

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-70967-5 - Learning Medicine: How to Become and Remain a Good Doctor, Eighteenth Edition

Peter Richards, Simon Stockill, Rosalind Foster and Elizabeth Ingall

Frontmatter

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Learning Medicine

Eighteenth Edition: How to Become and Remain a Good Doctor

Learning Medicine is a must-read for anyone thinking of a career in medicine, or who is already in the training process and wants to understand and explore the various options and alternatives along the way. Whatever your background, whether you are school-leaver or mature student, if you are interested in finding out more about becoming and being a good doctor, this is the book for you.

In continuous publication since 1983, and now in its eighteenth edition, *Learning Medicine* provides the most current, honest and informative source of essential knowledge combined with pragmatic guidance.

Learning Medicine describes medical school courses, explains Foundation years and outlines the wide range of specialty choices allowing tomorrow's doctors to decide about their future careers; but it also goes further to consider the privilege and responsibility of being a doctor, providing food for thought and reflection throughout a long and rewarding career.

From reviews of previous editions:

“This little volume contains everything that is required by the aspirant in medical training and also answers questions that probably would not be thought about. Particularly valuable are the details of specialisation and the requirements for this. This little volume is a must for all students (and their parents!).”

Scottish Medical Journal

“Wise, well observed and accurate (not to mention funny!). Rather than just telling you how to get into medical school – this book asks you the much more important question: “Will you enjoy it?””

Foundation Year 1 Doctor

“...provides a very objective and balanced up-to-date analysis of both medical school and medicine as a career. It not only gives the potential medical student invaluable information about what medical school is really like from day to day, and the careers it could lead to, but also help with decisions such as “is medicine for me?” and “how do I get in?””

UCL Medical Student Clinical Year 2

“To read this is to be warned, informed and educated – a very useful piece of ground-work before even applying to medical school.”

GP and GP Trainer

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How to Become and Remain a Good Doctor

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Foundation Year 1 Doctor

With cartoons by the late Larry

and a foreword by Sir Roger Bannister



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**To spirited students, dedicated doctors, and courageous and
forbearing patients – all of whom have helped us to learn medicine.**

With our special thanks to all those (students of several medical schools, a patient, and a BBC TV producer) who have each contributed their piece to this book – Tom Alport, Chloe-Maryse Baxter, Michael Brady, Sarah Cooper, Sarah Edwards, Adam Harrison, Farhad Islam, Liz James, Grace Robinson, Susan Spindler, Brenda Strachan, Helena Watson, Lynne Harris, David Carter, Sarah Vepers – and particularly to the late Larry, who most generously breathed life into a “worthy cause”, and to his widow, who has not only kindly given us permission to continue to use the original cartoons but also to use some not previously included. We also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Dr Aneil Malhotra in the updating of this 18th edition.

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Foreword

By Sir Roger Bannister, CBE DM FRCP

The authors between them have more or less seen it all. This book gives a vivid, and fair picture of medical student life and what is involved in becoming a doctor. There is fun and esprit de corps; hard work and even drudgery.

It is also about what it means to be a doctor: the privileges and responsibilities; and about career options and pathways.

If, after carefully considering the issues raised here, you choose medicine and if you are successful in getting a place at medical school, you will be on the threshold of one profession, above all others, acknowledged all over the world to have brought the greatest advances and the greatest benefits to mankind. Medicine has fascination; it has diversity.

For 40 years I have been a neurologist and have never for one day lost the feeling of exhilaration of solving a new clinical problem. Medicine has happily been the core of my life. Study and reflect on this book and medicine might, or might not, become the core of yours too.

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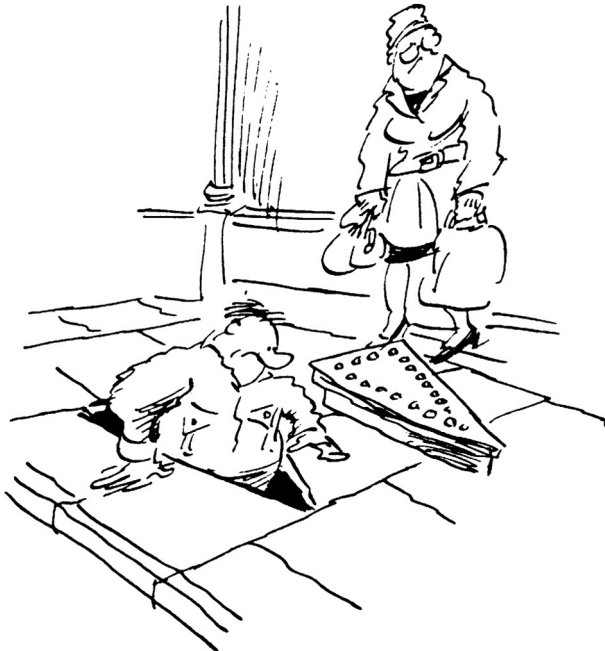
[More information](#)**x** **Foreword**

If you choose to represent the various parts in life by holes upon a table, of different shapes – some circular, some square, some oblong – and the persons acting these parts by bits of wood of similar shapes, we shall generally find that the triangular person has got into the square hole, the oblong in the triangular, and a square person has squeezed himself into the round hole. The officer and the office, the doer and the thing done, seldom fit so exactly that we can say they were almost made for each other.

SYDNEY SMITH 1804

If we offend, it is with good will,
That you should think we come not to offend,
but with good will

A Midsummer Night's Dream
SHAKESPEARE



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Preface

For 25 years this book, regularly updated, has assisted many people like yourself, to make your own informed decision as to whether, or not, medicine is the right career for you.

However, this book has a much wider purpose. It charts the various medical school courses, explains the Foundation years, and outlines the wide range of medical specialty choices.

Further, through its consideration of the legal consequences of the privilege and responsibility of being a doctor, it gives food for thought and reflection throughout your career in convenient bedside reading!

It also provides a readable source of information for patients and the public, about what it takes to become and remain a good doctor.

With the ever-increasing radical changes to medical education and medical practice, Medicine continues to go through difficult times, but patients will always need good doctors.

Medicine is not just another job: it is a way of life. Most doctors are highly regarded by their patients. Medicine is a tremendous career for the right people.

You will need to consider all the personal and professional implications of a life dedicated to putting patients and patient safety first.

We celebrate our 25th anniversary by sub-titling this book “How to become and remain a good doctor”, to reflect its now much wider scope.

The authors

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