SWAG - Sustainability Week At Gloucestershire Academy:

An innovative programme to raise awareness of sustainability in healthcare for medical students

Z. Brown[1], C. Priest, **M. Young**, L. Bowen, A. Gosal, C. Oliver, P. Davies, A. Samuels

[1]*Clinical Teaching Fellow, University of Bristol, Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Gloucester GL1 3NN*



SWAG Daily Email Bulletin

> General Medical Council
>
> "Newly qualified doctors must be able to apply the principles, methods and knowledge of population health and the improvement of health and sustainable healthcare to medical practice."

> *"I think it would be good to begin my clinical practice working sustainably."*

Quote from post intervention questionnaire

Aims

- ♻ To investigate students' current knowledge of sustainable healthcare
- ♻ To raise medical students' awareness of sustainability in healthcare
- ♻ To encourage students to take an active role in the promotion of sustainable healthcare
- ♻ To educate on key aspects of sustainability
- ♻ To establish medical schools' current commitment to sustainability teaching

Why is this relevant?

With a GMC deadline of summer 2020 set to incorporate teaching into medical student curricula and limited research available in current literature, this project highlights not only current student awareness about sustainability but also investigates interventions to improve this

Methodology

An innovative and exciting new programme was developed for 20 final year medical students from the University of Bristol at Gloucestershire Academy. It took place during their 'Preparing for Professional Practice' clinical placement in February 2019.
The programme ran for 1 week alongside regular teaching; this included:

Activities

- Daily newsletters to encourage students to create solutions to healthcare sustainability issues
- Short student presentations delivered to peers to promote their novel ideas
- Students invited to participate in educational "Guess the Cost" Game
- Charity collection for 'Pied Piper Appeal' organised and advertised on hospital bulletin and the intranet to raise awareness

Analysis

- Pre-intervention questionnaire with Likert scales and white space questions
- Post-intervention questionnaire with Likert scales and white space questions
- Questionnaire analysis to demonstrate students' attitudes towards sustainability



Medical students donating books to the Pied Piper Appeal team

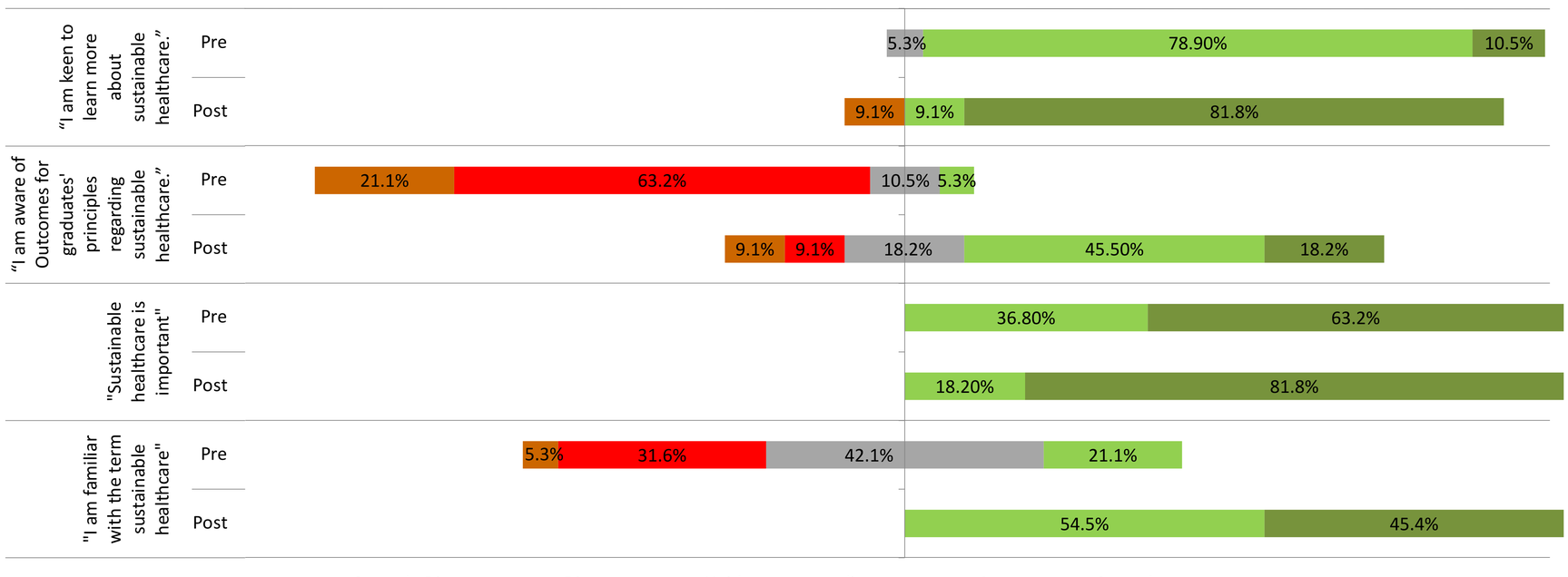
> *"I feel as a medical student we have no awareness of costs and wastage in healthcare and if we did have teaching it would improve sustainability from the start of our training."*

Quote from post intervention questionnaire



Word cloud developed from questionnaire analysis

Results



> *"We suggest the development of a sticker illustrating the difference in cost between a standard needle and butterfly needle which can be placed on all treatment trolleys."*

Suggestion from student presentation

Discussion

Results have shown all students who participated in SWAG were very interested in acquiring further knowledge regarding sustainability and deem it an important factor to consider in clinical practice.

Interestingly, pre-intervention questionnaires revealed a significant percentage of students lacked confidence regarding familiarity with the term 'sustainable healthcare' and were not aware of the 'Outcomes for Graduates' requirement regarding sustainable practice. Promisingly, post-intervention results do demonstrate an increase in student awareness which shows this simple programme could be an easy way to work towards meeting the GMC target.

This programme was advertised in both the hospital bulletin and on the intranet, sparking discussions amongst clinical staff about how we can work together to improve sustainability; this highlights the need to continue raising awareness, potentially via inter-professional learning.

Next Steps...

- ♻ Repeat SWAG with different year groups of students and different groups of healthcare professionals to compare levels of understanding, and demonstrate how knowledge of sustainability can be improved within interprofessional working environments.
- ♻ Integrate the programme into and deliver across the University of Bristol's academies, embedding sustainability within the core curriculum.
- ♻ Follow students involved with SWAG to establish if they apply sustainable practice as FY1 doctors.

References

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