

## Introducing....

# NEMSA Network

### What is it?

A social network for anaesthetists in the East Midlands. You've probably heard of these, and may even use some of the biggest (Facebook, MySpace, Bebo etc). They allow individuals to interact in new ways that more closely mirror real life.

### Why do we need it ?

1. The move to the new host of nemsanet has prevented us creating email groups we can all use (for example the [spr@nemsanet](mailto:spr@nemsanet) address no longer works),
2. There have been problems with email forwarding (e.g to hotmail & yahoo accounts)
3. Our forums (which have been poorly used) have been hijacked.

So there's was an opportunity to review our IT, and a network offers more functionality than a simple email system.

### When can I use it ?

Invitations to join are going out now. For the time being the nemsanet email system will continue to be used for all official school business, although its envisaged that if the network is successful the nemsanet email system will eventually be replaced by messaging within NEMSA Network. There are no plans to alter [www.nemsanet](http://www.nemsanet) itself, you will still be able to look here for documentation etc. Gradually as individuals get used to using NEMSA Network, and if there are no problems, we may use it to disseminate more information & co-ordinate school activities (for example teaching sessions). Ultimately many of the things we currently organise via email, notice boards, telephone calls etc could all be organised via NEMSA Network (e.g rotas, leave, cover, teaching, training, service development etc).

Sign up, have a look, and use the network as much as you'd like.

### What can I use NEMSA Network for ?

The best way is to join up and explore! But until then here's a few highlights....

1. Your own page on the network. Shows a summary of your recent activity, lets you know what your friends have been doing. Add "applications" such as file storage, photos & videos, notebooks etc.
2. Messaging – there are options to send a message to another individual, or an entire group. This option will send an email to whichever email account they used to sign up to the network with (individuals now in control of which email account they wish to use). Change your email whenever you like.
3. Groups – join or start a group. Once groups are created you can host discussions, email members, share documents & notes, whatever you'd like. Groups can be started for professional interests, (perhaps groups for sub-speciality interests will work well) to organise social events, for trainees at a certain hospital, or anything you like! (It's likely that in the future such groups will be used as the default way the school will communicate with

groups of trainees – e.g those sitting the primary, trainees at a given site etc. For now the current email system will remain in place until the network is up & running).

4. Discussions – start a new discussion in the forum on a topic of your choice, social or professional. There are options to subscribe to updates using RSS (what's RSS ? See later).
5. Events – organise & list an event, professional or social, invite others, reply to invitations.
6. Notes – post documents to your own page, or onto the notes page of the network. There are a few ways to do this, post a simple note for comments, write on your 'wall' or add an “application” (e.g using the box.net widget application) which lets you upload various files types (excel, powerpoint, word, pdfs etc)

### **Why a network – what's wrong with email ?**

Our email system no longer achieves everything we want. Email requires everyone's inbox to be full of messages that might not have anything to do with them. NEMSA Network allows groups to *define themselves* & communicate effectively & quickly. The Network will become more useful the more people sign up, and the more they use it.

### **What is RSS ?**

Many of the features on NEMSA Network allow you to subscribe via RSS. When the website is updated your RSS “feed” will let you know. This means you don't need to keep checking the website for new comments on your discussions for instance. There are many programs available that can receive RSS feeds – one of the easiest is Google Reader (available from Google for free). You can subscribe to feeds from millions of other websites in the same way.

### **Help! I'm new to all this and don't know my RSS from my ASS...**

Fear not. A friday afternoon session will be organised soon to guide beginners through, although you can learn quickly by using the network. For those interested the session will also include a brief introduction to lots of other tools available on the web to help you out!

The small print.....

- NEMSA Network is password protected, but ultimately not secure (unencrypted and relatively porous). So no patient identifiable information please. You should exercise care what personal information you place on NEMSA Network, although it should be visible only to colleagues.
- It's your responsibility to make sure that the email address registered with the network remains valid.
- As with all web based solutions, the Network works best with a sound connection. If you struggle at certain times of the day on NHS computers, please try again at a quieter moment.
- If you haven't received an email invite to join the network then please email me from a reliable email address.
- If there are comments, technical problems or suggestions please either email me, or even better message me via the network, or write on my wall!

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