

# E-learning Review

By Dr Lawrence Ng, MCFP

I was looking for a way of doing my CME online when I read a flyer from the College that its e-learning portal is free from now until end Oct 2004. Curious to find out how it works and lazy to travel to far away venues for CME talks (which usually gives one point), I was keen to try out the portal at [www.onlinemedlearning.org](http://www.onlinemedlearning.org). Moreover, each completed module earns 5 CME points.

The first step was to apply via email for a password which I received on the same working day. The current module, on Communication & Counselling, is the fourth in the series.

There is a set of notes in pdf file (for reading or downloading) and a multimedia role playing exercise. The latter is particularly interesting as it is an re-enactment of actual cases in general practice in a consultation setting. This set the mind of the learner in a clinical setting and helps him put into immediate practice what he learns online. It is a more powerful way to learn than cut-and-dried classroom or hotel lectures. Surprisingly, the script is uncannily realistic.

Two case exercises are done in a Q&A style which, although similar to the CME test, does not contribute to the passing or failing. These exercises are also multimedia and is both audio and visual to the



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broadband user. The dial-up user can only hear the audio conversation. I found making mistakes on the MCQs here rather educational as the wrong answers are followed by a pop-up dialogue box which tells you why the answer was wrong. For soft topics such as communications, the correct answer is actually a "best-practice" answer and it helps me to reflect on my current ways of

thinking, talking to the patient and choices in management such as making a referral whilst not giving the patient a sense of abandonment.

The exercises can be done in separate sittings which means that one can log off and go to attend to a patient or have lunch, and return later to resume the exercise. This would not have been possible in a didactic classroom or drug talk CME. Hence, it is flexible and fits into my schedule and does not impact on my lifestyle. It saves precious weekend time for the family and leisure pursuits!

At the end of doing the exercises, reading the pdf notes and viewing the multimedia role play, I took the plunge and submitted myself to the CME test. It was with a measure of satisfaction when I found that I passed with 20 correct answers out of 25 MCQs. For me, this is the way to go for CME.

