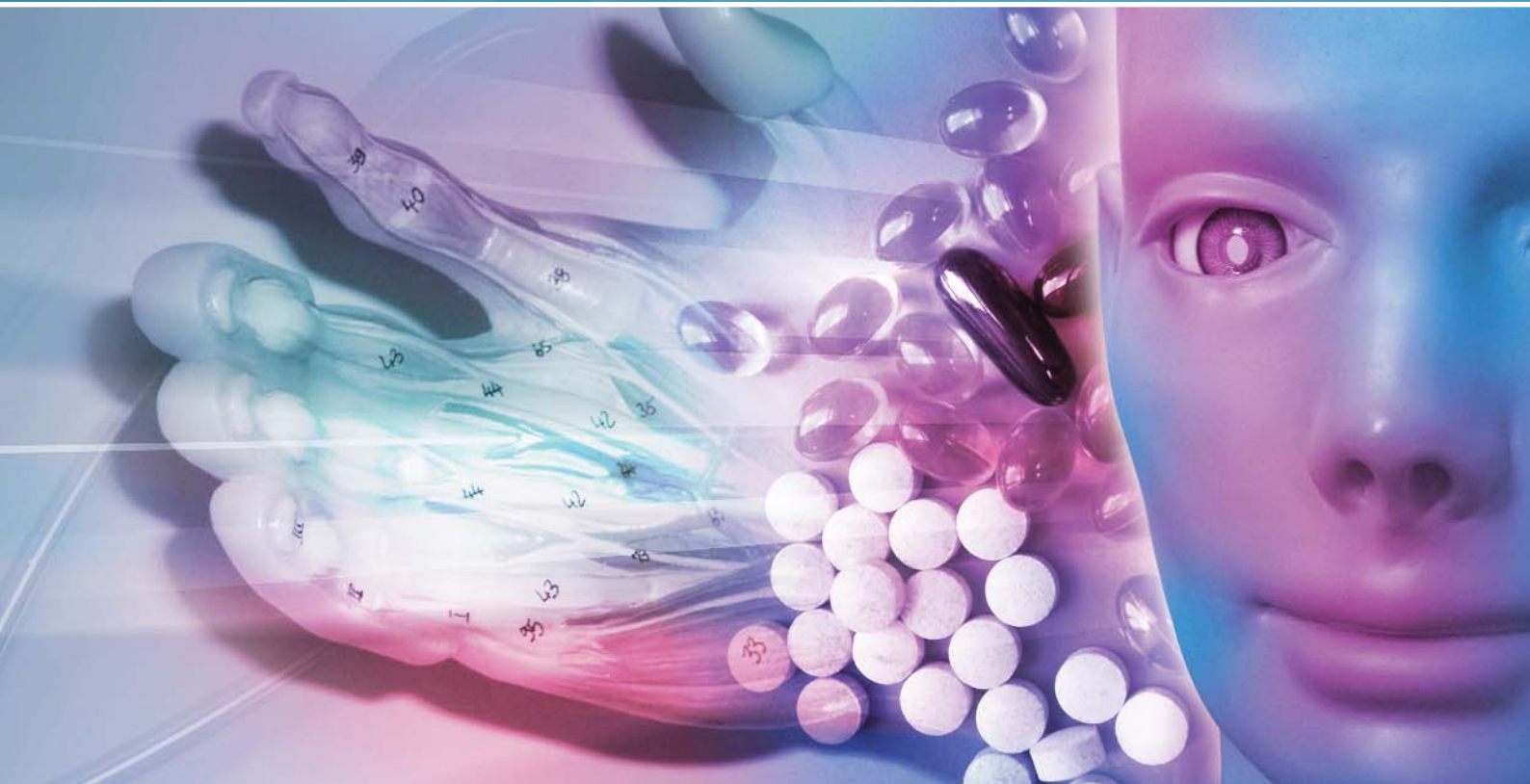




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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CLINICAL SKILLS



A Peer Reviewed International Journal for the Advancement of Clinical Skills
– ‘docendo ac discendo’ – ‘by teaching and learning’



C.O.M.E.T. – A novel educational method in clinical skills

From simulation to reality

Shibboleths of incompetence

Development of a clinical skills bus: making simulation mobile

“See one, do one, teach one!” – the uphill struggle for clinical skills acquisition

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The International Journal of Clinical Skills looks forward to contributing positively towards the training of all members of the healthcare profession.

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Mission Statement

The clinical skills arena is an ever expanding field with an increasing wealth of knowledge; however there is no central resource for the sharing of evidence based research and information. The International Journal of Clinical Skills (IJOCS) is a peer reviewed International Journal, which will promote the sharing of information and evidence based research, as well as bringing together the clinical skills community.

The Journal aims to develop and maintain standards in research and practice, lay a platform for discussion and debate, and provide opportunity to present evidence based medicine and critical appraisal of research. Provision of this much needed resource for both students, teachers and healthcare professionals, will ultimately enhance patient care.

