



## **10<sup>th</sup> International Clinical Skills Conference 2025**

**Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

**“Past, Present and Future”**

### **Professor Jeremy Howick -Keynote Plenary Summary**

**Title: Empathy is a blockbuster drug; Why we need medical student empathy to increase**

Evidence from systematic reviews of randomised trials demonstrate that empathic care improves patient outcomes ranging from reducing their pain and length of stay in hospital to improving their satisfaction with care; enhanced empathy also improves student and practitioner wellbeing. Given these benefits, we would expect medical and healthcare students to become empathy experts by the time they graduated. Unfortunately, medical student empathy often declines as they progress throughout medical school, and this decline often persists into their training.

After describing this evidence, much of which has been produced by Professor Howick, he will describe the Leicester Medical School Empathy curriculum in three steps. He will:

1. Describe the approach to developing, delivering, and evaluating empathy interventions.
2. Address the pervasive problem that the hidden curriculum often mitigates against empathy.
3. Outline the five curriculum streams currently being delivered at the Leicester Medical School.

Explaining the hard science supporting the benefits of empathic care, and how the evidence can be used to design empathy teaching in plain English, the plenary will appeal to both a specialist/clinical and lay audience. The former will gain evidence-based insights they may wish to implement in their setting, while the latter will appreciate that the patient role is central in the development and delivery of empathy education.

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