for different universities)
- ▶ AS/A Level, a minimum of 3 A Levels (AAA or A\*AA)
  - ▶ CHEMISTRY and preferably Biology to A2 level
  - ▶ Predicted grades for A2 must be A or A\*

# Work Experience



- ▶ Medical schools expect students to have a realistic appreciation of what a career as a health professional involves. Work experience provides good evidence
- ▶ Clinical work experience is very difficult to find as there are:
  - ▶ Too many students trying to find placements
  - ▶ Confidentiality restrictions
  - ▶ Age restrictions

However.....

# There are lots of things students can do.....



- ▶ Talk to people- local GP, healthcare professionals
- ▶ Do some voluntary work , e.g. Local hospice, care home, shopmobility over a long period of time
- ▶ Ask people in the profession to shadow them for a few days
- ▶ Enrol on a St John's Ambulance first aid course.

# There are lots of things students can do.....



- ▶ Students must keep a diary and reflect on their experience.
- ▶ They should use their time effectively during their placement by:
  - Gaining insights into the demands placed on staff
  - Problems they encounter
  - Strategies they employ to handle difficult situations
  - Benefits they obtain from caring for people and working in teams

# Admission tests: UKCAT



- ▶ Required by the greatest majority of medical schools in the UK.
- ▶ Tests are taken on a computer; results given immediately after the test
- ▶ Multiple venues across the UK
- ▶ There is a wide testing window from July to October
- ▶ If they leave registering to the last minute, students may find it difficult to find a space in a testing centre near to their homes

# UKCAT dates



- ▶ Registration opens 01 May 2015
- ▶ Testing begins 01 July 2015
- ▶ Registration Closes 22 September 2015
- ▶ Last testing date 06 October 2015
- ▶ UCAS application deadline 15 October 2015

**Costs:** UK/EU up to 31<sup>st</sup> August : £65

- ▶ UK/EU, 1<sup>st</sup> September to 6<sup>th</sup> October : £80

The tests are not curriculum based, test of cognitive skills

# BMAT



- ▶ Oxford
- ▶ Cambridge
- ▶ Imperial College
- ▶ University College London
- ▶ Royal Veterinary College
- ▶ Bristol Veterinary School
- ▶ Brighton and Sussex
- ▶ Leeds
- ▶ Lancaster
- ❖ **Students should NOT apply to four BMAT universities – if the exam goes wrong they instantly lose the opportunity to secure a place**



# BMAT Dates



- ▶ It is a pen and paper test, testing scientific knowledge and writing skills
- ▶ Entries extranet opens : 01 September 2015
- ▶ Closing date: 01 October 2015
- ▶ BMAT takes place: 04 November 2015
- ▶ BMAT results released: 25 November 2015
- ▶ £44.00 EU (including UK) standard entry fee

# Schools not requiring an admission test



- ▶ Bristol

Note:

- ▶ This may change
- ▶ Students must keep looking at the UKCAT website and the websites of any university to which they intend to apply

# Personal Statement



- ▶ Assessed on
  - Commitment to medicine (work experience and research)
  - Core qualities of doctors, demonstration of excellent communication skills, problem solving, services to the community, integrity and empathy and caring nature
  - Teamwork and leadership skills demonstrated by activities in the College, extracurricular activities (DOE, etc)

# Interview



Selection criteria for interviews could include the following:

- ▶ GCSEs
- ▶ AS grades
- ▶ Predicted A level grades
- ▶ Personal statement
- ▶ Reference (not St. Georges)
- ▶ BMAT
- ▶ UKCAT
- ▶ **Types of interviews:**
  1. Panel Interview
  2. Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)

# Understanding how medicine is studied



1. Traditional
2. Integrated
3. Problem-based learning

# Present & future support at Woodhouse



- ▶ Links with medical institutions: ***Kings College Outreach for Medicine programme, Med View and Dent View, UCL Target Medicine , Imperial College e-mentoring***
- ▶ Medicine Study Groups at Woodhouse
- ▶ BMAT/UKCAT practice
- ▶ Tutorial on the NHS
- ▶ Trip to the Royal Society of Medicine
- ▶ Trip to the National Institute of Medical Research
- ▶ Workshops on surgical skills at the Hunterian Museum
- ▶ External speakers
- ▶ Woodle Medicine folder
- ▶ UCAS, personal statement help & mock interviews
- ▶ Notifications from career adviser

# Sources of Information



- ▶ Medical and science articles in newspapers, journals and on the Internet
  - ▶ Twitter
  - ▶ Books
- 
- ❖ A comprehensive list of websites, books and libraries is available

# The Internet



Twitter can be used as a really effective way to keep up to date with medical news from a variety of organisations.

