

HOW TO START A

LIFESTYLE MEDICINE INTEREST GROUP





OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Australasian Society of Lifestyle Medicine (ASLM) community! We are delighted that you are interested in starting a Lifestyle Medicine Interest Group (LMIG) on your campus.

This guide was created to make the process of starting a LMIG as easy as possible. ASLM staff and leaders are available to answer any questions you may have and provide you with the support you need to establish and create a sustainable and vibrant interest group.

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ABOUT ASLM

The Australasian Society of Lifestyle Medicine (ASLM) is an interdisciplinary society working towards improved prevention, management, and treatment of chronic, complex and lifestyle-related conditions.

“Lifestyle-related’ includes environmental, societal, behavioural and other factors. ASLM members include GPs and medical specialists, allied health practitioners, public health physicians, educators, scientists, researchers and healthcare executives.

Together, we advocate for a multidisciplinary, multi-system approach to the chronic and lifestyle-related disease problem, and for a comprehensive understanding of health and wellbeing, that is, not just the absence of disease, but for complete physical and mental health, for health equity, social justice, corporate responsibility and environmental sustainability.





LIFESTYLE MEDICINE

THE DISCIPLINE:

Lifestyle Medicine provides an interdisciplinary, whole-system approach to the prevention, treatment and even reversal of chronic and lifestyle-related diseases through the modification of the behavioural, social and environmental drivers.

Bridging the gap between health promotion and clinical practice, it involves clinicians, public health professionals, healthcare executives, researchers, scientists and educators working together to prevent, manage and treat conditions that result from:



Lifestyle Medicine is growing in popularity around the world as a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to the challenges faced by our society and our health system.

In Australasia, Lifestyle Medicine has grown rapidly under the guidance of ASLM and its board, working parties, members and management team.





LIFESTYLE MEDICINE

THE MOVEMENT:

Much more than just an evidence-based discipline, Lifestyle Medicine is also a global movement for change in health, healthcare, society, environment and our future.

It relies on the collective wisdom and will of health professionals from around the globe to help advocate for and inspire tangible change. With every new or renewing member and supporter, our collective voice gets louder, politicians take more notice, and our initiatives have more impact.

If you support lifestyle intervention as the first-line treatment for many chronic diseases, [join](#) a like-minded group of passionate, resourceful and driven change-makers, and help us advance the Lifestyle Medicine movement for change.



LIFESTYLE MEDICINE INTEREST GROUPS

Lifestyle Medicine Interest Groups (LMIG's) are organised groups of prevention-oriented health professional students who are interested in the field of Lifestyle Medicine (LM). The groups are recognised, supported and mentored by ASLM and meet on a regular basis to learn more about LM, work towards increasing awareness on their respective campuses, share best practice, and gain exposure to LM in clinical and research settings.

OBJECTIVES OF LMIG's:

- 01 Provide educational opportunities for students interested in Lifestyle Medicine to learn about how to practice their profession from a Lifestyle Medicine perspective.
- 02 Increase student awareness of the latest advances and research in Lifestyle Medicine.
- 03 Expose students to career opportunities in Lifestyle Medicine.
- 04 Inform students at all stages of training about the activities of ASLM and encourage outreach activities that foster the goals and objectives of ASLM.
- 05 Provide students interested in Lifestyle Medicine with opportunities for professional advancement and leadership development.
- 06 Establish or improve Lifestyle Medicine curriculum at medical and allied health schools through faculty and student advocacy.
- 07 Cultivate multi-institutional, student-initiated programming.
- 08 Promote a healthier and happier lifestyle for student members of each chapter and lead by example for local communities and society at large.
- 09 Develop Lifestyle Medicine initiatives that support healthy habits for medical and allied health students and residents, as well as the local community.
- 10 Collaborate with other ASLM LMIGs to share best practices.



STEPS

STEPS FOR STARTING A SUCCESSFUL LMIG:

i A list of helpful resources can be accessed via the [LMIG Student Resources page](#) on the ASLM website.

CONSULT SCHOOL

Consult your school's administration (student services or head of department) to find out information on how to establish an official interest group on your campus. Ask about required forms, key dates, group structure, organisation and funding.

GARNER INTEREST

Garner interest from fellow students by using school forums, connect through social media platforms (Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn), campus email, health class group projects, study groups and campus advertising (i.e. posting flyers in student lounge, student commons).

HOST INITIAL MEETING

- Invite students to a meet-up (in-person or online via Zoom etc).
- Facilitate an initial meet and greet.
- Consider showing the recorded presentation "[Introduction to ASLM and Lifestyle Medicine](#)" (20 mins) by ASLM President, Dr Sam Manger or other talks available through ASLM - just chat to us to find out what is available. Use this as a launching pad and invite students to discuss their thoughts on what was shared.
- Collect student's details and invite them to join a Facebook group/[mailing list](#) to facilitate ongoing discussion.
- Decide on when you would like to host the next meet and share this with the group.
- Enlist group members to act as your advocates and to invite other students who they think might be interested to join the Facebook group and/or attend the next meet-up.





