Hello and welcome to the very first edition of the HYMS Alumni newsletter.

I hope you will enjoy hearing news from HYMS, and I hope too that you will share your news with us and keep in touch. As this is a special graduation edition, I would in particular like to congratulate all those students who have just graduated from HYMS. You are now members of an exclusive network of people - the HYMS Alumni Association.

We want the HYMS Alumni Association to be vibrant and exciting, and a network that is useful to you in your career. HYMS is very proud of its Alumni. We aim to be one of the best medical schools in the country and you can help us to build our reputation. I hope that you will come back to HYMS to help current and prospective students, to mentor and tutor, and to assist our development, so that you are as much a part of our future as I hope we will be of yours.

Please support the activities of the Alumni Association and tell us what events or activities you would find useful. If you would like to get more involved in the work of the Association, or would like to be featured in an issue of this newsletter, then please do get in touch at alumni@hyms.ac.uk.

Finally, we are running a competition to name this newsletter and we would like as many of you to email your suggestions to alumni@hyms.ac.uk. The deadline is 31st October 2014 and the winning entrant will receive a £10 Amazon voucher. We look forward to your suggestions!

We look forward to hearing from you.

Professor Trevor Sheldon
Dean of HYMS
Hello!

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to the HYMS Alumni Association. You are members of a select group of graduates from the UK's newest medical school. The good news is that membership, whilst being exclusive, is free. We don’t want your money, we want your participation!

I am aware that there are a large number of such associations around and when a letter drops on the mat it is usually not opened and is instantly put in the “cylindrical filing cabinet”! I hope that we can generate more interest than that.

We have a very small core group which is running the association - Abbie Brooks, one of our original cohort and Kirstie Skelton Clarke, who is a HYMS staff member. If you think you would like to help, please let us know! Email alumni@hyms.ac.uk

The purpose of the association is to maintain a cohesive community of doctors who are able to keep in contact with their peers. The contacts can be social or professional. You may want to let others know where you are, how you are doing, relate stories or recount cases or experiences which may be serious or amusing.

We also envisage alumni providing support for both undergraduates and postgraduates. This could be face-to-face or online. We have all been through situations where friendly advice and support would have been welcome; this is increasingly more difficult thanks to the changes in work practices imposed by the European Working Time Directive. You will all know the vagaries of making career choices and getting the inside information on jobs and bosses. We would hope that members would be able to give a little time to this.

It would also be nice for the alumni to get together from time-to-time, perhaps to get some postgraduate education followed by a social event. We also envisage facilitating sports events followed by a dinner or a party. It gives you a chance to meet and catch up. It would also be good for you to meet your old teachers and for them to meet you. It would be great to think that we could facilitate year group reunions; I have always found them to be great fun, renewing old acquaintances and friendships, these are always something to treasure.

I feel that as doctors we are in a privileged position. We have useful, interesting jobs; we are trusted and get well remunerated. Giving a bit of time back has to enrich our professional lives. I hope that you can join us.

We are in the process of developing the association and we value your views on what we should be doing. If you have any constructive ideas please let us know. I hope that you
will be able to contribute features for the newsletter and that you follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Steve

Professor Steve Leveson

President of the HYMS Alumni Association

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**Saying goodbye to Theme Cluster C**

“You mean to say there’s no more Theme Cluster C?” - Just as your great-great-grandparents can remember exactly what they were doing when they heard that JFK had been shot (I have to accept I find it hard to place your ages these days), I know this moment will also be seared into the collective HYMS alumni memory. I can just picture you now, perhaps putting down your mojito on the Gold Coast beachside bar to which you repair after a hard day’s graft, perhaps taking a brief moment aside from another fascinating exploration of the beliefs, concerns and expectations of the good people of Goole, perhaps raising a bleary but reflective eye from the reflective account in your reflective portfolio – each with a common thought – ‘How come they’re getting away without having to do that!’.

Well sadly it is true, and not only that but who was it that was forced to wield the knife that put an end to good old TCC? Yes dear reader, it was me.

