

EDITORIAL

Volume 17 Issue 1 2025

DOI: 10.21315/eimj2025.17.1.1

ARTICLE INFO

Submitted: 07-02-2025

Accepted: 17-02-2025

Online: 26-03-2025

To My Young Lecturers

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To cite this article: Ab Rahman J. To my young lecturers. *Education in Medicine Journal*. 2025;17(1):1–2. <https://doi.org/10.21315/eimj2025.17.1.1>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.21315/eimj2025.17.1.1>

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The biggest difference between being a medical lecturer and any other role is the student. Without students, there is no International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), no Kulliyah of Medicine (KOM), and no Sultan Ahmad Shah Medical Centre (SASMEC). Our purpose as medical lecturers is not just to teach medicine but to shape the next generation of doctors, not just in competence but in character, not just in skill but in soul.

A clinician focuses on patient care, mastering diagnosis, treatment and management. A lecturer teaches and researches, expanding knowledge but often detached from the clinical realities of patient care. A medical lecturer stands at the intersection of these roles, balancing the responsibility of treating patients with the duty of educating future doctors. But here at IIUM, we aspire for something even greater. We are not just medical lecturers; we are *murabbi*—mentors, guides and role models. We do not just pass on knowledge; we nurture, inspire and shape the minds and hearts of our students, bringing them closer to Allah through the practice of medicine (1).

To truly fulfil this role, we must embody both competence and compassion. Competence means being recognised as an expert, not just in title but in substance. It means being a clinician who commands respect for their skills and knowledge, a specialist who leads in their field. But it also means being a true educator, not just one who lectures but one who teaches with purpose. Teaching is a discipline in itself—it requires structure, thought and refinement. Education is not about dumping information; it is about guiding students towards understanding, application and transformation.

Using the ADDIE (Analyse, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate) framework ensures we do this effectively (2). We analyse our students and their needs. We design and develop lessons that are impactful. We implement them in a way that engages, and most importantly, we evaluate to continuously improve. This cycle of teaching is not just a method; it is a mindset of constant growth, just as we expect our students to grow.

But beyond competence, compassion is what makes a true *murabbi*. A great doctor is not just a skilled one, but one who recognises suffering—not only in patients but in students too. Some of our students struggle in ways we do not see. Some are overwhelmed, others demotivated, and many question their own worth. We must be educators who do not just teach but also listen. We must have empathy, not just once, but over and over again, renewing it as part of our daily practice.

Medical lecturers are also researchers, but too often, we remain consumers of knowledge instead of creators. There is a poverty of ideas when we are content with merely reading and citing others without contributing our own (3). The medical field does not move forward by observation alone—it progresses when we question, explore and challenge existing knowledge. Our duty is not just to train doctors but to build the future of medicine itself.

Balancing between being a clinician and a medical educator is not easy, but it starts with knowing why you are here. Be conscious of your purpose. Be alert to the impact you can make. Recognise that beyond lectures and rounds, you are shaping lives. More than just fitting into the system, you can help create a positive environment. YOU have the power to influence the culture of KOM. YOU are empowered to change how teaching and learning happen here.

And always remember—without students, there is no university, no faculty, no hospital. We need SASMEC for training, but SASMEC also needs us to sustain its role as a teaching hospital. Everything we do in education, research and clinical work is interconnected.

Being a medical lecturer is not just a profession—it is a calling. It is an opportunity to leave a lasting impact, to build not just doctors but compassionate, ethical and competent leaders in healthcare. It is a chance to make a difference, not just in medicine, but in the lives of those we teach. This is your role now. This is your mission. Welcome to the journey of being a *murabbi* in medicine.

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