

Dr. Me Project: What do medical students gain from teaching self-care for common self-limiting illnesses in primary schools?

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Dr. Me

Background

With increasing demands on General Practice, it is vital for the sustainability of the NHS to support medical students to understand and effectively manage self-limiting conditions and communicate self-care principles to patients. Participating in these activities can also provide insight into GP careers.

Dr. Me is a health promotion project which trains medical students to teach self-care for common self-limiting illnesses in primary schools. Students undergo two three-hour training sessions, led by a GP trainee, which focus on self-limiting conditions, self-care, appropriate use of NHS resources and teaching skills.

Through the programme, medical students learn and practice key GP skills, such as understanding self-limiting conditions, communicating self-care and safety-netting. In addition, students are also exposed to GP role models and portfolio careers.



Results

Three students participated in the focus group. Benefits to students centred around 3 key themes:



Aim

To identify the benefits medical students gain from participating in the Dr. Me training programme and teaching self-care in primary schools.



Methods

Medical students who had previously participated in the Dr. Me project were invited to participate in a focus group.

A semi-structured approach was used, and responses were transcribed, coded and thematically analysed.

Discussion

Medical students found participating in the Dr. Me project a fun and confidence-building experience.

Dr. Me enabled students to learn about and teach self-care in primary schools which allowed them to develop and consolidate many practical GP clinical skills such as communicating self-care, safety-netting and building rapport.

The training sessions also provided opportunities for the students to develop professional skills which will be useful for their future careers, including teaching skills and quality improvement.

Students were further able to explore career paths associated with General Practice, such as medical education and lifestyle medicine.

Overall, student participation in Dr. Me is an enjoyable and practical way to improve and consolidate GP skills, develop professional skills, and explore GP careers.

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