



## **Branch Start-up Guide**

A PharmAware Resource

**National Committee  
2012**

## Introductions

Firstly, a **massive** thank you from the PharmAware National Committee for being interested in this activity and wanting to take it forward on a branch level at your university :-)

There are few things we'd recommend that you do to begin with:

- Read over the PharmAware explained presentation
- Check out our website – [www.pharmaware.co.uk](http://www.pharmaware.co.uk). We have placed a huge amount of resources on there that we think could be extremely useful if you want to start up an active branch.
- Email the National Committee so that we know you're hoping to start a PharmAware branch and we can offer you lots of support! – [pharmaware@gmail.com](mailto:pharmaware@gmail.com)
- Make a plan of what you want to achieve from your branch and the timeframe you want to achieve it in

## Some Starting Points

Crucially you need to get a few keen people on board that can help you to set things up (a mini-committee). Here are a few tips to do this.

- Get in contact with your medsin branch at the university who may be able to help you with funding.
- If you're a medic/have medic friends, review your medical school's policy and medical curriculum
  - Does your med school have a policy on student exposure to drug promotion (free lunches, lecturers from pharma companies etc)?
  - Do you get any teaching on drug promotion, evidence-based medicine or critical appraisal skills?
- Find a supportive tutor at the university (maybe an ethics tutors/ someone keen on Evidence-based medicine)
- Get an idea of what your target audience thinks:
- Run a basic survey of students' attitudes towards drug promotion and their training on this issue – Do they want more teaching? Do they want to become more aware of Pharma issues?
- Find out if your branch has a Universities Allied for Essential Medicines group - UAEM and PharmAware share several common goals and have lots of potential for joint events, plus you can agree to publicise stuff for each other.

## Capacity Building

Now you have your keen beans on board you need to find a way to expand your membership. Things you can do include:

- Put on a „PharmAware explained“ night
  - Use/Adapt the PharmAware explained powerpoint
- Play a cool video clip/TED talk (ie, Ben Goldacre's TED “Battling Bad Science”)

- If you think it is possible, get an external speaker (contact the NC for ideas or potential contacts in your area)
- Arrange a social afterwards!

**Remember** that Pharmaware stretches far beyond the reach of medical doctors!! Get in contact with other student groups within the university such as Pharmacy students/ Biomedes...

## Ideas for Socials

- Put on a Conflict-Free lunch/dinner
- Farmer Wear fancy dress night out
- PharmAware quiz night on key Pharma facts
- Have a film screening of a film related to Big Pharma eg. The Constant Gardner
- Start a journal club or a Pharma-related book club (see Resources doc for book ideas)
- Regional training - invite the NC to run a training day/weekend and invite other Medsin branches in your region

## Longer-Term Ideas

There are tonnes of things you can take on as a long term projects that you can do over the course of 1 to 2 years. We can help you with these as there are a number of projects e would like to roll out in unis across the country.

- Changing your curriculum
- Get involved in implementing our Drug Promotion Survey looking at med student attitudes and exposure to drug promotion (email the NC for more details)
- Help us to map med school policies on EBM/Drug promotion and if you're a medic/pharmacy student let us know what teaching you get on your curriculum
- Get involved in national campaigning (align local efforts with national level) - Keep in touch with the NC to find out what we're up to :-)

**Finally... GOOD LUCK!!!**