

PsychEd: A National Teaching Programme to Encourage Medical Student Interest in Psychiatry

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INTRODUCTION

- In the UK, current demand for psychiatric services outweighs capacity ¹
- A growing proportion of medical students are applying for psychiatric training positions in the UK, resulting in oversubscription in recent years ²
- The UK's 34 Psychiatric Societies ('PsychSocs') offer additional teaching and guidance to medical students interested in psychiatry
- The authors developed **PsychEd**, a national teaching programme to support PsychSocs in fostering students' knowledge and interest in psychiatry beyond the traditional curriculum

OBJECTIVES

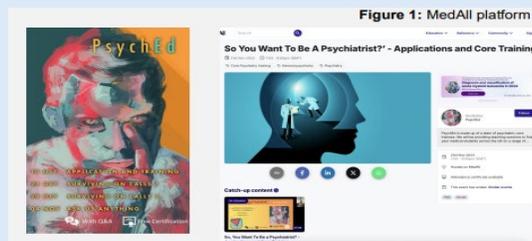
1. To increase medical students' interest of psychiatry as a career
2. To enhance students' knowledge and confidence in psychiatric practice
3. To promote engagement in psychiatry through practical insights and exposure

REFERENCES

- Rising demand for mental health care - Care Quality Commission, https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/major-reports/soc20202021_01d_mh-care-demand (accessed 14 December 2024).
- 2024 Core Psychiatry Training CT1 Competition Ratios, <https://www.specialtyapplications.co.uk/competition-ratios/core-psychiatry-training-ct1-competition-ratios/>

METHOD

- A quality improvement project was conducted to evaluate the teaching programme using pre- and post-session questionnaires with Likert-style ratings as measures for our outcome measures
- Between December 2023 and November 2024, two cycles of teaching sessions were delivered to medical students & resident doctors
- **PDSA Cycle 1:** 6 sessions (Nov '23 – Feb '24). The topics included psychiatric sub-specialities, training applications & career pathways
- **PDSA Cycle 2:** 4 sessions (Oct – Nov '24). Delivered podcast-style & provided more in-depth, real-life clinical encounters & focusing on the highly requested topics from the cycle 1
- The programme was hosted on MedAll (Figure 1), a free virtual healthcare platform, which has helpful built-in features including advertising, feedback and attendance certificates



RESULTS

Figure 2: Population Map

- A total of 182 medical students & resident doctors attended the 10 sessions
- Participants were affiliated with a range of medical schools / institutions internationally, including in India, Australia, & North Africa



Figure 3: P Chart Demonstrating Programme Impact PDSA cycle 2: over the 4 sessions: 84% average increase in interest, knowledge and confidence in Psychiatry as a career

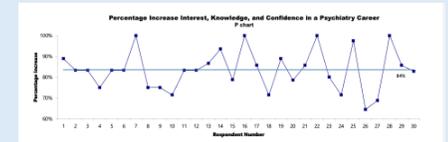
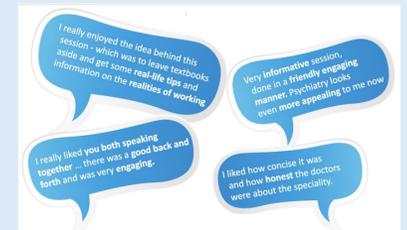


Figure 4: Free-text Participant Feedback Free-text feedback demonstrated the benefits that participants derived from the programme and a preference for dual speaker presenting



CONCLUSIONS

- Despite its recent infancy, PsychEd delivered a broad range of teaching sessions to an international audience
- The programme increased participants' confidence in working as resident doctor in psychiatry and sparked interest in pursuing psychiatry as a career – contributing to the ongoing efforts to address the mental health crisis
- Participants favoured sessions presented in a dual speaker format, challenging conventional didactic approaches, which have subsequently been adopted by other educational initiatives within psychiatry