STEPS

HOST SECOND MEETING

- Follow a similar format to above, however this time you might like to share the recorded presentation "Lifestyle-related determinants of chronic disease" by Lifestyle Medicine pioneer Prof Garry Egger.
- Provide space for students to discuss and share their ideas on this.
- Also, provide space to brainstorm what sort of activities/areas of interest the group might like to explore for future meetings.
- Decide on topic/activity for next meeting.
- Delegate tasks to group members to ensure equal share of responsibility for meeting. preparation and other duties.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFULL MEETINGS:

- Limit meetings to 60 minutes generally.
- Send out meeting reminders to all members prior to your scheduled meeting times.
- Create a specific agenda for each meeting prior to the meeting date.
- Encourage everybody to bring a plate of healthy food and/or refreshments, where possible.
- List meeting attendees and keep an updated list of group members.
- End each meeting with a date or commitment for the next meeting.
- Send out a follow-up email with meeting notes and action items.
- Record minutes at every meeting.





STEPS

NOMINATE YOUR LMIG STUDENT LEADERS

Identify one or two students to be the 'champions' of your LMIG. These students will anchor the group and act as the main communication and leadership point between your LMIG and ASLM.

MAKE IT OFFICIAL

Register your LMIG with ASLM. Your LMIG Student Leader/s will be invited to participate in the ASLM Student Leadership Action Group, which will be the communication and collaboration point for all LMIGs throughout Australia & New Zealand.



PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

GET SPEAKERS



ASLM can also support you in connecting with Lifestyle Medicine speakers where available.

Talk to various departments within your institution and take note of lecturers throughout the year who express interest in preventative medicine or Lifestyle Medicine in your local community. We recommend looking at the following areas:

- Dietetics & Nutrition
- Exercise Physiology
- Counselling, Psychology & Psychiatry
- Addiction & Sleep Medicine
- Primary Care
- Nursing
- Endocrinology
- Cardiology
- Gastroenterology
- Public Health
- Epidemiology

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- In the initial meetings, poll the group for ideas and outline goals.
- Develop a Google folder for the interest group to share and organise information.
- Develop a website or social media profile to increase awareness and share information.
- Some schools may provide server spaces already for student groups. If this is not the case at your school, services such as Google, Wordpress or Facebook can provide free online space.
- At the end of every email, add a link to the [student movement](#) page on the ASLM website and to other ASLM events like the [conference](#).
- Is there a faculty member who may be interested in getting more involved in Lifestyle Medicine? Perhaps you want to approach them for additional support or interest in the group.
- Identify other disciplines within your institution that may be interested in Lifestyle Medicine. Reach out to other students and support interdisciplinary collaboration.



IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

LUNCH TALKS

Plan a monthly series of lunch talks on lifestyle-related topics such as exercise, nutrition, and lifestyle treatments of chronic disease. It may also be advantageous to schedule a meeting before or after the talk to make better use of time.

LUNCH TALK IDEAS:

- The importance of clinician health and self-care in counselling patients on healthy habits
- The role of Lifestyle Medicine in addressing the chronic disease epidemic
- Lifestyle Medicine in clinical practice
- Exercise and its positive impact on chronic disease and mental health
- Exercise and brain function
- Motivating your patients to move
- Patient-clinician physical activity partnership
- Positive psychology and wellness coaching techniques
- Mindfulness-based stress reduction
- Different dietary approaches – how are they similar/different and what the evidence says
- Culture, meaning, identity and health
- How plant foods protect against disease and promote health
- Behaviour change principles (Transtheoretical Model of Change, Motivational Interviewing, Coaching Conversations, the Coach Approach)
- Blue Zones
- The social and environmental determinants of health
- Psychosocial factors in Lifestyle Medicine
- Lifestyle Medicine from a Public Health perspective
- Addiction medicine
- Sleep health
- The microbiome in chronic disease
- Metaflammation and chronic disease
- Possible national expert speakers for a keynote level audience.



IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

LECTURES

Coordinate lectures with your curriculum. For example, if you are looking at endocrinology or cardiology, chose a speaker that can share the impact of Lifestyle Medicine on disease processes targeted in these fields.

FACULTY TALKS

Invite faculty or local professionals from various disciplines to present on Lifestyle Medicine related topics, including:

- Dietetics & Nutrition
- Exercise Physiology
- Health Behaviour change coaching
- Counselling, psychology & psychiatry
- Addiction Medicine
- Sleep Medicine
- Public Health
- Social Work
- Epidemiology
- Pathophysiology of chronic disease

JOURNAL CLUB

Start a journal club or host a panel discussion with expert faculty on a popular or controversial topic.

GRAND ROUNDS

Invite expert LM presenters to give a Grand Round at your institution in the various departments as the relevance of the topic allows.



IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

DISCUSSIONS

Host a discussion on importance of Lifestyle Medicine in health professional student curricula and in clinical practice.

LMIG CONFERENCE

Host a Lifestyle Medicine Interest Group (LMIG) mini conference or summit. Activities could include workshops on motivational interviewing, appreciative enquiry, or writing exercise prescriptions or lectures on nutrition and exercise.

LIFESTYLE MEDICINE WEEK

Host a Lifestyle Medicine week, featuring activities such as a pedometer challenge, healthy cook-off, exercise breaks during lectures, documentary film screenings, Lifestyle Medicine lectures, or group walks, runs, yoga, meditation.

FUN RUN

Organise a 5K walk/run for your school to promote wellbeing locally and generate awareness of your group on campus.

MOVIE NIGHT

Host a movie night presenting a Lifestyle Medicine/Health related documentary. Talk to us about some suitable movies.



CONTACT AND SUPPORT

CONNECT

Connect your LMIG in with ASLM's Student Leadership Action Group. This will support networking between different LMIGs throughout Australia & New Zealand.

If you have a Facebook profile, be sure to also join our [Facebook Group for Lifestyle Medicine Professionals!](#)

GET IN TOUCH:

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