

RSM 'Otology Dragon's Den'

The Royal Society of Medicine Otology Section recently held an 'Otology Dragon's Den' event. Following on from our interview with Professor Gerry O'Donoghue, RSM Otology Section President, in the run-up to this event, we interviewed **Steve Broomfield**, Consultant Otologist in Bristol and Honorary Secretary of the RSM Otology Section, to find out how the event went.

Can you please remind us how this event came about?

Innovation is a hot topic in the NHS at the moment, and Prof O'Donoghue was keen to dedicate one of the RSM sessions during his tenure as Section President to celebrating innovation in otology. The concept of holding a 'Dragon's Den' event seemed to fit perfectly with his aim to highlight an important topic in an interesting and entertaining way.

What was the format of the meeting?

Prof O'Donoghue kicked off proceedings by highlighting the importance of innovation in all areas of medicine, including otology, and stressed that whilst the current emphasis on evidence-based medicine is important, it is vital that we remain forward-looking; encouraging innovation is an excellent way to do this.

Next, the guest lecture was given by Professor Tony Young, Consultant Urologist and Director of Medical

Innovation at Southend University Hospital and Anglia Ruskin University, and recently appointed as NHS England's National Clinical Director for Innovation. Prof Young gave an extremely forthright account of his own experiences of innovation, describing some of the difficulties he faced, both practical and financial, in trying to establish his first innovations. It was inspirational to hear how his hard work and persistence have paid off, ultimately leading to him establishing the MedTech campus at Anglia Ruskin University, one of the largest health innovation centres in the world. It was exciting to hear about his plans for innovation in the NHS in his role as National Clinical Director for Innovation; to both increase the uptake of existing innovations in the NHS as a whole, and to support individuals with innovative ideas by providing a high level of encouragement, advice and support.

The rest of the afternoon was taken

up with the 'Dragon's Den' event, chaired by Professor Tony Narula, who kept everything running smoothly and used his experience as an examiner to ensure that each presenter was sufficiently grilled by the Dragons! His ability to balance good humour and serious discussion made for an entertaining and stimulating event.

Who were the 'Dragons'?

Prof Young was joined by Professor Richard Ramsden, for otology expertise; Dr Jim Roberts, a UCL consultant anaesthetist and experienced innovator; and Mr B Sethia, the current RSM President. All entered into the spirit of the event and questioned the presenters in an incisive and thought-provoking way.

Who were the presenters?

A large number of abstracts were submitted for this event, finally whittled down by the RSM otology section committee to the final seven who



Figure 1. Prof Gerry O'Donoghue with the presenters at the Dragon's Den event.
From left to right:
Back row: Prof Gerry O'Donoghue, Mr Vik Veer, Mr Alex Yao, Miss Natalie Hopka, Prof Tony Narula, Mr Matt Clark, Miss Emma Stapleton, Mr Krishan Ramdoo, Mr Chris Coulson.
Front row: The Dragons: Dr Jim Roberts, Mr B Sethia, Prof Richard Ramsden, Prof Tony Young

presented on the day. Each presenter had just three minutes and a maximum of three slides to present their idea, leaving plenty of time for interrogation by the Dragons.

All of the presentations were very well delivered, and ideas ranged from new concepts to further development of established technologies (Table 1). All of the presenters, including a medical student and a foundation trainee, defended their ideas brilliantly and it was clear that the Dragons were torn in deciding on a winner.

Who was the winner? Was there a prize?

Taking account of an audience vote, the Dragons selected Mr Alex Yao's undergraduate ENT education app as the

winner. Unfortunately there wasn't a large cash prize! Nonetheless, it was clear that many of the ideas will have been given a boost through being presented at this forum and from the feedback given by the Dragons.

What did you take away from the event?

Most importantly, this event clearly demonstrated that innovation is alive and well in otology! I hope that anyone with an innovative idea will have been encouraged to further develop their concept and see it through to completion.

This event also highlights the role of the RSM in providing an interesting and entertaining educational programme

that covers topics outside of the usual curriculum as well as a providing a forum for meeting friends and colleagues. I would encourage trainees and consultants to join the RSM and take part in this type of event in future.



Contributor to Trainee Matters

Mr Steve Broomfield FRCS,
Hon Asst Secretary
E: steve_broomfield@hotmail.com



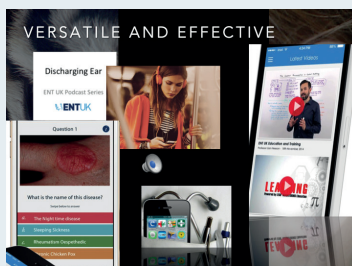
Table 1: Summary of ideas presented at the RSM 'Dragon's Den' event

Presenter	Position	Place of Work	Idea
Miss Natalie Hopka	Medical Student	Sheffield Teaching Hospitals	Development of a virtual reality 3D temporal bone simulator with haptic feedback
Prof Jaydip Ray	ENT Consultant		
Mr Matthew Clark	ENT Consultant	Gloucestershire Royal Hospital	'E.T.' – a low fidelity ear surgery simulator for training in the developing world
Mr Chris Coulson	ENT Consultant	University Hospitals Birmingham	Development of the endoscope-i for otoendoscopic imaging
Mr Krishan Ramdoo	Research Fellow	Northwick Park Hospital	Development of elderly community hearing screening and novel cerumen removal tool as part of a falls care package
Miss Emma Stapleton	ST8	Doncaster Royal Infirmary	Development of a national temporal bone registry
Mr Vik Veer	ST7	James Cook University Hospital, Middlesbrough	Development of a disposable oto-endoscope with built-in KTP laser
Mr Alexander Yao	FY1	Freeman Hospital, Newcastle	Developing a new app for undergraduate curriculum delivery in ENT for a digital age

Interview with 'Dragons' winner, Alex Yao

Hi Alex. Congratulations on your success at the Dragon's Den event. Can you tell us a little about your winning idea?

Thank you. The idea is the development of a mobile application that can help to standardise the delivery of the new ENT curriculum to medical undergraduates. I realised when I was a medical student that exposure to ENT was very poor (about 1 week), and something was required to maximise the learning opportunities during the exposure times that were available. With a group of colleagues we decided to develop an app. The app contains topics which are mapped to the new ENT curriculum, emphasised in order of importance to make the most of time invested by students reviewing topics. Topics are presented in audio, video and question format which should cater to differ learning types.



Were there any other ideas that stood out for you?

All the ideas presented at the meeting were outstanding and a reflection of a healthy culture of innovation happening currently in ENT in UK. I look forward to seeing the VR temporal bone trainers, and iphone endoscopes in future!

How did it feel presenting to the 'Dragons'?

Unsurprisingly it was a rather nerve-wracking experience! It's made all the more so by being so junior in a room full of senior trainees and consultants. Everyone was extremely supportive however, and I think overall it was much less intimidating than I had expected- possibly even enjoyable!

Do you have any plans to develop the idea?

Absolutely. We are currently looking into more avenues for funding and looking into the best partners to develop the app with. We are aiming to develop a prototype or beta before general launch. Needless to say there are many people who are working hard behind the scenes at the moment.

Interviewed by Katie Labak.