



Sustainable Healthcare Teaching Case Study Template

Name of Institution: Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Name of course or session: Doctors against climate change

Summary

Since 2019, Brighton and Sussex Medical School has offered a Student Selected Component (SSC) in Sustainability in Healthcare. The 7 week course is currently offered to 2nd year students. On this vignette based course, students are educated on how healthcare systems impact the environment and how different departments around the country have started to solve these problems. Students are encouraged to create and follow their own green goals outside of the course so they leave the SSC with some personal growth.

Background

The SSC was designed and taught by Dr Jonathan Sadler, a Research Fellow at Brighton and Sussex Medical School. There was a distinct lack of sustainability in the 5-year curriculum despite local hospitals working hard to improve their sustainability. Starting with the premise sustainability benefits all, and the belief that students already know the common issues, the course aims to highlight both the individual's and hospital's responsibilities to the larger environment.

Course Description

Year group taught: 2nd

Status of this teaching within the curriculum: Student-selected

Curriculum area

Various themes are addressed in the course:

- What is sustainable medicine? How to green, why the environment is important in healthcare
- Greening surgery/anaesthetics
- Debate on consumer culture – can it ever be sustainable?
 - a. Teaching on how to discuss topics with people who disagree with your opinions

b. SMART goals

- Plastic problems, water problems, the life cycle of drugs, gloves and energy
- Resilience in medicine
- Student talks on topics of their interest

Sustainability learning outcomes:

- PLO 1 - Describe how the environment and human health interact at different levels
- PLO 2 - Demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to improve the environmental sustainability of health systems
- PLO 3 - Discuss how the duty of a doctor to protect and promote health is shaped by the dependence of human health on the local and global environment

Pedagogical format

Small group lectures – students are taught and encouraged to discuss key topics. At the halfway point of the course, a student debate is held. This was to encourage the ability to research and discuss key issues, whilst under the scrutiny of their peers. The course ends with student presentations, extending knowledge on a topic they find personally relevant.

Teaching time

Total teaching time for this course or session (hours): 7 hours

Teaching time for sustainable healthcare (hours): 7 hours

Number of students taught:

2019: 10

2020: 19

Materials used:

The course was written and developed by Dr Jonathan Sadler. It was created in Mentimeter and slides are available on request. Many of the lectures feature videos from environmental sources on Youtube. These are often used to highlight the broad topic, before honing in on how this is relevant or what part the NHS plays in this.

Assessment:

Assessed through student engagement in course and via presentations at end of the course.

Lesson Learned

- Sustainability in the NHS is a new area for most students. Repeating key central learning points, such as the fundamentals of sustainability is required most weeks.
- Students feel empowered and motivated following the course, so encourage them to create their own groups and find local projects to join (which you can highlight).
- Lots of students find the course emotionally difficult try and end each week on a positive note.
- If you decide to cater for the event, vegan snacks are recommended (the most inclusive snacks).

Quotes – SSC cohort 2019

- “I did not expect to enjoy it as much as I did.”
- “I loved it so much and has led me to pursue interests outside of medicine but with a link to medicine. My favourite thing I have done at BSMS.”
- “Found my SSC extremely interesting especially because it’s not covered on the curriculum.”

For further information, please contact:

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