Why do I need a GP?

Your health is your most precious asset. Being healthy is more than just not being sick – it's about your mental and emotional health, your physical health and your sense of well-being. Medical students are busy, often stressed and may find it hard to find time to think about being healthy.

If you ask yourself, “what would I recommend to a patient in my age and professional demographic about health care?”, you would reasonably suggest a healthy diet, enough exercise, regular breaks from work and an annual check up with a GP. Fewer than 40% of medical practitioners have their own GP, so the medical profession itself does not got a good track record in this area. You should change this and set up better patterns of care for yourself and your family.

Doctors and medical students often seem to have the very worst health care. They tend to self-diagnose, self-prescribe and self-refer. It's difficult for us to be patients. We can see the value of patients having a personal doctor who knows their history and gives personal care, but, in a strange twist of thinking, we don't see that this applies to ourselves and our families. So take your own best advice. Find a GP you trust and let them manage your health care. Have a regular check-up. Encourage your colleagues to do the same. And let another doctor use their time and objectivity to manage your family's health.