

# Introducing a Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Teaching within a Liaison Psychiatry Team

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## Aims

Multi-disciplinary teams are fast becoming the standard practice in the NHS with many important decisions being decided by them. There are already movements to incorporate an undergraduate multi-disciplinary curriculum but little is known about its benefits of postgraduate multi-disciplinary teaching in liaison psychiatry teams. This study aims to determine the benefits of a multidisciplinary teaching program within a liaison psychiatry team.

## Methods

The Liaison Psychiatry team is based in an English NHS Hospital. It consists of twenty-one individuals from varied training backgrounds, including Psychiatric Liaison Practitioners, consultants, junior doctors, students and administration staff. The teaching program consisted of one hour of didactic lectures weekly for six weeks in early 2020. The topics were identified and delivered by the team members. A paper-based survey was completed (n = 14) at the end of 6 weeks, which consisted of a series of statements using a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

## Difficulties Encountered

As this program required members to teach each other, there was initial apprehension related to individual confidence to speak up and ability to use formal education techniques, such as PowerPoint. To overcome this, the delivery of teaching was intentionally flexible and methods used included articles, videos, invited speakers, and PowerPoint.

The topics delivered were also flexible and initially focussed on what the teacher would like to teach. This led to a wide variety of topics including, 'Impact of Ethnicity on Schizophrenia Diagnosis', 'Musical Therapy', and 'Role of the Chaplaincy in Hospital'.

## Results

Before the program, 64% agreed or strongly agreed that they could seek advice from other members of the team and 43% felt confident in giving a presentation. Afterwards, it was 100% and 86% respectively.

All team members felt they gained knowledge because of the program and two-thirds of them had since applied that knowledge in their practice.

86% of team members felt it had a positive impact on team cohesion and morale. All felt it supported their educational development and would recommend a multidisciplinary teaching program to colleagues.

## Don't just take my word for it...

"Very well organised. Excellent for helping staff develop skills and confidence in teaching, as well as for updating clinical knowledge."

"I strongly support teaching within the team. Any protected learning and discussion time can only be beneficial."

"This is excellent. Presentations are informative and pitched at the right level. I am keen that this continues within the service."

"Has allowed the team to come together once a week and talk together. Everyone has gotten involved."

## Conclusion

The results demonstrated that multi-disciplinary teaching creates a positive impact on the team dynamics, as well as individual learning.

Due to the success of this trial, the teaching program has continued to this day and transitioned online due to the coronavirus pandemic. On this basis, we would recommend the use of multi-disciplinary teaching events.