Reciprocal mentoring for inclusivity – a pilot programme

Dr Alice Harpur and Dr Charu Chopra , Advancing Equity in Medical Education Group, NHS Education for Scotland
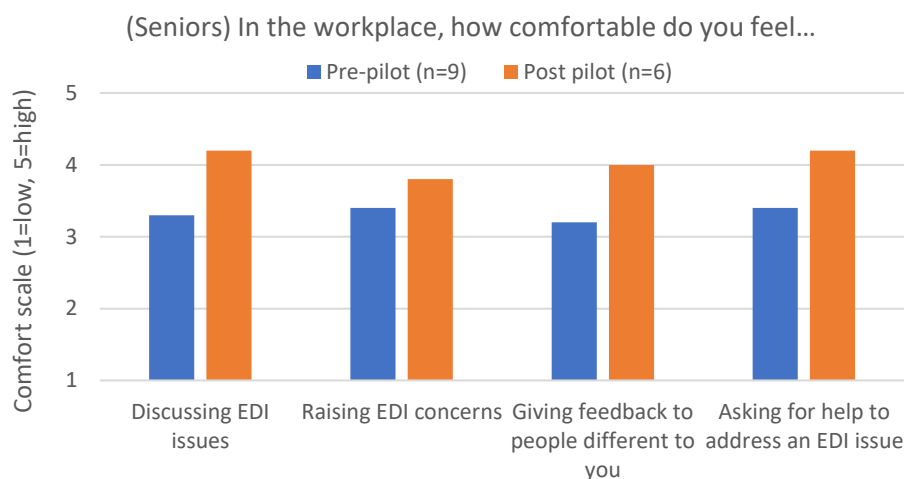
NHS Education for Scotland

BACKGROUND

Healthcare systems need to take bottom-up and top-down approaches to create more inclusive environments and capitalise on the opportunities that a diverse workforce offers. Reciprocal mentoring brings junior and senior staff together to remove power hierarchies, adopt the roles of both mentor and mentee, and embark on a journey of co-learning.

INTERVENTION

16 secondary care medical educators (seniors) and 16 secondary care doctors in training from under-represented groups (juniors) were recruited into reciprocal mentoring pairs. After completing online training, pairs were asked to arrange four 1-hour mentoring meetings over 12-months. Pre- and post-pilot evaluation was undertaken using online surveys.
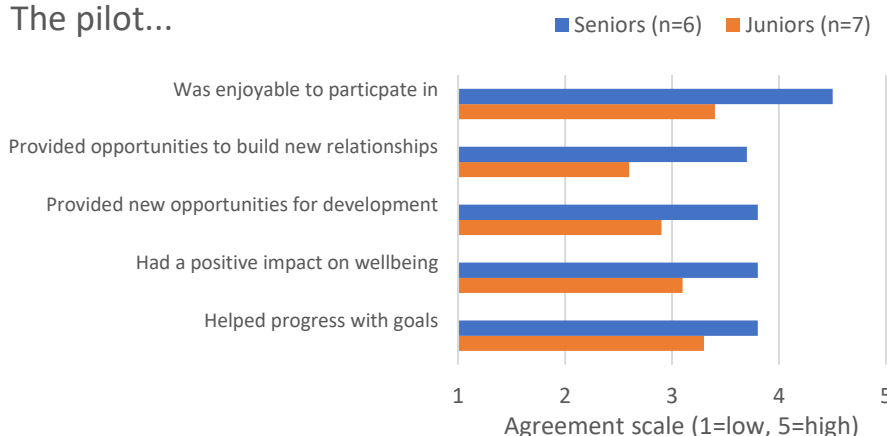
EVALUATION RESULTS *(*EDI = equality, diversity and inclusion)*

(Seniors) In the workplace, how comfortable do you feel…

- Pre-pilot (n=9)
- Post pilot (n=6)

Comfort scale (1=low, 5=high)

Discussing EDI issues | Raising EDI concerns | Giving feedback to people different to you | Asking for help to address an EDI issue

"It was lovely to connect with someone who otherwise I would not have met and hear their perspectives."

The pilot improved senior participants comfort in discussing and addressing EDI issues, with similar improvements observed among junior participants. The pilot was also enjoyable and had a positive impact on professional goals and wellbeing, although impact appeared to be greater among seniors.

The pilot…

- Seniors (n=6)
- Juniors (n=7)

- Was enjoyable to particpate in
- Provided opportunities to build new relationships
- Provided new opportunities for development
- Had a positive impact on wellbeing
- Helped progress with goals

Agreement scale (1=low, 5=high)

CONCLUSIONS

Reciprocal mentoring brings together individuals who are unlikely to otherwise cross paths. It has the potential to increase awareness of and action to address EDI issues and support professional development. An understanding of the organisational impact would require longer term follow-up.