

Investing in community: Nurturing local potential through a psychiatry outreach summer school for post-GCSE students

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Aims and Hypothesis

- The aim is to encourage students' interest in psychiatry through:
 - Early Exposure
 - Practical Guidance
 - Stigma reduction
- Enables consultants and trainees to engage with and support local communities
- Feedback was collected to assess the extent to which the summer school met its goals

Background

- Medical schools and mental health trusts work to improve access to medicine.
- Building strong ties with local communities is key.
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds face ongoing barriers.
- Post- GCSE stage is critical for A-levels and career planning.
- 8th annual Psychiatry Outreach Summer School for post-GCSE students (IoPPN and SLAM)

Methods

- 30 academically able students recruited from local schools, focusing on disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 3-day free summer school with sessions across different psychiatric specialties.
- Opportunities to meet patients, families, carers, current medical students, simulated patients, and psychiatrists.
- Daily small-group reflective sessions to explore, reflect, and consolidate learning.
- Scheduled to support post-GCSE students in A-level choices, medical school advice, and work experience opportunities.



2025 summer school logo –
winner of 2024 course student logo design competition

"It's made me consider attending medical school and becoming a psychiatrist later in life"

"Practice being a psychiatrist was an incredibly unique experience"

"The lectures were very interesting and eye-opening"

"Coming here has really inspired me"

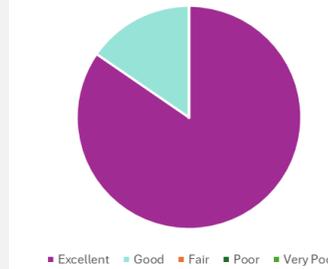
"Listening to the patient experiences was really interesting"

"It was the most exciting and engaging day"

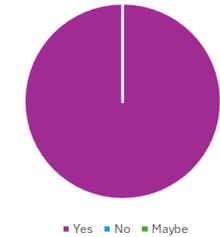
Results

- 100% of students would recommend it to others.
- 85% rated the experience as excellent; 15% rated it as good.
- Interactive and patient-led sessions received the highest ratings.
- Qualitative feedback highlights:
 - Inspires students to consider medical school
 - Provided practical guidance on applying
 - Promotes patient-centred understanding of mental health and psychiatry

17. How was your overall experience?



18. Would you recommend the programme to others?



Conclusions

The IoPPN/SLAM Psychiatry Summer School has been successful at inspiring and supporting local post-GCSE students from schools in disadvantaged areas to consider a career in psychiatry.

References/further reading:

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3. Medical schools council. Increase in students from disadvantaged backgrounds attending medical school, News | Selection, Application, 11.12.2024. available at [Increase in students from disadvantaged backgrounds attending medical school - Medical Schools Council](#)
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