

## Authors' reply

Singapore Med J 2019; 60(12): 656 <https://doi.org/10.11622/smedj.2019162>

Dear Sir,

We would like to thank the writers for their comments and are especially heartened to receive this response to our article.<sup>(1)</sup> The following points were brought up: (a) the National Health Service (NHS) England's Making Every Contact Count (MECC) initiative;<sup>(2)</sup> (b) a pocketbook that facilitates doctor-patient conversations on lifestyle issues;<sup>(3)</sup> (c) low awareness of the MECC initiative as a potential reason for variations in physical activity (PA) intervention; and (d) a brilliant suggestion that medical students (themselves) may prove to be the key in reversing this situation.

The support for behavioural change in promoting health gained significant momentum in 2014 with the Five Year Forward View by the NHS.<sup>(4)</sup> Subsequently, the national MECC advisory group led by Public Health England and Health Education England was formed in May 2015.<sup>(5)</sup> Of note, our survey took place from February to June 2017 and was sent to medical students in the United Kingdom from different years of study.<sup>(6)</sup> Indeed, not only could awareness of the MECC initiative have been low at that time, but some of our survey respondents (who were doing clinical rotations) may not have been involved with these newly implemented initiatives.

Nevertheless, we think that the MECC approach and practical resources such as the handbook are great innovations when it comes to health promotion, and we in Singapore can consider learning from them. With thoughtful replies such as yours, medical students may well be the catalyst to increased uptake of PA interventions in clinical practice!

Yours sincerely,

Edwin Jun Chen [Chew](#)<sup>1</sup>, Ying Na [Ho](#)<sup>1</sup>, Ga Jing [Kee](#)<sup>2</sup>, Dinesh [Sirisena](#)<sup>1,2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Nanyang Technological University, <sup>2</sup>Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore, <sup>3</sup>Sports Medicine Centre, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Singapore. [edjcchew@gmail.com](mailto:edjcchew@gmail.com)

## References

1. Pattison L, Mason J, Deshpande A. Comment on: Scoping review and international multi-centre cohort study investigating teaching, knowledge and beliefs regarding physical activity as a health intervention among medical students: a comparison between Singapore and the UK. *Singapore Med J* 2019; 60:655.
2. Health Education England. Making Every Contact Count [online]. Available at: <https://www.makeeverycontactcount.co.uk>. Accessed October 5, 2019.
3. Health Education England. A Pocket Guide to Making Every Contact Count in Healthcare [online]. Available at: <https://www.makeeverycontactcount.co.uk/media/1040/012-mecc-pocketbook-for-healthcare-staff-june-15.pdf>. Accessed October 5, 2019.
4. National Health Service. Five Year Forward View, October 2014 [online]. Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/5yfv-web.pdf>. Accessed October 5, 2019.
5. Health Education England. MECC Frequently Asked Questions [online]. Available at: <https://www.makeeverycontactcount.com/media/27967/faqs-mecc-v4-dated-1-june-2018.pdf>. Accessed October 5, 2019.
6. Chew EJC, Ho YN, Kee GJ, Sirisena D. Scoping review and international multi-centre cohort study investigating teaching, knowledge and beliefs regarding physical activity as a health intervention among medical students: a comparison between Singapore and the UK. *Singapore Med J* 2019; 60:642-51.