The IJOCS will be a regular publication, three times a year in the first instance, both online and in print. The implementation of the IJOCS website will provide a continual resource for daily use. Also, in conjunction with the 'Clinical Skills Lab', the IJOCS will allow access to an online database on over 200 clinical skills – launching in 2008.

A diverse range of reviewers support the Editorial Board, all of whom are leaders in their respective fields and the IJOCS prides itself on the quality of content. Contribution of original ideas, research, audit, policy, reviews, case reports and 'Letters to the Editor' are welcome from all those involved in this multidisciplinary field. Submissions are not limited to these specific publication types and your novel suggestions will be considered.

I wish to thank all those involved in the development of this unique venture – a Journal whose remit is highly significant to today's needs.

Dr Humayun Ayub

Editor-in-Chief

International Journal of Clinical Skills

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Foreword

International Journal of Clinical Skills – An exciting forum for clinical skills

There has been an explosion in the volume of medical information related to clinical skills, which are essential in our efforts to maintain optimal patient care. The International Journal of Clinical Skills (IJOCS) aims to disseminate this knowledge in an easily accessible form. This will not only enhance our attempts to provide a quality health service, possibly with some standardisation, but also provide a vehicle for teaching and learning, hence the Journal's motto – 'docendo ac discendo' (by teaching and by learning).

The IJOCS will not only serve as an avenue for publication of research papers, but will also act as a means of communication between clinical skills professionals at an international level. Consequently, those involved in the clinical skills field, can keep those in other countries informed of their activities, as well as offering best practice guidance.

Alongside this valuable publication, a continually evolving online database ('Clinical Skills Lab') will become available for students and teachers to access – this will hold extensive information on over 200 clinical skills. The Clinical Skills Lab will be regularly updated by all those involved in this field and provide a platform for discussion and debate.

The IJOCS also aims to present comment on items of specialist interest. For example, the current issue contains a paper by Professor Harold Ellis CBE, on 'Medico-legal consequences in surgery due to inadequate training in anatomy', and explores the potential niche for anatomical clinical skills training within the newly developed medical Foundation Years (F1 & F2). It is hoped readers will make use of the Journal to comment on matters such as this – and on others relating to the subject of clinical skills – by means of 'Letters to the Editor', research based evidence and shared practice.

In order for IJOCS to become an exciting forum for clinical skills, the Journal welcomes submission of innovative research, papers, reviews and case reports. Of course, submissions are not only limited to these specific publication types and your innovative ideas would be greatly welcome by the Editor.

I am confident that IJOCS will be appreciated by a variety of health care professionals, at an international level. It promises to be representative of an ever expanding field, and with the support of all those able to contribute, it will, without doubt become increasingly influential.

I wish those responsible for the production of the International Journal of Clinical Skills, the success which their initiative deserves.



Professor The Lord McColl of Dulwich CBE
September 2007

Interview with Kuldip Birdi, author of 'Clinical Skills for OSCEs'

Miss Wing Mok

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Kuldip Birdi

Where are you working at the moment?

At King's College Hospital in Orthopaedics. It's great fun!

When did you first get involved in teaching clinical skills?

My involvement began when I was appointed Social Director of the Guy's, King's and St. Thomas' School of Medicine - GKT - Surgical Society in '94. I was teaching medical students suturing at that time. This was in high demand and consequently, a year later, I was appointed Clinical Skills Director for the Society and started to teach other surgical skills in addition to suturing. It was a very enjoyable experience.

What do you think about the 'International Journal of Clinical Skills'?

I think it is a very good idea – why didn't I think of it! A lot of students would be very keen to read specialist topics in clinical skills written by experienced clinicians. The Journal wouldn't solely be aiming for the general medical student but also at other health professionals such as Dentists, Nurses and Physiotherapists. Incorporating self-test questions, OSCE scenarios and sections written by examiners would also make it more appealing to the readers. I think this Journal will no doubt improve confidence and prepare the student well for his or her practical exams.

How did you get involved in writing the "Clinical skills for OSCEs" book?

In my third-year in medicine most of us were using the first edition of the book for revision. I found it very useful. It was one of a kind. However, I felt that there were some aspects of the book that could be improved. I decided to contact the publishers and the original author, Neel Burton, who became very interested in how I could brighten up the book. After submitting a few sample chapters and a short informal interview in Oxford, I was given the privilege to work alongside Neel on the second edition. I remember that day very well. I was so thrilled!

Why did you choose to write the second edition to the OSCE book instead of writing a whole new one yourself?

I used this OSCE book for my revision because it had the key elements necessary to pass the exams compared to the other books. The text was simple and to the point unlike other books. It was a very good revision guide since everything was summarised on at least two pages. About three years ago there weren't many OSCE books that I knew of. This book was the only one which stood out from the rest. I don't think I could have competed with it.

Some students have criticised your book being devoid of details, what do you say about that?

It was our intention not to include too much information in the second edition. Neel and I felt that it would be most appropriate to highlight the important and difficult bits in the book. We had to keep text to a minimum and constantly thought about our market, namely medical students. My first drafts of the chapters were quite detailed, averaging about three pages. This would have made the book thicker and more expensive. Furthermore, we wanted to maintain the original style of the first edition without spoon-feeding the student and not to keep it GKT orientated. It was hard work but definitely worth it.

