Exploration of Social Practice and Volunteering for Medical Students

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Abstract. This paper mainly discusses students' social practice and voluntary service in medical colleges and universities. We conduct social practice through the formation of a series of professional associations, such as summer rural areas vacation, deepening into nursing homes and communities, and caring “left-behind children” etc.. Students have a clear understanding of their careers and help students form good professional ethics through social practice. Our practice has proved that there are still many problems in the integration of the current medical students' social practice and their majors. Based on this, this paper puts forward some suggestions for current medical students' social practice.

Introduction

Social practice is an important channel for college students to go to society and understand their national conditions. It is an important way to translate theoretical knowledge into practical skills. Nowadays, under the development of the new situation, society has put forward more standardized requirements for the contents and forms of social practice for college students. Therefore, a series of activities initiated by medical students through the establishment of medical professional associations not only conforms to the development of social specialization, but also makes the "second class" of medical students more meaningful and enriched.

There are many ways in which medical students can participate in social practice. For example, they can carry out social practice in rural areas during the summer vacation, health service activities in nursing homes, volunteer service activities in the community and social practice activities that care for rural “left-behind children”. On the one hand, social practice activities focus on cultivating students' moral qualities, innovative spirits and practical abilities. On the other hand, they can enable students to more fully and correctly understand society, adapt to society and serve society. This article takes the social practice activities of Xi 'an Peihua University medical college as an example:

Formation of Social Practice Team

Through a series of investigations and studies, it is found that although many college students practice their activities through the formation of social practice teams during weekend, summer vacation and other spare time, the practice teams are mostly non-professional. Based on the above circumstances, Xi'an Peihua University Medical College established Xiaopei Health (cross-specialized group), Xinglinshe (relying on clinical medicine specialty), Herbal Society (relying on pharmacy), Nightingale (relying on nursing specialty) and other communities. Taking the Xiaopei Health as the main body, taking full advantage of medical college students' extracurricular time to get out of campus and provide comprehensive health services for the society to thoroughly implement the relevant policies of the "Relevant on further strengthening and improving the significance of college students' social practice" . (China Youth Federation [2005] No. 3)
The Form of Social Practice

Summer vacation practice activities in rural areas

In the course of social practice activities in rural areas during the summer vacation, the students popularized prevention of common diseases and knowledge of nursing measures, conducted blood pressure measurements for villagers, guided villagers to learn simple first aid knowledge, helped villagers fill out questionnaires and provided psychological care for villagers. In the process, they found that in some remote villages, a large number of villagers suffer from different degrees of hypertension, diabetes, coronary heart disease, cerebral infarction, rheumatoid arthritis, anemia, hypoglycemia, low blood pressure, gallstones, herpes zoster, gastric ulcer, depression, and many other diseases. Based on this phenomenon, many professors and chief physicians with wealth of clinical experience give the villagers healthy and reasonable diet guidance and rehabilitation training methods in a timely manner. At the same time, they found that many villagers had some problems with the interpretation of local medical policies, medical insurance policies and urban and rural relief systems. After reading related books and learning about the situation with the relevant departments, students also explained the relevant documents for the local villagers in detail.

Nursing home service activities

Medical students have more courses and less flexibility in time, and most of their studies are conducted on campus and relatively lack of opportunities for social practice. However, with the continuous emergence of social endowment problems and the increasing of pension institutions, medical colleges and universities have gradually realized that old-age care institutions are a favorable place for extra-curricular practice. In the process of social practice in nursing homes, the students helped the elderly to conduct health examinations, lectured on their related health first aid knowledge, disinfected the elderly's daily necessities and investigated the psychological and living needs of the elderly. In this practice process, students improve their professional qualities and enhance their practical ability. At present, most of the resident population in nursing homes are empty-nest people who have no children or whose children are not around. They tend to be lonely and insecure and crave the company of others. Medical students in the social practice process of nursing homes are not only conducive to relieving the pressure brought about by their busy academic work, but also bring a strong demonstration effect of respecting the elderly, which is conducive to the formation of a harmonious society.

