

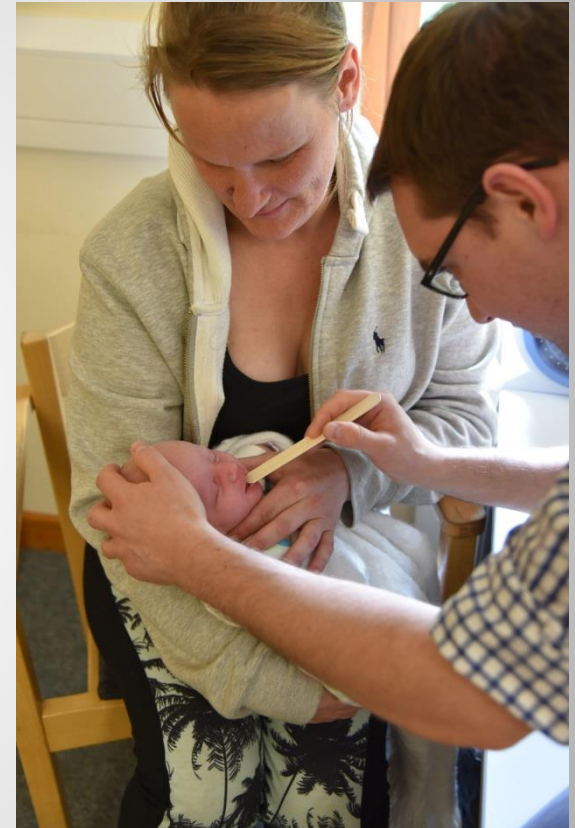
# Student Selected Components in General Practice

**Dr Kinnary Martin**  
**Dr Tanya Blumenfeld**



By the end of this session you will:

- Know the what, when, why and how of SSCs
- Have an idea of the types of SSCs currently on offer
- Have explored some topics that you can offer
- Know who to contact for advice



**Intended learning outcomes**

## The GMC envisages that SSCs would allow students:

- An opportunity to study in greater depth an area of their choosing that is outside but which complements the core curriculum.
- A greater control over learning and the development of self-directed learning skills including critical thinking and reasoning which would engender an approach to medicine that is questioning and self-critical.
- To develop greater confidence in their own skills and abilities.
- To present the results of their work verbally, visually, in writing or a combination of these.
- To develop and recognise the value of transferable skills.
- To consider potential career paths.

## Aims of SSCs

- A project, devised by you and the student(s) jointly, overseen by you.
- May involve qualitative or quantitative research.
- Outcome: a presentation, a poster, a publication (more about this later).



**What?**

Topics can be broadly divided into:

- An extension of the core curriculum e.g. an SSC in sports medicine as a logical development of an attachment in orthopaedics or rheumatology.
- An area related to medicine but not included in any detail in the core curriculum e.g. history of medicine, information technology, forensic pathology, medicine in the classical world.
- A topic that can be applied to medicine. e.g. management skills, journalism, a foreign language.

After undertaking a research based SSC students may be able to:

- Retrieve information
- Evaluate and critically appraise scientific literature
- Demonstrate proficiency in written communication
- Demonstrate proficiency in oral communication
- Demonstrate proficiency in self-directed learning
- Demonstrate an ability to manage time effectively
- Partake in teamwork

**Skills, skills, skills**

## Year 4:

- 6 week block. 4 blocks per year January - June:
- 2017 dates:
  - 2/1/17-11/2/17
  - 13/2/17-25/2/17
  - 10/4/17-20/5/17
  - 22/5/17-1/7/17
- 2018 dates:
  - 1/1/18-10/2/18
  - 12/2/18-24/3/18
  - 9/4/18-19/5/18
  - 21/5/18-29/6/18



**When?**





**Your motivation**



- Different to the day job
- Exploration of an area which interests you
- Enables a focus on your population
- Involvement in research
- Opportunity for posters, presentations & publications
- Fosters the idea of GP as an attractive career destination
- Student enthusiasm

**Why?**

- Student visits PCU or MedEd SSC page:

The screenshot shows the Primary Care Unit website. The navigation bar includes links for Home, News, About Us, Research, Education and Training (highlighted), Information for researchers, People, and PCU Intranet. The main content area is titled 'Student Selected Components (SSCs)'. On the left is a sidebar with a list of links: Primary Care Unit, General Practice Education for Cambridge medical students, Bereavement Symposium – Book Counselling, Teaching in Primary Care for medical students, Academic Clinical Fellows, Opportunities for PhD Students, MPhil in Clinical Sciences (Primary Care Research), and Student Selected Components (SSCs). Under the SSCs link, there are three sub-links: SSCs (List of Current Available Projects), SSC Past Assignments, and SSCs (List of Past Available Projects). The main content area features a heading 'Keen to explore SSC opportunities with the Primary Care Unit?' followed by a paragraph of text and a quote from Dr John Benson. Below the quote is a list of five numbered items: 1. Current projects, 2. Using CPRD, 3. Disseminating your findings, 4. About recent SSC projects – list of past assignments plus examples, and 5. Message to Cambridge medical students from Professor Jonathan Mant.

