



Medical Student Placements in Public Health: A Novel Opportunity

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Background

- The Department of Medical Education (DME) of NHS Highland (NHSH) actively contributes to the ScotGEM (Scotland Graduate Entry in Medicine) and the University of Aberdeen (UoA) medical students programmes
- It does so by supporting the placements of such students in completing their Students Selected Components (SSC)



Introduction

- The DME invited the Public Health Directorate (PHD) of NHH to contribute to the medical students' SSCs.
- This presentation reports on the first 3 years (3rd year, 2023 – 2024 not complete yet) of activity of medical students that chose Public Health among their SSCs.



Methods

- Participants
 - medical students:
 - ✓ from ScotGem or from the University of Dundee (UoD) final year, or 4th year from the UoA. We also took on final year medical students
 - ✓ doing an elective placement (from all over the UK, for at least of 4 weeks duration), or
 - F2 doctors (1 “taster” week).
- Students complete their PH SSC attending in person, or wholly remotely, or in a combination of both. It is their choice, and we strive to support that (as the rest of the PHD staff may choose to work).



Methods 2.

- The ScotGEM and UoD placements last 4 weeks
- The UoA ones 2 weeks (as part of 3 consecutive 2-weekly placements)
- Students receive selected readings before starting their placement
- Delivery method is learning on the job



Results

- Between August 2021 to April 2024 we have had 43 students/junior doctors on placement in Public Health
- Table 1 shows the distribution of students/doctors according to their study course, placement type

Academic Year	No students			FY2	Total
	ScotGem / UoDundee	U o Aberdeen	Electives		
2023 - 2024	2	5	2	2	11
2022 - 2023	8	11	0	1	20
2021 - 2022	8	4	0	0	12
Total	18	20	2	3	43



Results 2.

- Table 2 shows the components employed to deliver the training

Training Components

(i) connecting students with PH team members

(i) inviting to multi-disciplinary business meetings as observers

(i) offering to join in the running of a project

(i) students prepare a presentation

- delivered to the whole PHD through a MSTeams call
- since the 2nd year
- it may be presenting to a Directorate's Journal Club session, which we blended in with SSCs



Results 3.

➤ Table 3 shows the range of topics that students chose for their projects

- **Women Against Violence project**
- **Public Health aspects of CVD (cardiovascular disease)**
- **Socio-economic determinants of health and well being**
- **COVID-19 Contact Tracing**
- **Counteracting Alcohol and Drug Programme**
- **Smoking Cessation programme**
- **Service redesign in NHH**
- **Outcomes of Intervention Radiology methods in Thrombectomy**
- **Osteoarthritis: a clinical issue under the lenses of Public Health (to be presented at the Faculty of Public Health, Scotland, Glasgow, 1st May 2024)**



Discussion

- To our knowledge, NHH is the only Board in Scotland offering a SSC in Public Health

- Main reasons for choosing Public Health as a SSC were:
 - lack of exposure to PH during the medical curriculum
 - awareness shared through “word of mouth” of the critical appraisal/Journal Club element of our PH SSC



Discussion 2.

- Main positive feedback was offering the opportunity to understand principles and practices of Public Health, and
 - how it may support their future careers, whether in Public health itself or in any other medical discipline

- We have not been able to systematically evaluate our training programme:
 - We want to improve our feedback taking process to ensure we can further tailor our learning offer to participants.

- We would like to understand further why there has been a considerable reduction in choosing PH as SSC by ScotGem/UoD students