

ODP Students Experience of Sustainable Healthcare Education Using Innovative Distance-Learning

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AIM

Due to post-COVID increased surgical waiting times in Scotland, there is a necessity to develop a sustainable and highly-skilled perioperative workforce (Scottish Government, 2021). This coincides with the delivery of a distance-learning DipHE Operating Department Practice (ODP) programme, with students employed by NHS Boards pan-Scotland. Students are employed in all 14 regional health boards, and in 1 specialist health board.

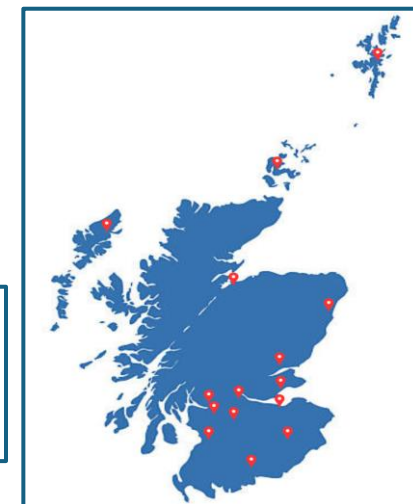
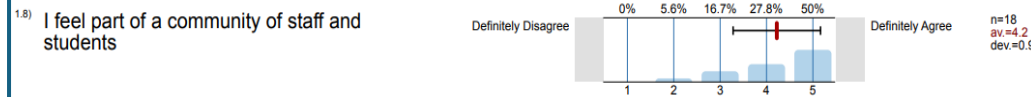
METHODS

Student experience was evaluated using quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A module experience questionnaire (MEQ) was disseminated to final year DipHE ODP students at UWS.

- Quantitative data allowed students to provide a score to their satisfaction.
- Qualitative data produced a more in-depth and rich account of the specific factors which contributed to their overall satisfaction.

RESULTS

- Despite Filho et al (2021) stating that the COVID-19 pandemic led to a great degree of social isolation among students, ODP students 'definitely agreed' or 'agreed' (av=4.2/5) that they 'feel part of a community of staff and students'.
- Students enjoy the flexibility of online learning, commenting: "All students work at different paces, I prefer working through it in [my] own time". ODP students 'definitely agreed' or 'agreed' (av=4.4/5) that 'staff made the subject interesting'.
- Students also liked that they could choose specific assessment topics, allowing them to learn more about subjects they were unsure of: "I liked that for the essay we could choose what we wrote about as it gave me an opportunity to explore part of the learning I knew less about and read up on them".



SUMMARY

Overall, students on this programme have a positive experience and contribute to a sustainable NHS Scotland workforce. In the past 3 years, this programme has produced 130 registered ODPs in Scotland, including remote and rural areas, with a further 83 expected this year. From September 2024, the programme will be offered as a BSc degree, enhancing the nation's highly-skilled perioperative workforce.