

# The ACUMEN project

D Beckett, C Gordon & M Jones

E-learning for healthcare (e-LfH) is a collaborative programme between the Department of Health, the NHS and various professional bodies. It provides high quality, interactive education for healthcare workers, and has been described as ‘The most positive development in medical education in 20 years’ by the Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson. Indeed e-LfH have recently been awarded the e-learning age 2007 Gold award for ‘Excellence in the production of e-learning content’.

Initially (and very successfully) trialled in radiology the project is currently expanding to incorporate other medical specialities, including anaesthetics and general practice. ACUMEN (the Acute Medicine Network) represents the acute medicine arm of this project.

|           |                |          |                    |
|-----------|----------------|----------|--------------------|
| Collapse  | Breathlessness | Falls    | Acute back pain    |
| Jaundice  | Seizure        | Vomiting | Weakness/paralysis |
| Diarrhoea | Abdominal pain | GI bleed | Acute confusion    |
| Rash      | Palpitations   | Cough    | Chest pain         |
| Fever     | Poisoning      | Headache | Limb swelling      |

Figure 1. Top 20 medical presentations.

The project will ultimately cover all 64 of the major patient presentations within the acute medicine curriculum. Initially, however, the focus will be on the commonest 20, (see Fig. 1).

The four major emergency presentations (cardiorespiratory arrest, anaphylaxis, the unconscious

patient and the shocked patient) will also be covered in greater depth.

The project centres around lifelike interactive scenarios where the trainee is expected to take a relevant virtual history, examine the patient and order appropriate investigations. A management plan is then formulated dependent on information gleaned, and as in real life, the fate of the virtual patient depends on the adequacy of the trainees performance! The performance of the trainee is then compared to that of the expert, and feedback is given. Further new knowledge sessions and also bite-sized ‘revision sessions’ relevant to the case are also made available. Initially focusing on level 1 competencies, the trainee will be able to monitor their own progress as they progress to level 2 and, for those aiming for a career in Acute Medicine, to level 3.

The first scenarios should be available online in selected deaneries in autumn 2008, for acute medicine trainees registered with the JRCPTB. Trainees are urged to check the website regularly for updates. Although many authors have been allocated to scenarios, there are still opportunities for others to get involved and we would be delighted to hear from anybody who thinks they might be able to contribute. Even technophobes are welcome as you will be paired with an instructional designer, an expert in e-learning, who would help to formulate the scenario.

So if you are interested in getting involved, want to start e-learning or just want to know a little bit more then please visit the website at [www.acumen-online.org.uk](http://www.acumen-online.org.uk) or contact Mike Jones at the E-mail address provided..

**Dan Beckett**  
  
**Claire Gordon**  
SpRs in Acute Medicine  
  
**Correspondence:**  
Dr Mike Jones  
Clinical lead, Combined  
Assessment  
Royal Infirmary of  
Edinburgh  
Little France  
Edinburgh  
EH16 4SA  
Email: [mike.jones@e-lfh.org.uk](mailto:mike.jones@e-lfh.org.uk)