Community volunteer service activities

At present, basic medical conditions are relatively weak and medical personnel are limited. Hence, the prevention of common diseases and the promotion of health knowledge in some community medical and health institutions are difficult to achieve the expected results. Therefore, community volunteer services mainly focus on the needs of community residents and the community’s public welfare undertakings. Medical students not only possess professional theoretical knowledge, but also have a strong sense of responsibility and mission. Most medical students believe that participating in volunteer service is their own social responsibility and obligation, and they hope to do something meaningful to return the cultivation of society and actively promote social civilization.[1] Community social practice activities mainly focus on measuring the height, weight and blood pressure of community residents, and preaching health knowledge based on the data obtained. On the one hand, it can improve the knowledge about the causes and nursing measures of chronic diseases among community residents, so as to improve the awareness rate and control rate of chronic diseases in China. On the other hand, in the community work, students can clearly understand the prevention of diseases in the service communities, prevention and health care of different ages, health promotion, and the needs of people in different age groups in the community. All these have laid a good foundation for the development of community nursing in our country and provide a new way for medical students' employment.
Caring for rural "left-behind children" social practice activities

Today, the social economy is developing rapidly, but economic development in relatively remote rural areas lags behind. In order to improve the family's economic living conditions, parents choose to walk into big cities to make a living, and the “left-behind children” problem arises. Because of lack of parental care, these children suffer from loneliness, anxiety, low self-esteem and sensitivity. In addition, they are unable to deal with various situations in the society and are often negatively affected in society for their younger age. As a special youth group, medical college students have a relatively high overall quality and strong sense of social responsibility, so in the social practice activities of caring for “left-behind children”, students tend to communicate with the “left-behind children” from the psychological aspect and let “left-behind children” become more open-minded through face-to-face communication, entertainment, and labor together. This will enable them to regain the feeling of being protected, and help them to establish positive values and reduce the occurrence of negative energy events.

Significance of Social Practice Activities

Social practice is not only a physical form of carrying and transmitting information, but also a method that most directly connects with society. It allows us to intuitively understand society, accumulate experience, enrich their knowledge, rich experience, make friends, expand thinking, cultivate the spirit of solidarity and collaboration. The role of medical students as a special group in society cannot be ignored. They went out of the classroom through participation in social practice activities such as volunteer activities in the countryside, elderly care services, community services and care for rural “left-behind children”. They went deep into grass-roots levels to extensively touched reality and consolidated theoretically obscure knowledge to supplement previously incomplete theoretical knowledge in the practice. [2]

Impact on Students

Consolidate professional skills. Medicine is a highly practical subject and students before the internship have certain professional theoretical knowledge. However, they rarely have the opportunity to apply their knowledge to practice. Social practice activities provide students with a learning platform combining theory with practice and broader space for mastering, enriching, applying knowledge and enhancing creativity. Students perform health checkups for community residents, children and villagers to familiarize themselves with and master the general procedures and methods of health checkups. Under the guidance of the teacher, students visit the majority of residents, deepen their understanding of common and frequently occurring diseases to enhance their ability to operate and improve their diagnosis and treatment techniques, which lays good foundation for future clinical practice. [3]

To enable students to develop noble medical ethics. For medical students, they have relatively perfect professional knowledge and technology and will be the main force for future medical innovation. Through social practice, medical students can strengthen their understanding of the medical ethics theory and truly catch on the connotation of “Health Student Oath” and “Life Support”. In social practice activities, medical students acquire emotional experience and consolidate their theoretical knowledge through various social actions such as dedication, cooperation, caring and helping others, which will play a role in truly cultivating innovative talents. [4]