After a decade of relative pedagogic-calm we have taken the plunge at HYMS and over the last two years have undertaken a thorough review of the curriculum. For reasons best known to others, I was allowed a role in the process and during that time I have swished around the dreamy spires of HYMS with the title of ‘Academic Lead for the HYMS MBBS Curriculum Review’ thinking the unthinkable and leaving unwashed coffee cups everywhere. Well, to be honest (and some rationality was going to have to happen in these paragraphs sometime), I’ve had the privilege of working with a whole team of colleagues within the School, with tutors, students and (more on this in a moment) alumni, drawing up a range of proposals which we will be implementing over the next three years. Developments that we hope will further improve the excellent training we can now offer.

And so now, ‘All changed, changed utterly’ as that poetic Mr Yeats wrote about a previous attempt at organisational transformation, before he altered his name and opened those wine lodges. Well actually, ‘A bit changed, changed somewhat’ (but that was never
going to work in a poem about revolutionary upheaval in Ireland—honestly what were you thinking?). We have kept our commitment to PBL (of course, you say, what would they have done with all those PBL rooms?), proposed longer clinical rotations (of course, you say, what were they going to do with all those hospitals and surgeries?) and most importantly—kept the QIP (of course, you say, hang on, what the ****?). Well, the alumni said....

For someone involved with the establishment of HYMS it has been an exciting time, a chance to re-engage with some of the questions we had thought about from the beginning of the School, what sorts of knowledge, what sorts of skills and attitudes did Tomorrow’s Doctors really need – what should distinguish a ‘HYMS graduate’? I can distinctly remember Bill Gillespie, the Founding Dean, saying on a day in early 2003, when we were struggling to work out exactly how to deliver teaching, ‘It will all be easier once the students get here’ – and it was. Just as working with students helped us solve problems and create a great course – so the opportunity to talk to ‘Today’s Doctors’ about their experiences after graduation has been incredibly helpful as we have reviewed it. Your insights in to what works well, what can be improved, what you now think you needed more of, where you feel we may have helped you stand out amongst your peers – they are absolute ‘gold-dust’. Do use the alumni association as a route to get messages back to us – we are listening.

Oh ... and about Theme Cluster C, well perhaps I was a little premature in announcing its demise. You can breathe again, for whilst the ‘fluffy stuff’ may sound soft, flimsy and transient – we will no doubt rest in the navel of HYMS, to be duly considered at length, way after those other more ‘basic’ sciences have been forgotten.

No longer a lead for the curriculum review I can sign-off as ‘Academic Lead for the HYMS Theme...Health and Society’ (now what shall we include in that I wonder?).

Professor Steven Oliver
Alumni profile: Dr Abbie Brooks

Abbie was part of the first cohort of students who graduated from HYMS. Here she tells us what life post-HYMS has been like, and combining a career as a doctor with being a mum.

I am very excited to welcome you all to the ‘pioneering’ edition of the HYMS Alumni Association Newsletter. Since I started out as chair of the association around 18 months ago, the team and I have been busy working on a number of projects including social gatherings, HYMS@TEN events and the fantastic Alumni Association Ball in September. It has been a very busy couple of years, multitasking alumni duties, training as a GP and the joys of motherhood.

I completed my training in July 2014 to become a fully fledged GP locally in York. I am looking forward to completing the HYMS cycle by training HYMS medical students over the coming years. The next step for me is hopefully the HYMS PGCME, but right now I have enough on, so that will have to wait until 2015!

It has been great to see HYMS alumni making progress in various specialities including general practice, surgery, paediatrics and medicine. My contemporaries are now speciality registrars, which amazes me constantly. How did time go that fast? HYMS@TEN celebrations over the last few months have really highlighted to me how far we have come in such a short time. Many of us are now married, home owners, parents, emigrants even – all life events which have brought their own unique challenges I am sure. Oh the joys of adulthood!

