

Public health and patient safety teaching in pharmacy and allied health care curr...

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INTRODUCTION AND AIMS Given the explosive population growth occurring around the globe today, it is more important than ever to promote public health through various programmes designed to prevent and control the spread of infectious and potentially deadly diseases (World Health Organization, 2014). Healthcare professionals are certainly vital to this process, as they are on the front lines of promoting public health and patient safety.

The study encompasses a thorough review of current literature related to the need for further teaching of public health and patient safety principles to undergraduate pharmacy students.

A detailed questionnaire was included in the scope of this study soliciting responses from fourth year students currently enrolled in the module. The process also involved a thorough analysis of each part of the module, include a pre-test, and a comparison of those results with the marks earned on module exams (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

The purpose of this study was to analyse the effectiveness of the new Public Health and Patient Safety module at the University of Hertfordshire. Both areas are covered extensively by the GPhC and, as such, needed a formal place within the pharmaceutical curriculum at university. Recommendations for improving the module were made based upon initial observations and the average performance of students in key sections of the course.

METHODOLOGY

The design of this study revolved around the use of an in-depth questionnaire that made use of germinal research and current module information in order to elicit valid and accurate information from each

responding student (Eggers & Jones, 1998).

An in-depth interview was also conducted with the faculty members in which they were encouraged to give their honest feedback about the module, generally involving perceived strengths and weaknesses relative to student performance.

All students were informed of the basis for their study and told that their participation was entirely voluntary. No student was forced to participate, and their eventual participation was kept confidential and anonymous at all times. This process also enabled the distribution of a pre and post survey, analysis of existing course work, and the interviews previously mentioned. An evaluation of the workshops, lectures, and any activities taking place online was also done.

The topics covered in each of the sessions was then able to be cross referenced with student performance on that particular section of the exam.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Main results/Key findings

In the key areas of the module, student knowledge demonstrated a weak 27% increase from the beginning to the end of the course.

It was noted that students did tend to perform better in their written course work, as compared to the final exam, and is probably reflected by their affinity towards group work.

There is a significant difference between student marks in progress test and final exam, 65. 12% of students scored higher in progress test than in final exam.

This study showed a lower level of student understanding relative to the

concepts of patient safety in comparison to public health.

Students feel that the combination of course delivery methods is quite effective. This includes lectures, workshops, and online activities.

Discussion

The survey results indicates the possible reality that either students are entering the module already possessing much of the requisite information covered in the course, or the module is not proving effective at hitting the major concepts proposed by the GPhC.

The implications of this study indicate a need to rework certain sections of the module to cover more areas that are deemed important by the GPhC, thereby better preparing undergraduate students for their exams.

The interviews revealed a largely positive response in terms of the existing module, while noting key areas for improvement such as more focused workshops, increased preparation for exams, and a renewed emphasis on online learning activities.

CONCLUSION

Overall reaction to the new module is largely positive and should be encouraging for department as a whole.

Some of the workshops could be shortened and become more focused in order to allow students more opportunity to ask questions and master important concepts.

There is a bit of concern over low exam scores, so the content of the module should be examine to determine which core concepts might need to lectured on more in order to increase student comprehension.

The module for next year should have more workshops of a lesser duration,

with an increased on patient safety, as that was the area that saw less improvement in pre and post exam results.