Peer-led medical education

SOLVIT: INNOVATIVE ONLINE PEER-LED LEARNING FOR LOCKDOWN

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A team of UCL Medical School (UCLMS) graduates developed interactive remote teaching for medical students during the COVID-19 lockdown: Student-led Online Virtual Team-based Learning (SOLVIT). Following a pilot with Year 5 students, we worked under UCLMS mentorship to formally integrate it into the curriculum.

SOLVIT comprised 29 new sessions spanning the Year 5 curriculum, enhancing established team-based learning with novel gamification: ‘knock-out’ clinical cases and innovative ‘Bonus questions’. Content was generated by Year 5 students, who wrote questions on their most recently studied module. Our SOLVIT team vetted and formatted questions into quizzes, collaborated with clinicians for quality assurance and delivered the teaching live over 11 weeks. Gamification and peer co-design improved relevance and engagement, and graduate facilitation relieved clinicians of technological responsibility. Creating strong relationships between the SOLVIT team, clinicians and UCLMS staff was essential to embed and deliver our innovation. Additionally, in this process we gained feedback from experts for our own development.

We evaluated the program through weekly feedback forms, in-session polls, and live whiteboard interaction, enabling week-by-week improvements. Students reported their need for clinical teaching and social interaction was addressed when many felt isolated. From 79 respondents, 64% felt that sessions were stronger being peer rather than clinician led (29% were neutral). 93% felt that peer-driven gamification made sessions more fun.

This project demonstrates that students can generate high-level, interactive, peer-to-peer education with low time investment by clinical staff, and boost student morale even at a challenging time. Our strengthening of relationships between graduate educators and medical faculty will enable us to shape future learning at UCLMS.

Peer-led, MedEd, gamification, distance

Developing effective leaders

A NOVEL APPROACH TO SUPPORT NEW FOUNDATION DOCTOR TRANSITION

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It is a longstanding problem that medical students feel inadequately trained for the workplace during their time at medical school. This year, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this situation through cancellation of all clinical placements including assistantships.

An online survey consisting of 124 participants was carried out to assess the confidence of participants for practice. We found 94.4% were not confident in managing the workload of a foundation doctor. 95.2% had not received formal workplace training from their medical school. 67.7% reported feeling reliant on senior students to prepare them for working as a doctor.

An online teaching programme titled ‘F1 Survival Guide’ was created. The series included four sessions, covering topics including maximising induction, managing ward jobs, organising the e-portfolio and conducting quality improvement projects.

It was broadcasted through Microsoft Teams to incoming foundation doctors. It consisted of a brief presentation by a foundation trainee, followeby panel-style questions and answers. In total, 515 people attended live internationally. 9% of them were international medical graduates preparing to work in the UK.

Of the 124 participants, 91.1% revealed their confidence improved after the webinars. 87.9% agreed the topics were important for their career development. 73.4% would recommend this program to their colleagues. 83.9% reported that online webinar was equally effective as in-person teaching.

The data shows this online training had a positive influence on the confidence of new foundation trainees by covering pre-existing gaps in the curriculum. Additionally, it revealed that senior students are heavily relied upon for this information. This indicates a need to re-evaluate how transition to practice can be made more equitable and economical through the use of virtual teaching. Recommendations include further research into the creation of a national online training programme for this transition.