***Student-led curricular change in sustainable healthcare***

Background

There is increasing recognition of the role of students as partners in curriculum development [1, 2]. Students openly express their learning needs and demands for teaching in emerging issues. One such issue, climate change, has been described as the greatest threat to human health in the twenty first century [3], and the need for environmentally sustainable healthcare is now well recognised [4]. Healthcare professionals are key agents for advocacy and change, however they may lack the tools for effective action [5]. At University of East Anglia (UEA), the inception of the new Healthy Planet student society served as an impetus for a partnership between two students and three faculty members to deliver teaching which is responsive to student needs. This working group developed a strategic approach towards introducing the teaching of sustainable healthcare (SH) in the undergraduate medical curriculum.

Methods and curriculum mapping

Members of this working group attended a workshop hosted by the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare in September 2015. Eight “beacon” medical schools across the United Kingdom presented their approaches to introducing SH elements in their teaching. At UEA we developed a two-pronged approach by introducing SH topics both vertically (across each year of the MBBS programme) and horizontally (within each theme or discipline which runs across all years of the programme). We identified and approached key faculty members (year leads and theme leads) to provide them with: a contact person from the working group; resources in SH relevant to their discipline; and case studies for successfully incorporating SH in their teaching material.

Challenges, solutions and the way forward

In this presentation we will describe our experiences in effecting curricular change to address unmet student learning needs. We will discuss the challenges (responding to resistance from some colleagues) and solutions (synergising with existing curricular elements) which helped us navigate a way forward.

References

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5. Gomez, A., et al., *Perspective: Environment, biodiversity, and the education of the physician of the future.* Acad Med, 2013. **88**(2): p. 168-72.