

Lancaster University Peer-associated Learning Society (LUPALS) – making learning more efficient

Lee Joshua Melo, he/him, Samuel Parker, he/him

We are Sam and Lee, 4th year medical students at Lancaster University with interests in cardiology and general practice respectively. We share a passion towards medical education, and are the co-presidents of the Lancaster University Peer-associated Learning Society (LUPALS) for the academic year 2022/2023.

LUPALS is a student-led teaching society founded in 2013 with three fundamental ethos: empowering students to achieve academic excellence, maintaining a supportive community to deal with the hardships of medical school, and providing extra-curricular opportunities to boost student portfolios. Every year, each year group elects LUPALS coordinators who are responsible for designing and facilitating a LUPALS curriculum for the academic year. Student feedback is necessary to improve future LUPALS teaching sessions, hence a vital task of coordinators is to ensure feedback is collected and delivered to teachers promptly. Furthermore, through adapting a liaison and administrative role, coordinators are the essential 'bridge' between students and teachers to ensure that sessions run as smoothly as possible. Meanwhile, presidents are in charge of governing and troubleshooting problems within the society. This is achieved through hosting termly meetings, arranging our annual teacher training session, and organising the handover responsibilities for the subsequent LUPALS committee.

We have been striving to uphold the LUPALS ethos since our roles as year two coordinators in the academic year 2021/2022. As coordinators, we designed and conducted a novel OSCE masterclass session to help students prepare for their clinical examinations. Due to student requests, we subsequently hosted revision and 'drop-in' sessions during their revision week. These sessions helped reassure students

and address their concerns prior to their exams. Our LUPALS sessions have also covered relevant issues such as health inequalities within the BAME and LGBTQ+ population, emulating the holistic approach required in medicine. Our roles as coordinators and presidents have highlighted the effect of peer teaching in a medical setting. We believe this encompasses two domains: the effect on an individual and the community. Peer teaching creates role models for students, thus increasing their confidence as medical professionals. In addition, it allows students to identify their weaknesses which promotes a productive mindset as learners and future doctors. We realised unhealthy competition amongst peers is a significant issue in medical school. As a result, we aim to instil values that allow peers to cooperate with each other rather than compete against each other.

Our future visions for LUPALS are to maintain the excellent standards of teaching and to improve student engagement by expanding our social media platforms. As presidents, we are proud of the work that we do and are relentlessly committed to make learning more efficient and accessible for medical



Correspondence to:
l.melo@lancaster.ac.uk
s.j.parker@lancaster.ac.uk

