It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the sixth issue of the *RCSIsmj*. We have no doubt that this year’s issue will provide an interesting read for students and professionals of all levels working within the Irish healthcare system. This year, once again, we have been bowled over with the high standard of diverse research and enthusiasm shown by the students of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. The quality of this issue is also a testament to the talent, dedication and enthusiasm of all our staff. We would like to thank everyone who gave up much of their time amidst hectic study schedules to produce another high-quality publication this year. Over the years, the *RCSIsmj* has developed into a highly regarded student medical publication, not only in our own hospital system, but also among the medical schools of Ireland and abroad. The *RCSIsmj* as a society was founded to “increase student interest in research and scientific writing by providing a formal structure and staff mentorship to facilitate these pursuits”. This issue marks our third year of involvement with the journal. As we look back over the years, we are pleased to see this goal realised time and again. This year, we succeeded in recruiting an exceptional staff, overseeing the development of our peer review process, and introducing a student-run journal club; all are events that we hope will continue in the years to come. As we pass on stewardship of the journal to the next generation, it is exciting to think of what further progress this publication will make in the coming issues. We have no doubt that the *RCSIsmj* will continue to serve our students and colleagues as a useful learning resource, a platform for their hard work, and a valued means of delving into the ever-important world of medical research and publication.

*Neil Fennelly and Anas Sarhan*

Directors, *RCSIsmj* 2012-2013