How?

- First contact: can be telephone or e-mail contact
- Find out: Name, year, dates of SSC block, more than one student?
- Then...open dialogue regarding interests to enable decision on specific content of SSC
- Confirm commitment to working together
- Work out rough plan and timetable for the project

**How?**

- Advise student to complete and submit SSC proposal proforma to MedEd
- Identify and arrange resources necessary: access to computer, log-in, presentation equipment
- Frequency of contact depends on project: suggested average of one GP session per week
- Payment:  
Calculated on basis of one GP session per week  
6 sessions @ £210 = £1260
- Student can claim up to £100 for travel expenses

**How?**



Kathryn Dixon audited GP records to examine vaccine uptake in a traveller community, with Dr Tanya Blumenfeld ➔ publication in the Journal of Public Health

*Dixon, KC, Mullis, R, and Blumenfeld, T. [Vaccine uptake in the Irish Travelling community: An audit of general practice records. Journal of Public Health; 19 Sept 2016; DOI: 10.1093/pubmed/fdw088.](#)*

**Recent example**

For full details see the PCU site SSC page

- 1) To understand fully the process of clinical commissioning, including the commissioning cycle. 2) To understand the advantages of clinical commissioning over other commissioning models and the barriers and pitfalls there-in. 3) To be aware of dementia services in the community setting in Huntingdonshire and the dementia pathway as it stands. 4) To audit at a practice level, the clinical outcomes from the national Dementia Direct Enhanced Service. 5) To undertake work on a new dementia strategy for Huntingdonshire, incorporating objectives 1-4. *Dr Malav Bhimpuria*

## Examples

- The student will be involved in the development of educational resources utilising multimedia and educational principles. *Dr Jon Ferdinand*
- The student will work with a GP with a specialist interest in Care of the Elderly to do some work at local nursing homes looking at repeat prescribing, care planning or falls management. *Dr Megan Phillimore-Brown*





**Your ideas**





The successful completion of the SSC programme will be demonstrated by a satisfactory SSC portfolio:

- Satisfactory supervisor report for Year 4 SSC block
- Satisfactory student report of Year 4 SSC
  
- Demonstration of key skills:
  - a. Writing of a manuscript or abstract
  - b. Presentation of material
  - c. A described literature search
  - d. A literature review or manuscript introduction or case report
  - e. Production of a poster or power point presentation of SSC findings
  - f. Use of statistical methods to inform understanding of data

## Assessment

- Meet up with student in final week for evaluation and feedback
- Submit report via MedEd
- You will receive an evaluation of the SSC from the student via MedEd
- Can students fail an SSC?

**Assessment**

- SSC prize awarded at end of Year 6 to student whose SSC portfolio is considered outstanding. 
- Cuthbert Prize For Humanities awarded for essay concerning interaction of humanities with clinical medicine.  
- Students may apply for a grant from GPEG for up to £300 to cover expenses related to presenting at conference. 

**Awards** 

- 1. NRES ethics approval: even setting up a small research project involving sending questionnaires to a small group of patients or setting up a focus group with patients or their carers will require NRES ethics approval.
- 2. Questionnaires for NHS staff, but not for patients: no NRES ethics approval needed, but you would require R&D approval, insurance and ethics approval from one of the internal ethics committees unless the R&D office consider the work to constitute service evaluation, rather than research.
- 3. If you want to do a small research project on healthy volunteers you will still need ethics approval from one of the University ethics committees and you will also need insurance.

## Ethical issues

- SSC programme managed by Dr Jonathan Fuld  
ssc@medschl.cam.ac.uk
- General enquiries: Dr Kinnary Martin  
km673@medschl.cam.ac.uk
- Research & ethics: Clinical School Research  
Governance Officer (cad50@medschl.cam.ac.uk)  
01223 769291
- Literature searches: Isla Kuhn, Clinical School  
Library

**Resources & contacts**



**Burning questions**