Reverse-mentorship of the core concepts in philosophy and mental health: a medical education case report

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Aims. The aim of this medical education case report was to outline the development and outcomes of a reverse-mentorship project that enabled cross-generational collaborative learning. The project took the shape of a philosophy of psychiatry journal club facilitated by a psychiatry core trainee in west London, UK.

Background. Reverse-mentorship reverses traditional roles of mentor and mentee. It is an increasingly fashionable concept in medical education. The junior mentors the senior clinician. The implicit learning outcomes include provision of a two-way learning process, development of mentoring skills for the more junior clinician and collaboration that builds social capital within the workplace. Reverse-mentorship is effective when the junior mentor is recognised for their expertise in a particular area. In this instance, the junior mentor has a special interest in the philosophy of psychiatry.

Method. Junior mentor and senior mentees formed a monthly journal club. The club tracked arguments from anti- and biological psychiatry on the meaning of mental illness. The debate offered insight into a semantic analysis of mental illness and a deeper conceptual understanding of medicine. The learning material derived from the core concepts of philosophy and mental health (Fulford et al.). The role of the mentor was to facilitate group discussion around arguments from relevant papers. A survey, adapted from a recent reverse-mentorship review article, measured the quality of educational experience for mentor and mentees.

Result. Overall, mentees (senior clinicians) agreed that the mentor (junior clinician) displayed attributes and behaviours for effective mentoring across most domains, including enthusiasm, effective communication, respect for mentee expertise and active listening to the needs of the mentee. The mentor was particularly impressed with the mentees’ openness to learn new concepts and respect shown. General reflections on the experience of reverse-mentorship were positive overall. A thematic review highlighted particular aspects, including: a good way to learn a new skill and great opportunity to develop professional skills of mentoring.

Conclusions. The importance of mentoring in medical education is well established. Reverse-mentorship is a new concept that looks to harness the unique qualities of millennials, including their aptitudes for empowerment, innovation and collaboration. This medical education case report shows that an enthusiastic junior clinician can successfully pilot an educational-mentoring scheme aimed at senior clinicians. To make more explicit the intuitive benefits of reverse-mentorship, longitudinal reviews are needed. However, this case report contributes important insights into this burgeoning field of medical education.

Developing resilience and promoting positive mental health strategies in university students

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Aims. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in young people living in Australia, accounting for 7.3% of all deaths among individuals aged 15–19 years. Historically, high levels of suicide have been recorded in Australian university students. This project aims to develop and test a massive online course-program (MOOC) for university students, underpinned by literature and strength-based suicide prevention principles, building resilience and awareness of mental health promoting activities.

Method. A scoping review of the literature was undertaken to explore the effectiveness of current suicide prevention programs for undergraduate university students, and the effective elements contributing to the success of these programs. Six electronic databases were searched to identify relevant literature. Further, mental health consumers and university students were involved in co-producing the content of the six modules of the ‘Talk-to-me’ MOOC.

Result. Nine articles were included in the review, discussing four types of programs including: gatekeeping, education, promotional messaging and online consultation. It was apparent from this review that there is a significant dearth of interventions and programs currently available to reduce the risk of suicide among undergraduate students, with many of the programs having limited efficacy. Despite this, a number of program elements were identified as beneficial to preventing suicide among post-secondary students including upskilling of students, and improving resilience, and self-management. These findings and further consultation with mental health consumers and undergraduate university students underpinned the development of the content of the ‘Talk-to-me’ MOOC which is tailored to meet the needs of university students. The MOOC contains six modules: Mental fitness; strategies to increase mental fitness; self-harm; suicidal behaviour in young adults; interventions for suicidal behaviour; and, gatekeeper interventions. Two case study scenarios depicting mental health challenges commonly experienced by young adults portraying appropriate crisis communication skills were developed and filmed complementing the six ‘Talk-to-me’ modules.

Conclusions. Overall, studies included in the review provide evidence to suggest that preventative programs, incorporating an educational component may be effective to be used in the MOOC to improving help-seeking behaviours among post-secondary education students. Findings from this review have
underpinned the development of the ‘Talk-to-Me’ MOOC which was launched in March 2020. To date this MOOC has enrolled over 45,000 participants from over 150 countries, with the average age of users being 24 years. Collectively, this line of work highlights that MOOCs are an effective means of mental health promotion to young adults.

