

GLASGOW ALUMNI COLUMN

An Interview with Prof. Rev. Sturrock and Eddie Carberry

For our first Surgo alumni column we wanted to include an interview between former student Eddie Carberry and rheumatology consultant and medical school chaplain Prof. Rev. Roger Sturrock.

I trained in medicine at the Westminster Medical School in London and worked in London before coming up to Glasgow to work as a lecturer. The opportunity arose for me to work in Nigeria for a little while and I taught in the Ahmadu Bello University hospital which at the time was the only medical school in the North of Nigeria. I later returned to Glasgow to head up the Centre For Rheumatic Diseases. Teaching and clinical research have always been an important part of my working week.

I have been involved in church life since my teenage years. Towards the end of my career I trained as a Reader in the Church of Scotland and subsequently was ordained as a Church of Scotland minister after returning to university as a student, graduating in Divinity. I am now an honorary Church of Scotland chaplain to the University and I have just taken on the role as chaplain to the medical school.

I see myself as hopefully providing Spiritual Care and advice to all students of whatever faith group or none.

Roger Sturrock



Eddie Carberry, FY1

Having dropped in to Roger's Wednesday afternoon clinic in the Wolfson Library Room 10, I can say that his skills of relating ethical and spiritual guidance to the trials and tribulations of life as a medical student are incredibly useful. I would personally recommend dropping by for a chat if you have anything on your mind.

An Interview with Prof. Rev. Sturrock and Eddie Carberry

I took the opportunity to attend one of Roger's Sunday morning sermons at Kelvinside Hillhead Church. Interestingly, Roger manages to weave the religious aspects of his sermons into relevant advice and guidance for his congregation- Eddie.

“ Your title is Revered Professor, what would you prefer students called you?”

Roger.

“ What is the best cytokine?”

It depends on your perspective! Some cytokines are good - enhancing the inflammatory response to tumours whereas others have the opposite effect. My favourite cytokine is TNF alpha!

"What is the link between rheumatoid factor and The X-Factor?" (the singing contest TV show run by Simon Cowell).

They are both easy to spot but with uncertain outcomes.

“ Do you believe in hell?”

If you mean fiery flames and devils with horns and tails, then the answer is no. Sometimes we create our own hell for ourselves.

"And unrelated to the previous question: Have you ever had to present a patient at a morning ward round after too many pints of Fun the night before?" (a 'pint of fun' is now the signature drink at the Glasgow University Union, it's a deadly cocktail made with a triple measure of vodka and tastes like fruit juice. It's responsible for the majority of student hangovers).

The short answer is no but as a junior Doctor on one occasion I had to guide an inebriated consultant on a ward round!

“ What's important about spiritual care in healthcare workers?”

The NHS is now recognising the importance of spiritual care for healthcare workers. It is about helping the inner person to cope with the stresses of health care and to get things in the right perspective. How to cope with suffering and death etc.

“ Would following all religions increase my chances of getting into an afterlife?”

No! I guess that it would be very confusing to follow every religion. It is not quantity that counts but quality!

“ There have been many famous scientists who were also greatly religious, have you ever found it difficult to think like a scientist and keep faith in religion?”

No. If anything religion helps to spur one on to understand how God works in creation.

