

Balint Groups Online for Medical Students

Opportunities for confidential discussion & reflection groups during 2021

Following the successful ‘pilot’ Balint on-line student group last year, the BSANZ is now sponsoring further opportunities for online clinical reflection groups for medical students in Australia and New Zealand. In recognition of the complexities of medical training and the need for personal care, the BSANZ is pleased to offer Balint groups during 2021 at no cost for interested medical students. There will be three rounds of groups starting in March, June and August 2021, dates to be confirmed.

What can a Balint Group offer?

- Opportunities to share and reflect on experiences of clinical work and training
- In-depth discussion about clinical interactions between students, doctors, and patients
- Outlets for anxieties and frustrations from observing the reality of clinical practice
- Greater understanding and appreciation of the complexity of medical work
- Support through collegial sharing
- Protection from disillusionment and burn-out. See also: <http://www.balintaustralianewzealand.org>

What is a Balint Group?

Balint group work is a particular method of clinical reflection, originating in the UK after WWII to support doctors working with patients and families who were experiencing personal and social trauma. Balint Groups focus on the thoughts and feelings of the doctor or student and now support doctors in all branches of medicine. An advantage of the online format is that students from different universities can meet to share their learning experiences.

What happens in a medical student Balint Group?

Two clinical situations or ‘cases’ are presented informally for 5-10 minutes. These clinical situations usually resonate with other students. For each case, the group is encouraged to respond and reflect on the patient, the interaction with the student, and the clinical context including other staff. Students often feel affirmed and validated after presenting a case.

Where and when?

All groups are held on Zoom. **Starting dates will be during the months of** March, June and August 2021. Each group will run for 6 weeks on a weekday evening (day to be decided), each session being 90 minutes. Groups will have between 7 and 10 students, and are ‘closed’ (i.e., the same students attend for the duration of that group). Participants are asked to commit to attending all six sessions of the series.

How do I join?

If you are interested in joining one of these online Balint groups this year, please contact Meredith Waugh who will welcome your enquiries and answer your questions.

Email: mwaugh4221@gmail.com

Group leaders

Each group will have two leaders, one being a medical doctor and the other a psychotherapist. All are experienced leaders of Balint Groups for doctors and other health professionals.

Dr Hamish Wilson is a GP and medical educator at Otago University, New Zealand.

Dr Daniel Brass is a psychiatrist in Melbourne.

Chel Quinn is a psychotherapist in private practice in Brisbane.

Meredith Waugh is a psychotherapist at the Gold Coast.

We look forward to working with you this year.

<http://www.balintaustralianewzealand.org>