The Alumni Association is in its infancy and we continually assess what our role should be. I am looking forward to the next phase and hoping to provide more educational and career-focussed events. We are always looking to expand and are keen to recruit an alumni representative from each graduating year, so please raise your hand and let us know if you’d like to join us.

Dr Abbie Brooks

Chair of the HYMS Alumni Association
HYMS research is going from strength to strength. Read on for a quick update on some of the current research so far this year...

HYMS cancer research in the news

Research by HYMS Chair in Primary Care Una Macleod, which looks into how people make sense of symptoms of cancer in the lungs, head and neck and the factors that make them go and see their doctor, has been mentioned in an article that appeared in the Yorkshire Post.


Care or home for maltreated children?

Researchers at HYMS and the University of York are launching a new multi-disciplinary project to examine what works best for abused or neglected children – going into care or staying at home with support. Read more.

Supporting children and young adults with Type 1 Diabetes

Dr Allison Green, HYMS Senior Lecturer and type 1 diabetes researcher in the Centre for Immunology and Infection, was invited by diabetes-specialty nurses Jeannette Burson-Thomas and Anne Foster to talk to children and young adults with type 1 diabetes about her research. Read more.

Research grant awarded by Cancer Research UK

Una Macleod, Steven Oliver, Rhian Gabe and Miriam Johnson with colleagues from Durham and Leeds have been awarded a project grant of £340,000 by Cancer Research UK to investigate the pathway to diagnosis for patients who are diagnosed with lung and colorectal cancer via an emergency presentation. Read more.

TV coverage for Baby Panda study

HYMS Senior Lecturer in Mental Health Dr Dean McMillan was interviewed for ITV Tyne Tees about post-natal depression and the Baby Panda study

Link: http://www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2013/research/baby-project/
Journal publication for Francisco

HYMS Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences Dr Francisco Rivero is co-author of a publication in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). Read more.

‘Natural oestrogens’ do not reduce testosterone levels in diabetic men

New research carried out at the Hull York Medical School (HYMS) has found that phytoestrogens – which are similar to the female hormone oestrogen – appear to be safe and beneficial for men with Type 2 diabetes. Read more.

Genetic links found between schizophrenia and cannabis use

HYMS Year 4 student Mohamed Zuhair is co-author of a paper that has been published in Molecular Psychiatry that suggests the genetics of schizophrenia increase the chances of future cannabis use. Read more.

News from Hull and York

Remember to keep up to date with all the news and happenings at your parent universities.

- News from the University of Hull
- News from the University of York
- News from HYMS

And finally....

HYMS achieves bronze Athena SWAN award

HYMS has achieved a bronze award from the Athena SWAN Charter in recognition of its support for women in science. Read more.

Dr Neil Metcalfe wins top prize at GP Enterprise Awards 2013

Congratulations to Dr Neil Metcalfe, Honorary Senior Clinical Tutor and Student Selected Component provider at HYMS, who has been voted overall winner of the GP Enterprise Awards 2013.

Can you name this newsletter?!

We think this newsletter needs a name, but rather than subject you all to one we have chosen, we thought we would ask you to come up with ideas.

Please email your suggestions to alumni@hyms.ac.uk. The winning entry gets to name the newsletter, and also gets a £10 Amazon voucher. The closing date is 31st October 2014.

Keep in touch

Now we are ten years old (or just over!), we will be carrying out a census to find out where you are now and how you are progressing with your careers. For the first time this year, we asked our new graduates where they are headed after graduation, and how they would like to stay in touch with HYMS. The results were really fascinating. We hope you will help us build up a better picture of where our graduates are now and what you are all doing by completing this short questionnaire that will be sent out to you before Christmas.

There are many benefits to being part of the Alumni Association, but for it to be really useful and dynamic, we need your input. We’d love to hear your news and views, find out how your career is progressing, and also welcome you back to HYMS either as postgraduate students or as mentors and tutors.

Please do get in touch if you have a story to share, or want to find out more about how the Alumni Association and HYMS can help you in your future career. Email us at alumni@hyms.ac.uk or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn Many thanks.