

# The joint issue of the *Tijdschrift voor Medisch Onderwijs* and the *GMS Zeitschrift für Medizinische Ausbildung*, Heft 02/2010

Robbert Duvivier<sup>1</sup>  
Margot Weggemans<sup>2</sup>

1 Maastricht University,  
medical student, Maastricht,  
The Netherlands

2 Utrecht University, medical  
student, Utrecht, The  
Netherlands

## Leserbrief/letter to the editor

With much interest we read the joint issue of the *Tijdschrift voor Medisch Onderwijs* and the *Zeitschrift für Medizinische Ausbildung*. We applaud the initiative taken by the editorial boards of both journals to provide an overview of the present state of medical education in Europe. We particularly enjoyed the contributions by our fellow students from Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, and Austria.

To quote the editorial by Professors Borleffs and Hahn "Nowadays medical education is not confined to national borders. Medical education has become a European concern, or even a broader issue with international impact." [1] We therefore would like to take this opportunity to highlight some recent developments in European medical education from an international student perspective.

The submissions provide interesting similarities and differences in students' experiences with the implementation of the Bologna Process. However, a unifying analysis is lacking. We wholeheartedly welcome the intention of the Editors "that we should learn from each other". Actually, medical students are learning from each other. In this commentary we would like to provide some examples of those efforts.

In 2004, medical students were the first stakeholders to issue a statement on the Bologna Process. This statement was the result of a series of meetings by representatives from various organisations, mostly local medical student councils and national student associations. Using a wide variety of methods in an iterative process, we produced the consensus document as published in the academic journal *Medical Teacher* [2]. Back then, we raised our concerns regarding the implementation of a two-cycle structure in medicine. Three years later we used the same

process to write a second statement to comment on the progress that had been made in the field of medicine [3]. Last year student representatives from 18 countries met again to discuss the results of the Bologna Process, ten years after signing the initial declaration. Their focus was the current state of implementation and future developments.

We share the analysis from our German colleagues that the two-cycle structure can be used to strengthen the unhelpful traditional division between the basic sciences and clinical sciences. In order to achieve harmonisation of medical education in Europe we deem it necessary to agree on core learning outcome to be achieved by graduation. These common core outcomes would constitute the European Core Curriculum in accordance with relevant European regulations (ie directive 2005/36/EC). Medical students have proposed such a European Core Curriculum [4]. We suggest that this curriculum is used as a framework which can be easily adapted and adjusted to meet national and local needs.

As medical students who strive to improve the quality of our education and our competence as tomorrow's doctors, we encourage all readers of TMO/ZMA to use our suggestions as a basis for further discussion.

## The authors

1. Robbert Duvivier, fifth-year medical student at Maastricht University, the Netherlands
2. Margot Weggemans, fifth-year medical student at Utrecht University, the Netherlands  
Directors, Standing Committee on Medical Education, International Federation of Medical Students' Associations

## References

1. Borleffs JC, Hahn EG. Medical Education in Europe. *GMS Z Med Ausbild.* 2010;27(2):Doc36. Zugänglich unter: <http://www.egms.de/static/en/journals/zma/2017-27/zma000673.shtml>
2. Onur O, Westbye HJ, Kovac K, IFMSA. The Bologna declaration and medical education. A policy statement for the medical students of Europe. *Med Teach.* 2005;27(1):83–85. DOI:10.1080/01421590400019625
3. Kulike, K, Lauch R, Westkemper M, Schlabs T, Johannink J, Schwab A, Lapp S, Weinmann P, Hilgers J. Die Bachelor/Master-Struktur in der Medizin – Die Perspektive der Medizinstudierenden. *GMS Z Med Ausbild.* 2008;25(1):Doc71. Zugänglich unter: <http://www.egms.de/static/en/journals/zma/2008-25/zma000555.shtml>
4. Hilgers J, De Roos P, IFMSA, EMSA. European core curriculum – the students' perspective Bristol, UK, 10 Juli 2006. *Med Teach.* 2007;29(2-3):83-84. DOI:10.1080/01421590701268731

### Corresponding author:

Robbert Duvivier

Maastricht University, medical student, Maastricht, The Netherlands

[robbertduvivier@g.mal.com](mailto:robbertduvivier@g.mal.com)

### Please cite as

Duvivier R, Weggemans M. The joint issue of the *Tijdschrift voor Medisch Onderwijs* and the *GMS Zeitschrift für Medizinische Ausbildung*, Heft 02/2010. *GMS Z Med Ausbild.* 2010;27(3):Doc40.

DOI: 10.3205/zma000677, URN: urn:nbn:de:0183-zma0006772

### This article is freely available from

<http://www.egms.de/en/journals/zma/2010-27/zma000677.shtml>

**Received:** 2010-04-22

**Revised:** 2010-04-26

**Accepted:** 2010-04-27

**Published:** 2010-05-17

### Copyright

©2010 Duvivier et al. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/deed.en>). You are free: to Share – to copy, distribute and transmit the work, provided the original author and source are credited.