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Developing Undergraduate Curriculum Resources on Health and Work in Medical Education

Kent and Medway Medical School & Centre for Health Services Studies

UK Conference for Clinical Communication in Undergraduate Medical Education
6-7th March 2019

Dr Ferhana Hashem, Senior Research Fellow
Dr Kate Hamilton-West, Reader & Faculty Director of Medical Social Sciences
Background to the project

- Commissioned by Public Health England (PHE) & joint Work & Health Unit (WHU), includes Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) & Department of Health & Social Care

- Start: September 2018; Ends: January 2020

- Outputs: comprehensive set of teaching resources on health & work including:
  - slide-sets of core topics
  - session outline for lecturers
  - online resources collection

- Using a co-productive approach involving stakeholders & Patient and Public Involvement
Aims and Objectives

To design an integrated curriculum for future doctors that addresses how to communicate with service users/patients about staying in and returning to work:

- To increase future doctors’ confidence in discussing health and work with patients, having acquired the skills, knowledge, tools and techniques to undertake this activity.
- To increase the uptake of future doctors broaching the issue of Health & Work in their patient consultations, including giving professionals the capability and confidence to use the fit note as a system for practical advice as well as a process for sickness certification.
- To increase patients’ experience of feeling more supported by future doctors in the long term.
- To increase the number of patients understanding the value of work to their own health and well-being, including their expectations of the fit note, by receiving advice from doctors.
Why we are doing this project?

- Improving Lives. The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper (2017) one of the key aims is to “ensure people are able to access the right employment and health services, at the right time and in a way which is personalised to their circumstances and integrated around their needs”

- The report underlines the vicious circle between work and health and the importance of having a unified vision of the relationship between health and work

- It highlights the importance to improve work conditions for workers with disabilities and chronic diseases

- PHE commissioned an audit report from ICF Consulting Services Ltd with the intention of broadly identifying Health and Work core topics for the current undergraduate medical curriculum
Communication and interpersonal skills specifically relates to Professional Skills outlined:

11. Newly qualified doctors must be able to carry out an effective consultation with a patient

g. describe the principles of holding a fitness for work conversation with patients, psychological and biological factors supporting capacity of the patient, and how to make referrals to colleagues and other agencies
Curriculum Mapping of Medical Schools

- Teaching approach
- Type of curriculum - full-spiral, partial or none
- Core syllabus topics
- Identify where Health and Work topics can be incorporated
- Assessment methods
- Recent / proposed changes to the curriculum
- Includes 5 new schools
Understanding co-production

- Working together to do something. Bringing people with different views and ideas together to make things better for everyone

- About people who use services, carers, and people who run services together as equals

- But it is also important for people to be allowed to do co-production in different ways. This will help people find new ways to do things
Co-production & Partnership Approach

Central Research Team hub: University of Kent

External Academic Panel Steering Group (EX-APS): Engage in partnerships with professionals

Health and Work Curriculum Group (HaWC): Co-design & co-create

Public Health Physician
GP Clinical Research Fellow
Patient Experience & Public Involvement Lead
+ academic team members at UoK

3 PPI representatives, 2 Occupational Health Physicians, Occupational Health Nurse Consultant, GP from DWP & Central Research Team members

2 PPI representatives, Occupational Health Physician, GP from PHE, HEE representative, medical sociologist, Medical Schools Council representative & Central Research Team members
Patient & Public Involvement (PPI)

Patient Representatives

Provide insights and commentary drawing from patient experiences to help to co-create and co-design the teaching resources

Medical Undergraduates

Offering insights and commentary drawing from medical undergraduate experiences & providing input on developed curriculum content

External Academic Panel Steering Group (EX-APS)

Health & Work Curriculum Group (HaCW)
PPI Activities

Health & Work Curriculum Group (HaWC)

3 Patient Representatives
2 meetings
Suggested the following points to consider:
- Physical implications of their condition on working
- Emotional impact of not working
- Values people hold about work
- What people enjoy about work
- Adaptable / open to other roles
- Where people see themselves in 5 years time

External Academic Panel Steering Group (EX-APS)

2 Undergraduate Representatives
2 meetings
Suggested following points to consider:
- Impact on the family when a family member is unwell
- Stress that GPs can offer signposting to services & not just provide a fit-note
- Managing conflict between patients & doctors
- Doctors are concerned that declaring poor health can impact negatively on patient’s career
Learning Framework

