

Evaluation of a near-peer teaching seminar tailored to medical students with a non-biological science background: A wellbeing and support community.

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"I found that non scientist teaching was an essential part of my learning this year and the only place where I felt I could ask 'basic' or silly questions "

"As a student from an arts background I ... don't know if I'd still be here without the teaching and support of the non-science teachers and the friends I've made in the seminars"

"The pre block sessions are fantastic - teaching us the basic science stuff that isn't covered anywhere else on the course."

Introduction

- Warwick Medical School's (WMS) Graduate Entry MBChB degree accepts students from all educational backgrounds.
- Studies show that students from a non-Biological science (NBS) background perform as well as their Bio-science background peers in Graduate Entry Medicine. ^{1, 2}
- However, NBS students also experience significant psychosocial stress in adapting ³
- 2016 cohort WMS students felt that NBS students would benefit from dedicated community and support structures.
- Near-peer teaching (*teaching by senior students on the same curriculum*) is commonly used in medical education as an effective educational tool, and is widespread at WMS. ⁴
- Students in Phase 2 of WMS (2016 cohort) ran a near-peer taught seminar, designed to meet the needs of Phase 1 (2017 cohort) students with NBS backgrounds.
- We evaluated the impact of this teaching seminar, in meeting the specific needs of students with NBS backgrounds, particularly looking at the value of community and support.

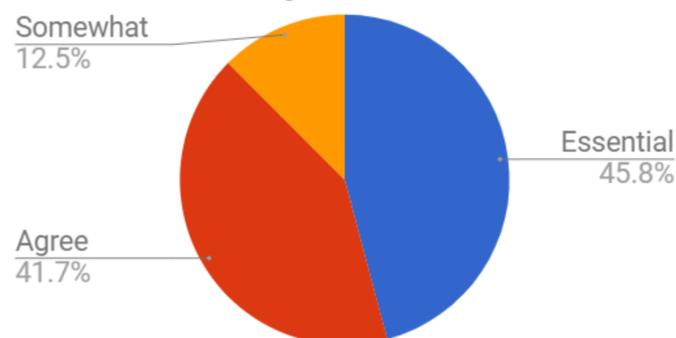
Methods

- Anonymous online questionnaire (Google Forms).
- Quantitative + Qualitative evaluation.
- 24 responses from 1st year medical students who attended (19 NBS students).

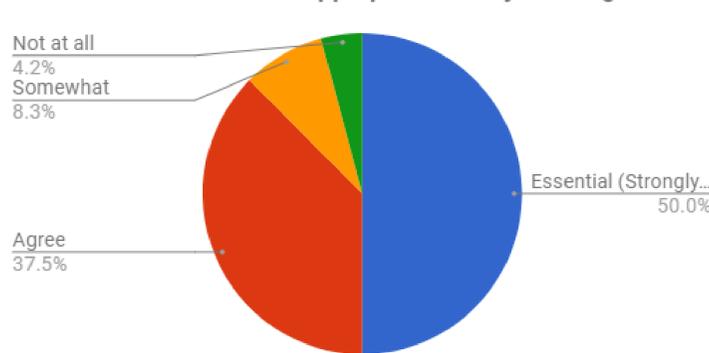
Results

- 83% of participants 'agree' or found it 'essential' to their learning that attendees were from similar NBS backgrounds.
- 63% found having other attendees from similar NBS backgrounds as 'essential' to their feeling comfortable in raising questions.
- 88% "agreed" or found it "essential" to have a community of people with similar NBS backgrounds.
- All students surveyed felt there were no other forms of support at WMS targeted at students from a NBS background.

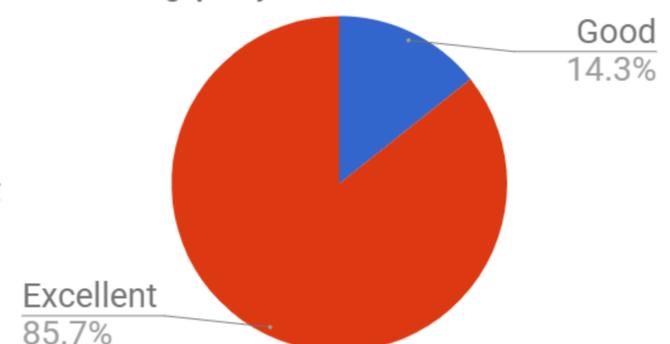
I feel it is important to me to have a community of people with similar, non-science backgrounds



I feel the content is more appropriate for my learning



The teaching quality overall was...



Discussion

- Near-peer teaching has proved a valuable tool for Phase 1 medical students for:
 - Educational reinforcement
 - Peer + Near-peer feedback and wellbeing support
- This evaluation highlights the demand for NBS student support
- Results indicate that this near-peer seminar teaching helps address this need.
- This model could be used successfully in other graduate medical programmes and could assist in recruiting students from diverse backgrounds

"I've found the Non-Scientists teaching **absolutely critical** to my understanding of some **complicated topics** this year, which were not explained during lectures at a level that I could understand. I went to a normal student seminar as well, which was useful, but not as helpful in terms of **demystifying some of the hardcore science!**"

References:

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 4. Yu, T. C., Wilson, N. C., Singh, P. P., Lemanu, D. P., Hawken, S. J., & Hill, A. G. (2011). Medical students-as-teachers: a systematic review of peer-assisted teaching during medical school. *Advances in medical education and practice*. 2. 157
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