How important do you think clinical examinations are nowadays with so many investigations available, do you think its value has depreciated?

Extremely important! You could argue both ways. For instance, clinical examinations can pick up clues (your diagnoses) that investigations cannot;

and investigations can sometimes pick up things that doctors wouldn't have even thought of finding in examinations. Investigations, whether they are in the form of bloods or radiology, provide vast amount of information that can be crucial to the clinical picture. If a patient comes into A&E with severe shortness of breath and audible coarse crackles on the chest, you have to examine the patient and use your clinical judgement to come to a diagnosis, before requesting a transthoracic echocardiogram (TTE) to find the cause. Some investigations like TTEs are not readily available in the acute setting, and one would have to rely on their diagnostic curiosity. So, I think clinical skills are very important and I don't think its value has depreciated. They will always be crucial, particularly in Third World countries where investigations are not readily available.

Do you think Clinical skills will continue to be highly valued even if investigations can be obtained relatively easily and cheap?

Yes, most definitely! Technology is constantly advancing. Investigations like MRI and 3D imaging techniques will become readily available, but I think it will be many years for this change to happen.

Are you involved in any other types of research at the moment? If so, what and why?

I have written biographies on two eminent orthopaedic surgeons of Guy's with John Older – William Trethowan and Constantine Lambrinudi. Historical articles are very interesting to read and write for three reasons. First, the approach to writing these types of articles is different from writing a scientific article. It involves interviewing eminent surgeons, living ancestors and research at the both the RSM and RCS libraries. Second, you learn a lot about the personal lives. Third, it improves your writing skills and enables you to expand your network of contacts. My articles are soon to be published in the Journal of Medical Biography. I have also begun writing a second book, with a colleague, aimed at final year medical students and FY1 doctors. I can't give you too much information...you'll just have to wait and see!

Do you enjoy teaching medical students?

Yes, very much so. Teaching is not just sharing your knowledge to other people. It's about keeping your student inspired and motivated. When you are teaching you are not just there as a teacher, but as a facilitator of learning. You support the student, stimulate their thinking, and enhance their ability to problem solve.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years time, and which specialty would you like to go into?

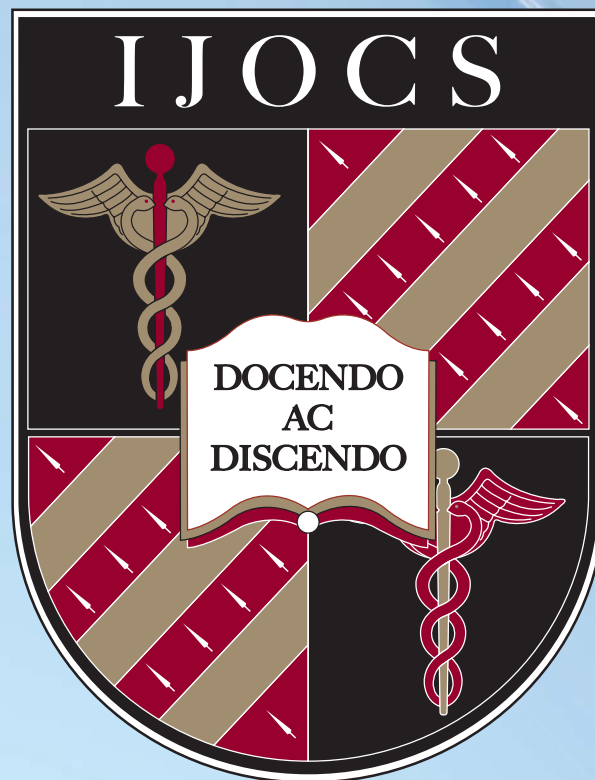
With this new system it's difficult to predict. I hope I will be doing ENT. Although I have not had much exposure to the field, I very much enjoyed my elective in head and neck surgery in India. It's a highly competitive speciality but at the same time I think it's very nice and laid back. The whole head and neck anatomy really fascinates me.

What three tips would you give to medical students taking OSCEs?

Practice your clinical skills continuously throughout the year, don't panic and be natural. For the OSCEs the assessors only want to know that you are safe and doing the right thing. ■

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Clinical Skills Lab (CSL)

The Clinical Skills Lab database will comprise information on over 200 clinical skills, broadly separated into:

- History taking skills
- Communication skills
- Clinical examination/interpretation skills
- Practical skills

Not only will this valuable resource provide material to students as a learning tool and revision aid, for example, OSCEs, it will also offer educational materials for teachers from all disciplines, allowing some standardisation of practice. The Clinical Skills community will also be encouraged to contribute, making this database interactive.

CSL is Launching in April 2008 – view sample material at **www.ijocs.org** and take advantage of a 50% discounted rate if booked prior to **1st March 2008** (enter promotional code **CSL63R** at registration)