Mentoring

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The Academy of Medical Sciences

Improving health through research.

Our priorities:
1. Promoting excellence
2. Influencing policy to improve health and wealth
3. Nurturing the next generation of medical researchers
4. Linking academia, industry and the NHS
5. Seizing international opportunities
6. Encouraging public and professional dialogue about medical science
Fellowship

The UK’s leading medical scientists from hospitals, general practice, academia, industry and public service.

Our Fellows are central to all we do. The excellence of their science, their contribution to medicine and society and the diversity of their achievements are reflected throughout our work.
Influencing policy to improve health and wealth

We aim to be the UK’s leading source of independent advice for those making decisions about medical research and researchers and to provide evidence from medical science to underpin policy development in the public, private and charitable sectors.

We provide policy advice in many ways:
1. Evidence-based reports by working groups
2. ‘Rapid responses’
3. Consultation responses
4. Discussion papers
5. Commissions from Government
6. Workshops and symposia
Nurturing the next generation of medical researchers

The Academy supports early career medical researchers with a portfolio of schemes:

- Mentoring
- Niche grants
- Outreach events
- INSPIRE – engaging medical students with research

Further information

To find out more, contact Colby Benari: mentoring@acmedsci.ac.uk
Mentoring for postdoctoral trainees

Since 2002, our **1-2-1 mentoring scheme** has provided direct support to clinical academics in training, supported in England by the National Institute for Health Research.

**Key issues for mentoring are:**

- Career planning.
- Personal development.
- Building effective networks.
- Work-life balance.

Our **mentoring booklet** aims to:

- **Promote** the scheme
- **Catalyse** other institutions to start local mentoring schemes for early career researchers.

www.acmedsci.ac.uk/mentoring-booklet
A mentor’s perspective:
Prof Elizabeth Simpson

My background: basic science (physiology, biochemistry, anatomy pathology), Cambridge natural sciences tripos followed by

Clinical training as a veterinarian (medicine, surgery, pathology)

Two years in clinical practice

Further training in pathology

Research in immunology & genetics esp WRT transplantation, cancer and autoimmunity at NIMR, NIH, CRC and Imperial College
A mentor’s perspective:

A mentor is a confidential listener prepared to discuss options, directions and various problems related to the mentee’s goals.

A sounding board for helping the mentee to work out their own options for action in face of problems.

A mentor is not a supervisor.

And possibly not from the same institution.
A mentor’s perspective:
how to find a mentor

Access list of those available eg fellows of AMS if you are eligible for their scheme

Consider if having more than one might be helpful eg. a clinical scientist and a basic scientist

Speciality/subject area, M/F

Consider ease of meeting (geographical, time available)

Approach potential mentor(s) to request a discussion

Assess the way forward, how often to meet, where, etc
A mentor’s perspective:
Attending regional meetings of mentees and/or mentors & mentees (eg AMS sponsored)

Helpful to compare notes with other mentees, across disciplines and specialities in same geographical area

Joining/setting up networks

Extend range of knowledge – scientific, professional, local facilities

Joint meetings of mentors and mentees helps to define their roles and understand the boundaries between mentor and supervisor
A mentor’s perspective: my experience of mentees

My mentees have included clinical fellows in PhD and postdoctoral clinical research posts as well as some basic scientists (outside the current AMS scheme).

Both male and female mentees, although most have been female.

Human clinical and veterinary fellows through the AMS scheme.

Each category share problems needing solution.

The AMS scheme is well organised & supported, and very flexible.
Habits of effective mentees

• Come prepared.
• Don’t expect to be given advice.
• Take your mentoring sessions seriously.
• If you commit to action, follow through.
• Give feedback.
• Challenge the mentor if they have got it wrong.
• Manage the logistics of the relationship.
Peer mentoring

- Buddy group schemes at the Academy.
- A committed leader/organiser is key.
- Regular communication – LinkedIn, email list, etc.
- Regular meetings.
- Small numbers.