Burnout and Interventions for Healthcare workers to cope during COVID-19

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Aims. Healthcare workers are exposed to both physical and mental demands in the hospital environment; recently intensified by over-stretching staff and resources during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Despite healthcare workers banding together, physician burnout is more prevalent than ever before due to emotional, physical and mental exhaustion. Firstly, this poster aims to expose the prevalence of burnout among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, to highlight the interventions and strategies to help minimise burnout among healthcare workers.

Method. I will focus on reviewing clinical trials with a particular focus on healthcare workers affected by burnout within the COVID-19 pandemic timeframe. Therefore, narrowing my search to 20 trials within the past 12 months using the following restricted search criteria: ‘burnout’, ‘covid-19’ and ‘healthcare’. Furthermore, commenting on strategies and interventions to minimise burnout by stretching my criteria to interventions trialled within the last 24 months. This is due to limited data and trial evidence for burnout strategies within the last 12 months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Result. Burnout is on the rise among healthcare workers across the globe, 47% of healthcare staff are expressing an element of burnout worldwide. With growing concerns of healthcare staff developing long term mental health implications as a result of work-related stress. At present, one third of frontline staff are experiencing depression and distress; which must be addressed. Reviewing recent trials has highlighted a number of successful strategies for approaching burnout including; app technology, talking therapy, staff support and internet-based resources. App-related technology and web resources have shown to be particularly beneficial among recent trials, with limited participation and engagement for support groups/talking therapy.

Conclusion. A significant rise in physician burnout and distress during COVID-19 has been noted in various trials. Interventions specifically related to burnout within COVID-19 are limited due to a low yield of completed trials; however, a couple of trials have found an improvement in COVID-19 related stress among healthcare workers using app-related technology. Internet based intervention is cheap, widely accessible and a non-judgemental method for seeking help, especially within a profession where burnout is heavily stigmatized.

Motivators and deterrents in choosing a career in psychiatry; making the most of psychiatry school events

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Aims. In response to the Royal College of Psychiatrists’ recruitment strategy, a bi-annual Psychiatry School event was set up in the North West of England. The Psychiatry School aims to inspire medical students and foundation doctors to choose a career in Psychiatry with two days of workshops on different sub-specialties and various aspects of the career pathway. A previous service evaluation has shown attending the event improves attitudes towards psychiatry.

The aim is to assess whether improving attitudes to psychiatry has been sustained and gain a clearer understanding of the motivators and deterrents in choosing a career in Psychiatry to better inform future events.

Method. An online questionnaire about positive and negative aspects of psychiatry was sent to attendees of the Autumn North West Psychiatry School 2020 before and after the event.

Result. The total number of completed questionnaires was 62. 53.6% people were considering applying for core psychiatry training prior to the event and this rose to 85.3% in the post event questionnaire.

Motivators for a career in psychiatry prior to the event included having a better holistic understanding of patients and wide range of sub-specialities. There was a common theme of interest in research opportunities. Dynamic patient-doctor relationship, exploring issues in depth and treating diverse populations were key motivators.

It is encouraging to note that 100% responders felt their positive views on psychiatry were validated.

The majority of deterrents were disregarded and attendees felt positive about choosing a career in psychiatry.

Conclusion. Following the event, the only negative view on a career in Psychiatry was the concern about the potential impact on one’s own mental health. This is an important issue (highlighted in the Royal College of Psychiatrists Position Statement) that deserves consideration at future events to highlight potential effects on Psychiatrists wellbeing and how these can be avoided or mitigated.

The wide variety of sub-specialities and opportunities for research were key areas that motivated attendees and we will continue to deliver engaging workshops around these themes.

Digital frontiers in international psychiatric recruitment: the lessons of the Northwest School of Psychiatry careers event November 2020

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Aims. A low level of psychiatric recruitment is a global issue[1]. The RCPsych & UK Mental Health Trusts jointly run School Events as part of a recruitment strategy. The North West has been running such events for the past years. After our first virtual event, we compare the quality, effectiveness and experience of a