

# BALINT GROUPS ONLINE FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS

*Confidential discussion & reflection in a supportive group setting*

**The Balint Society of Australia and New Zealand offers a Balint group experience for medical students, at no cost**

## What can a Balint Group offer?

- An opportunity to share and reflect on experiences of clinical work and training
- In-depth discussion about clinical interactions between students, doctors, and patients
- An outlet for anxieties and frustrations from observing the reality of clinical practice
- Greater understanding and appreciation of the complexity of medical work
- Support through collegial sharing
- Protection from disillusionment and burn-out

See the [Balint Society of Australia and New Zealand website](#) for more information.

## What is a Balint group?

A Balint group is an experiential, small group activity in which clinicians discuss cases from their practices with emphasis on the professional relationship. Instead of thinking about clinical updates or specific psychological, biological or other treatments, Balint groups use case presentation and discussion to explore and understand the emotional experience of the patient and the clinician, and what might be happening between them. The focus in a Balint group is on the doctor-patient relationship and the less conscious, less obvious aspects of that relationship.



## What happens in a Balint group?

A clinical experience which has stayed in the student's mind is presented informally – no preparation is needed but the presenter speaks about what is on their mind. The group then responds and reflects on the experiences of the patient, the student and others involved, and on what was happening in these relationships. The focus is on the emotional experiences of those involved rather than on problem-solving, diagnosis or management.

## Where and when?

The groups will be held on Zoom. Each group will meet weekly for 90 minutes over six consecutive weeks. Groups will generally be held between February - November each year and have between 6-8 students in each group. Participants are asked to make a commitment to attend all six sessions and there is no fee.

## Group leaders

The two group leaders maintain the structure and safety of the group. They help the group explore perspectives that might not have been heard. All are experienced leaders of Balint groups for doctors and other health professionals and one or both leaders will be medical doctors.

## How do I join?

If you are interested in joining an online Balint group, please contact Meredith Waugh ([mwaugh4221@gmail.com](mailto:mwaugh4221@gmail.com)) who will welcome your enquiries and answer your questions.

If you would like to continue with Balint work after this experience, we will be happy to help you find an ongoing group.