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Introduction

Medical school curricula already represent a significant workload for students [1]. It can be difficult to find a suitable time and place for novel teaching to be incorporated into the curriculum by educators – this is even more challenging when there is uncertainty about the utility of new teaching or the practicalities of delivering less conventional content. To address this, we piloted the ‘Teaching Innovation Lab’ (‘TIL’) – a safe space for educators to test new or unusual teaching materials in front of an audience of both fellow educators and students. This allows faculty to ‘road test’ new teaching and receive real-time feedback on their approach and concepts.

Methods

A regular (once-monthly) TIL session was scheduled, with all staff and students within the University of Dundee School of Medicine invited to attend. This was intended to function as a small pilot study to assess feasibility and value. For each session, a presenter was arranged who wished to demonstrate and test a teaching resource they were developing. After presenting, there was a facilitated feedback session to aid the presenter with further developing their material. Participants and presenters were invited to leave feedback on the TIL session using an online form and QR code.

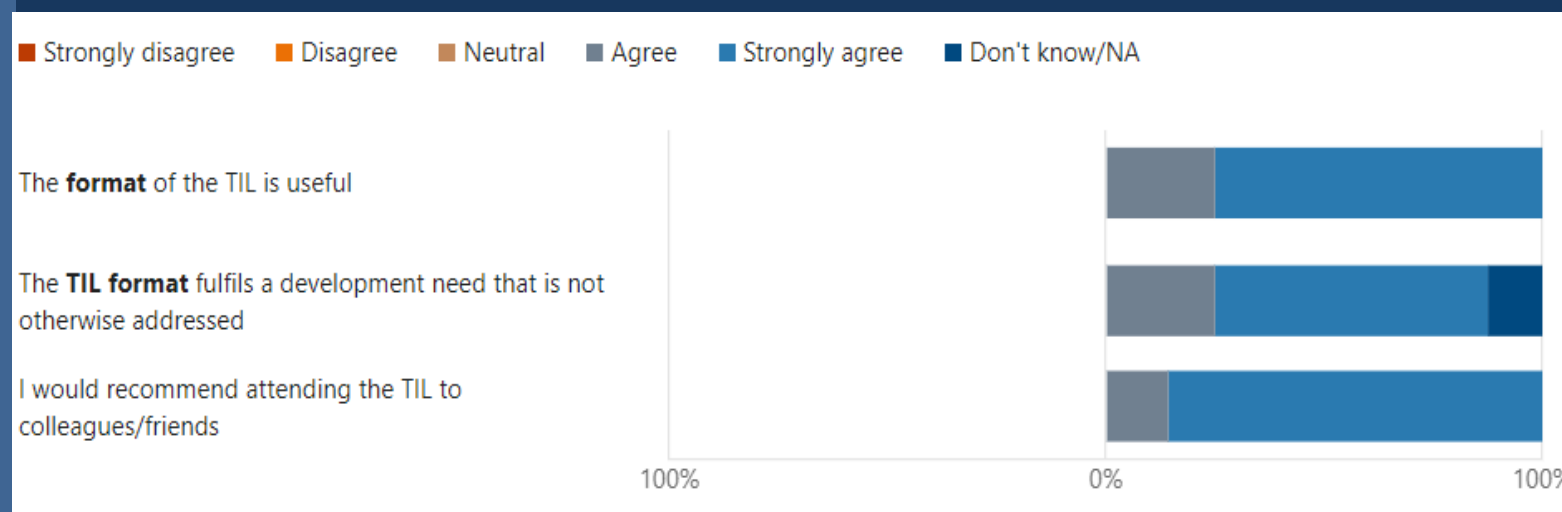


Figure 1: Results received from the post-TIL survey (n=8)

Results

We received 8 survey responses from a total of 10 participants in the TIL, with overwhelmingly positive results. 100% of respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the TIL was a useful format for development. 7 out of 8 respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the TIL fulfilled otherwise unmet development needs with the remaining respondent selecting ‘Don’t Know’. All respondents would recommend the session to friends and/or colleagues. Free-text responses focused on the ‘informal’ and ‘fun’ nature of the TIL as well as the benefits of peer-to-peer learning and observing innovative teaching techniques. One respondent stated “Very fun session that was equally reflective and informative. Great for students! TIL allowed the opportunity for different perspectives from teaching colleagues to come together.” This response is typical of free-text feedback received.

Conclusion

The TIL has had success in developing novel teaching within NHS Tayside/University of Dundee. It appears to be valued by educators for professional development and it can assist with ongoing evolution of teaching practices within medical education.

The TIL will continue to run, and data will be collected to evaluate ongoing utility of the format and seek a more robust data set for future publication. Next steps may include a more aggressive advertising strategy to broaden the attendance of the TIL.