

## **Tutoring of medical students by a private practitioner: first year results of a pilot experience**

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**Abstract:** With the aim of familiarizing medical students with everyday medical practice, the General Medicine Unit practitioners proposed to all the second-year medical students of our faculty a voluntary system of tutoring intended to accompany them through the entire duration of their studies. Students were offered the opportunity to establish a long-standing relationship with the practitioner which could take many different forms. The offer was accepted by 54 out of the 147 students and a questionnaire was mailed to the 54 students and their 54 tutors (practitioners) at the end of the first year of the experience. A fully-completed questionnaire was returned by 30/54 students and 48/54 tutors. Nine students failed to contact the tutor, half of the tutor-student encounters occurred in a private practice situated near Lausanne and half near the student's home. Twentyfive students spent between one and six hours in the tutor's practice; integration of the student into the praxis was judged to be easy in most cases. Students indicated that they had the opportunity to observe how the work was organized, to be sensitized to different aspects of psycho-social medicine and to exchange ideas about training and their future. The experience was considered as moderately to highly useful by 22/28 students and 24/39 tutors. We conclude that this tutoring system proposed to second-year students shows promise: encounters between students and practitioners early in their studies should result in a better sensitization to the reality of day-to-day medical practice.