Working as an Effective Team Member in Work Related Health Settings

Enabling Patients to Return to Work

Impact of Work and Worklessness on Health
Impact of Work and Worklessness on Health

Core Topics

- Work as a key determinant of health (Y1 and 2)
- How work can influence health (Y1 and 2)
- How worklessness can influence health (Y1 and Y2)
- Speaking to patients about their work (Y2 and Y3)

GMC’s Outcomes for Graduates 2018

- Applying social science principles
- Applying biomedical scientific principles
- Applying psychological principles
- Health promotion & illness prevention
- Dealing with complexity & uncertainty
- Communication & interpersonal skills
- Diagnosis & medical management
Enabling Patients to Stay in & Return to Work (I)

Core Topics

- Legal responsibility to support people to return to work (Y3 and Y4)
- Awareness of the impact of disability & work (Y3 and Y4)
- Supporting patients on the benefits of work (Y3 and Y4)
- Fitness to work & the fit note (Y3 and Y4)
- Return to work after surgery, illness or injury (Y3 and Y4)
- Recognising illness that may be caused by work - 1 Common related conditions
- Recognising illnesses that may be caused by work - 2 Occupational asthma

GMC’s Outcomes for Graduates 2018

- Legal responsibility
- Communication & interpersonal skills
- Diagnosis & medical management
- Applying biomedical scientific principles
- Applying social science principles
- Applying psychological principles
Enabling Patients Stay in & to Return to Work (II)

Core Topics

- Recognising illness that may be caused by work - 3 Work related stress (Y3 and Y4)
- Barriers to return to work (Y3 and Y4)
- Signposting to OH services
- Benefits to sick and disabled people (Y3 and Y4)
- Living with long-term conditions and work (Y3 and Y4)
- Living with cancer and work (Y3 and Y4)
- Work and Mental Health (Y3 and Y4)

GMC’s Outcomes for Graduates 2018

- Dealing with complexity & uncertainty
- Legal responsibility
- Communication & interpersonal skills
- Diagnosis & medical management
- Applying biomedical scientific principles
- Applying social science principles
- Applying psychological principles
Working as an Effective Team Member in Work Related Health Settings

Core Topics:

- Developing effective communication skills within a MDT that assesses work related health (Y3 +)
- Utilising the expertise of a team to deliver optimal work-related health care to patients (Y3 +)
- Identify impact of physical & mental health on own productivity (Y1-5)
- Recognising & supporting biopsychosocial principals of work-related ill health amongst colleagues (Y1-5)
- Health promotion & prevention of work-related illness amongst colleagues (Y3 +)

GMC’s Outcomes for Graduates 2018

- Communication & interpersonal skills
- Leadership and team working
- Legal responsibility
- Dealing with complexity & uncertainty
- Professionalism & ethical responsibility
- Applying psychological principles
- Applying biomedical scientific principles
- Applying social science principles
- Health promotion & illness prevention
Developing & testing medical school curriculum resources - Kern, Thomas et al

- Piloting
- Phasing in
- Full-implementation
## Piloting enablers & barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enablers</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Using existing contacts with Deans of medical schools to agree to take part</td>
<td>- No established links with a medical unlikely to get agreement to participate in pilot</td>
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<td>- Spiral curriculum opens up likelihood of agreement for topics being tested</td>
<td>- Traditional curriculum or partial spiral less likely to get agreement for topics being tested</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Medical schools with a focus on training for community medicine/ general practice</td>
<td>- Medical schools without a focus on teaching in community medicine / general practice less likely to gauge relevance of materials</td>
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Piloting plans next steps...

- UoK to build trust and links with selected medical school UG course leads to plan pilot sessions in 2019/2020 academic year Term 1 (February 2019 – ongoing)
- Prepare the piloting tools to gather evaluation & feedback from the learners and the course tutors (March 2019)
- Submit University of Kent ethics application of the piloting tools (April 2019)
- Share the teaching materials & slide sets with the UG medical course tutors and document their feedback (May 2019)

SUMMER HOLIDAY 2019

- Prepare resources for the pilot & maintain communication with medical schools (June, July, August 2019)

PILOT KICK-OFF
(September 2019)

PILOT END-DATE
(December 2019)

- Write-up final report (Jan 2020)
Discussion time/Questions