**Dr Jo Bishop**

**Meeting attendance report –**International Association for Medical Education Conference (AMEE), Prague, Czech Republic, from 24th to 28th August 2013.

Anatomical Society funding for attendance at the AMEE conference allowed me to showcase some [INSPIRE](http://www.acmedsci.ac.uk/careers/mentoring-and-careers/inspiring-students/about-INSPIRE/) work. This programme is coordinated by the Academy of Medical Science and is intended to nurture the next generation of medical researchers.

AMEE is a “worldwide organisation with members in 90 countries on five continents. Members include teachers, educators, researchers, administrators, curriculum developers, deans, assessors, students and trainees in medicine and the healthcare professions. AMEE promotes international excellence in education in the healthcare professions across the continuum of undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing education”. (<http://www.amee.org/home>)

The project I described aims to increase medical students’ active engagement in research by supporting and motivating them towards considering research careers. With colleagues I have increased collaboration and networking within the College of Medicine in Swansea and the wider University and between healthcare companies and scientists so as to foster a more supportive and collaborative environment for students interested in research.

Participation at AMEE as a poster presenter allowed me to share this initiative with 15 other delegates. The scheduled poster ‘session’ was entitled ‘Teaching and learning about research’ and was chaired by Zubair Amin with each delegate given 3 minutes to present and an allocated 2 minute question and answer opportunity. The chair encouraged collaborative discussions and many good practices were shared. There was a number of medical students presenting work in their capacity as the National Institute for Health and care Excellence (NICE) representative for their school. They were not aware that their school would have an INSPIRE representative and that they could work together. I was able to remedy this lack of useful information.

Current INSPIRE activities at Swansea include:

BIOBREAKFASTS- A networking opportunity for students to meet scientists, healthcare company representatives and College researchers.

Learning Opportunities in a Research Setting (LORS) - Creating a bank of approximately 200 optional placements where students can gain and expand their research experience. Examples of opportunities available include journal clubs, research meetings, bench top experiments, seminars and discussions with existing research groups.

e-PORTFOLIO and ‘MY CV’ - Support students in building their online portfolio of research experience helped by near-peer mentors who act as role models and also provide lectures and workshops.

Expand existing schemes - Using INSPIRE funding for student research vacationships and to support current funding schemes for student-led projects.

Swansea medical students will also have opportunities for intercalated and parallel studies, including a Masters in Research (MRes), to boost their formal research skills and employability. It was very useful to discuss this option with other schools that had already formalised it, what were the perils and pitfalls?

It was agreed by all delegates that early research exposure will enrich our students and will ensure that our future clinicians are aware of academic pathways as a career choice.