University of Birmingham

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Primary Care Clinical Sciences

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About

Kate Thomas is Vice Dean for Medicine and programme director for the medicine degree programme. She leads the team of academics who develop and manage the programme.

Qualifications

- FRCGP, Royal College of General Practitioners 1995
- MRCGP, Royal College of General Practitioners 1989
- MB ChB, University of Birmingham 1984

Biography

Kate Thomas graduated in Medicine at the University of Birmingham in 1984. Following House Officer posts at Good Hope and the Queen Elizabeth Hospitals she undertook her general practice training in North Birmingham. She became a partner in her training practice, Ley Hill Surgery in Sutton Coldfield, in 1989. While she was a GP Registrar she became Chairman of the National Trainees' Conference in 1988. Through this she came into contact with professor Sir Michael Drury, then Head of the Department of General Practice at Birmingham. This lead to Kate gaining a National Training Fellowship from the Royal College of General Practitioners during which she undertook research on cervical cytology. In 1990 Kate was appointed as a Lecturer in the Department and ran the MSc in Primary Care from then until 1999. She was involved in the innovative Community Based Medicine (CBM) programme from its inception in 1995 and became the Lead for the programme in 2001. In 1996 she was appointed Senior Lecturer and, with David Fitzmaurice, led a three year project putting young GPs into practices and developing guidelines to support practice improvements. In 2005 Kate was appointed as an Associate Professor. For 7 years Kate took the lead on Education in the Department of Primary care and in the Division of Primary Care, Public and Occupational Health.

Whilst developing as a medical educator through CBM Kate developed a parallel career in medical student welfare. In 1992 she became Year tutor for final year students, a role she maintained until 2007. In 2001 she became Senior Tutor and since then has developed a comprehensive support network for medical students at Birmingham. In 2002 she created a Concern Form (also sometimes known as a Yellow Form) which is a means of staff or students reporting concerns about an individual student to the Student Development and Support Office. The student is then seen by their Year tutor and appropriate actions taken. The Concern Form has been adopted by a number of other medical schools, in the UK and abroad, and by some postgraduate specialties.

With her colleague, Professor John Skelton, Kate has been instrumental in setting up a Professional Support Unit for students in the College to support students with learning and behavioural difficulties.

Teaching

Teaching Programmes

Medicine and Surgery MBChB (/undergraduate/courses/med/medicine.aspx) :

- Community Based Medicine – years 1-5 and GEC 1-4
- Integrated Problems
- Medicine in Society

Research

RESEARCH THEMES

Medical Education

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Kate is currently involved in research into the reasons that medical students receive Concern Forms, a method of staff alerting the Student Development and Support Office in the Medical School of concerns they have about individual students. The aim of this work is to establish how we can better support students in resolving their difficulties.

Other activities

- Member, UKFPO Rules Group
- Member, Royal College of General Practitioners Fellowship Committee

Publications

Carter Y.H. and Thomas C.P. (eds.) (1996) Research Methods in Primary Care. Oxford, Radcliffe Medical Press.

Carter Y.H. and Thomas C.P. (eds.) (1999) Research Opportunities in Primary Care. Oxford, Radcliffe Medical Press.

Adams J.L., Fitzmaurice D.A., Heath C.M., Loudon R.F., Riaz A., Sterne A., Thomas C.P. (1999) A novel method of guideline development for the diagnosis and management of mild to moderate hypertension. BJGP 49:175-9

Parle J.V., Greenfield S.M., Thomas C.P., Ross N., Lester H.E., Skelton J.R., Hobbs F.D.R. (1999) Community-based Clinical Education at the University of Birmingham Medical School. Academic Medicine 74(3):248-253

Skelton J.R., Thomas C.P., Macleod J.A.A. (2000) Teaching Literature and medicine to medical students, part I: the beginning. Lancet 356:1920-22

Skelton J.R., Macleod J.A.A., Thomas C.P. (2000) Teaching literature and medicine to medical students, part II: why literature and medicine? Lancet 356:2001-03.

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