To facilitate the improvement of students' comprehensive quality. Students participate in social practice through various forms such as field surveys and questionnaire follow-ups. They autonomously explore and study topics or projects, formulate practical plans and implement practical programs to enhance practical value. They cultivate innovative thinking and innovative awareness through independent study and thinking, trying to be a college student who meets the requirements of the times.
The meaning to society

Medical college students are the future of medical development in China and they are the reserve force for the development of later medical undertakings. The cultivation of medical students with social responsibility will make our medical career full of hope. The sense of social responsibility of students must be strengthened through social practice. [5]

Impact on Service Objects

Volunteer service objects are mostly vulnerable groups in the society or relatively backward areas. Volunteers teach lonely elderly people the knowledge of prevention and treatment of common chronic diseases, chat with the elderly, and perform health checks for the elderly, in order to resolve the loneliness of old people. Through the exchange of volunteer students with “left-behind children”, these children are able to feel the love and warmth of society in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. This will help them to establish a correct world outlook, outlook on life and values and be able to be useful to the society when they grow up.

Insufficiency in Social Practice Activities and Suggestions for Improvement

Inadequacies of social practice

The social practice activities are simple in form and lack of pertinence. Now medical students conduct social practice activities mainly to go to nursing homes to offer condolences to the elderly, cleaning for the elderly, performing programs, and so on. Although these items can alleviate the loneliness of the elderly to some extent, they are also a waste of human and material resources. In addition, the participating students are concentrated in the first year of the university and the areas of professional knowledge involved are not extensive enough. They mainly focus on the measurement of blood pressure, the demonstration of CPR and the presentation of some health knowledge. Some instruments cannot be brought to the activity site due to environmental and other factors, resulting in the simplification of activity projects.

Practical activities just flow in form. Medical college students participate in social practice in order to carry out practical exercises, promote the overall development of comprehensive quality, play their specialty and increase their talents. However, we found that some students went into the community, nursing homes and other places to participate in social practice just for the purpose of submitting practical reports and obtaining credits, which was contrary to the real purpose of holding social practice activities.

Suggestions for Improvement of Social Practice in Medical Universities

Universities should pay more attention to practical activities. Schools should give strong support in the screening of projects, the selection of instructors and funding. They should mobilize all students to actively participate in activities as much as possible and formulate corresponding reward systems. Social practice activities should be used as an important part of the assessment of students during their studies by giving them the same amount of credit as professional courses in order to encourage college students to pass positive energy to the society and to inspire students' sense of mission and belief.

Establishing a Health Service Base. The social practice base of volunteer service is a platform for college students to carry out volunteer service, which can support the cultivation of socialist core values. Through volunteer service social practice bases with different service functions, we can create voluntary service platforms for university volunteers “doing practical things for the masses, doing good and solving problems” and creating an ideological education and moral cultivation environment which will help them cultivate and practice the socialist core values in the volunteer service social practice. The establishment of a health service base on the one hand guarantees the normalization and specialization of social services for volunteerism. On the other hand, through regular volunteer services, the spirit of voluntary service can be transformed into a personal value pursuit. At the same time, they have deepened their understanding and recognition of socialist core values. [6]
**Promoting social practice through school-enterprise cooperation.** In the traditional teaching model, more attention is paid to the cultivation of students’ theoretical knowledge, which leads to their poor practical ability. Through the university-enterprise cooperation teaching mode, their practical ability can be effectively cultivated and professional level and psychological quality can be improved, and they can play an important role in promoting the overall development of students’ overall quality. [7]

**Conclusion**

Social practice is a good form to guide contemporary medical students out of school and into society. It is a good channel for cultivating and training medical students’ talents. Medical students can use what they have learned in society to serve the community and set up the idea of serving the society. Participating in social practice activities will help medical students in schools to refresh their minds, absorb new ideas and knowledge and narrow the distance between medical students and society and broaden their horizons in society. Therefore, we need to establish a correct understanding of social practice, give social practice a certain amount of attention and further accelerate the establishment of a sound system of medical student’s social practice, so as to better improve the ability of medical students in social practice.

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