Try following some or all of these:

- ▶ @doc2doc @RoySocMed @rcgp @GPonlinenews  
@BMANews @bbchealth @BMAstudents  
@AmerMedicalAssn @CR\_UK @DHgovuk  
@Doctors\_net\_uk @ExploreWellcome @StudentBMJ  
@MedscapeStudent @msnewspaper @NHSChoices  
@TheKingsFund @TheBMA @TheBHF @RCPLondon  
@wellcometrust @WHO @WHOBulletin



# The Internet



- ▶ There are a number of websites that are worth looking at for potential doctors, and some, like BBC Health News, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/default.stm>
- ▶ [http://www.gmc.uk.org/guidance/case\\_studies.asp](http://www.gmc.uk.org/guidance/case_studies.asp)
- ▶ The Wellcome Trust provides an excellent website and a really good magazine (called Big Picture) which you can read online. You can also subscribe to it for free. Here is the link:
- ▶ <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/Education-resources/Teaching-and-education/Big-Picture/index.htm>

# The Internet



- ▶ Subscription to the student BMJ
- ▶ <http://student.bmj.com/student/student-bmj.html>  
Unfortunately it's not free.
- ▶ Other really useful web pages are:
- ▶ <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/Students/UKMedicalSchools/Pages/UK-Medical-Schools-A-Z.aspx>
- ▶ This lists links to all the UK medschools.
- ▶ <http://www.medschoolsonline.co.uk/>
- ▶ is also an excellent resource, like a medical top trumps page.

# The Internet



- ▶ The BMA publish advice, updated annually, on becoming a doctor.
- ▶ [http://www.bma.org.uk/careers/becoming\\_doctor/becomingadoctor.jsp](http://www.bma.org.uk/careers/becoming_doctor/becomingadoctor.jsp)
- ▶ If you want to find out more about the NHS, then look no further than:
- ▶ <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/thenhs/about/Pages/nhsstructure.aspx>

# The Internet



- ▶ If you want to know more about different career paths, then try this:
- ▶ <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/foundation-doctors/your-career-path>
- ▶ and if you want to know more about different specialties, then you need to look at this:
- ▶ [http://www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk/specialty\\_pages.aspx](http://www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk/specialty_pages.aspx)
- ▶ This website has lots of great interactive ethical case studies:

# Books on medicine



- ▶ Max Pemberton (2008): Trust me I'm a Junior Doctor. Hodder
- ▶ Max Pemberton (2009): Where does it Hurt? Hodder
- ▶ Atul Gawande (2003): Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science
- ▶ Atul Gawande (2007): Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance
- ▶ Atul Gawande (2009): The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right
- ▶ Michael Sparrow (2002): Tales of a Rural GP (Robinson)
- ▶ Michael Sparrow (2004): Repeat Prescription: Further Tales of a Rural GP (Robinson)

# Books on medicine



- ▶ Nick Edwards (2009): In Stitches: The Highs and Lows of an A & E Doctor
- ▶ Jerome Groopman (2007): How Doctors Think. Houghton Mifflin
- ▶ Cecil Helman (2006): The Suburban Shaman. Hammersmith Press
- ▶ Oliver Sacks (1985): The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat. Picador

This book is an interesting look at the myths behind medicine:

- ▶ Ben Goldacre (2009): Bad Science. Harper Perennial.

# Books on medicine



## The following 4 books are recommended for those preparing an application

1. Succeed in Your Medical School Interview: Stand Out from the Crowd and Get into Your Chosen Medical School (Elite Students Series) by Christopher See (2011) published by Kogan Page
2. Getting Into Medical School 2014 Entry by Simon Horner (2013) published by Trotman
3. [Choosing a Medical School: An Essential Guide to UK Medical Schools 2<sup>nd</sup> Edn](#) by Alexander Young, Alexander Aquilina, William Dougal, Thomas Judd and Matt Green (2011) published by BPP Learning Media
4. Getting into Medical School - The Pushy Mother's Guide by Anna Marie Mangan (2008) published by Spine Publishing

# Books on Medical ethics



- ▶ This book is great on ethics, taught through case studies:
- ▶ <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Cambridge-Medical-Ethics-Workbook-Commentaries/dp/0521788633>
- ▶ This is a nice short introduction to medical ethics:
- ▶ [http://www.amazon.co.uk/Medical-Ethics-Short-Introduction-Introductions/dp/0192802828/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1309938291&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Medical-Ethics-Short-Introduction-Introductions/dp/0192802828/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1309938291&sr=1-1)



# On a positive note



- ▶ For suitable candidates, medicine offers the greatest benefits:
- ▶ A guaranteed job when they graduate
- ▶ A job for life
- ▶ Excellent pay and overtime
- ▶ More diversity of career pathways than virtually any other vocation
- ▶ Opportunities to work abroad