

Case Study: Health and Wellbeing Outreach Programme delivered by Undergraduate Learners

The Health and Wellbeing Outreach programme for undergraduate learners was funded by Health Education England (HEE). Universities in the North West of England were tasked with developing innovative ways their health and social care undergraduate students could highlight issues around health and wellbeing in their local communities – particularly in school settings and offer an age appropriate health and wellbeing intervention.



Several North West universities took part, each developing different approaches, a brief summary is outlined below:

Health promotion in schools – engaging year 2 students with the local community (Lancaster University Medical School)

As part of their 2nd year students took part in a new module in their Community Course to help them develop health promotion and disease prevention skills. Lancaster approached nine local non-selective schools and asked if their undergraduates could deliver a PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) or Science lesson to their year 8 pupils. 16 classes were delivered by undergraduates to five schools around health promotion on topics such as “Healthy Hearts”.

All Learner’s Public Health Conference (Stockport NHS Foundation Trust)

Stockport planned a “Public Health Conference” for their pre-registration healthcare students on placement. Students could learn about public health services in the area – a market-stall type event was held, and spoke placements were offered to students. The conference has grown to become an established part of the education offer at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust over the last three years. It takes a multi-disciplinary approach and its success lies in the collaboration between the trust and the local public health team at Stockport Council.

More details from each of the organisations are attached as appendices.

The Wellness Project (Manchester Metropolitan University - MMU)

MMU held an event for 120 children aged 9-10 and 16 teachers from three primary schools in the North West. Nursing students planned and delivered a series of sessions on health and wellbeing including; On the move, Healthy Bingo, Fighting Germs, Healthy Communities and the Health Pledge. A group of undergraduate nurses helped plan the day which enabled school children to visit the university and experience a range of health and wellbeing activities in a fun interactive way.

Peer-Education: Putting our healthcare future in their hands (University of Manchester)

Student-led workshops were planned for pupils in the North West aimed at highlighting issues that influence health and wellbeing. 134 students delivered 34 workshops across 6 schools on topics such as Alcohol Awareness; Diabetes; Mental Health Awareness and Sexual Health Awareness. This approach was well evaluated, and plans are already in place to expand this work to include more undergraduate learners.

Helping you to help yourself (University of Chester)

Students were expected to co-ordinate a place based public health promotion exercise in consultation with service users and with the support of academic staff delivered as part of the PSHE curriculum. In the last week of term five workshops were delivered and pupils moved around them throughout the day looking at a different health and wellbeing topic each time. The intervention was delivered in a local secondary school experiencing high levels of deprivation.

Key Outcomes

Across the programme some of the positive outcomes reported by the HEI programme leads are:

- Increased student confidence in their skills and ability to deliver health promotion programmes with children. Undergraduates had first-hand experience of health and wellbeing issues facing young people
- Putting learning into practice – students are using their health promotion skills to support patients (Stockport example)
- Students learned about the public health offer and services in their localities and about the importance of the visibility of health professionals in the community to support population health
- Development of communication, presentation and engagement skills
- Ability to develop age appropriate resources and messages
- Improved knowledge and confidence on health improvement, factors that contribute to health inequalities and prevention
- Development of team working skills
- Time management and team working skills

- Two of the participating organisations have already committed to integrating their outreach into education curricula and are formally assessing the work as part of the core education programme

- The Stockport model is now an annual event at Stepping Hill hospital – building on successful local working partnerships between the local public health team and acute trust

- The remaining organisations are considering how they might continue to offer their undergraduates the opportunity to experience community outreach work, though requires confirmation

Key outcomes for individual organisations can be found in the appendix.

Background

Health Education England (HEE) exists for one reason only: to support the delivery of excellent healthcare and health improvement to the patients and public of England by ensuring that the workforce of today and tomorrow has the right numbers, skills, values and behaviours, at the right time and in the right place.

A small group of higher education institutions (HEI's) were approached by HEE working across the North West in order to take a proof of concept approach to health and wellbeing outreach work delivered as part of the learning experience for undergraduate healthcare learners (medical and non-medical).

All participating organisations applied for funding via the HEE North West office – education transformation directorate. During the operational phase of the project the HEIs worked individually and provided email progress updates periodically to the education transformation director.

Each HEI varied in terms of the number of learners and schools participating in the programme – for example at the University of Manchester 134 3rd year M. pharm students delivered 34 workshops across 6 schools, whilst at Manchester Metropolitan University 9 BSc nursing students planned the intervention with supervision from the faculty tutors. This provided a rich level of diversity in delivery – which was later shared at a workshop (October 2018) to a understand the pros and cons of differing approaches. The purpose of which was to share good practice, learn from others practice and develop a case study to share across the health economy as well as informing future commissioning decisions.

One of the key priorities of the Five Year Forward View (NHS, 2014) has stressed the need for a radical upgrade in prevention and health promotion in order to ensure the future health of millions of children, the sustainability of the NHS, and the economic prosperity of Britain. The recently developed framework for promoting ownership of All our Health (Public Health England, 2015) has identified the critical need to ensure that healthcare professionals are more visible in prevention and population health and measuring the impact of their work; being a force for change, contributing to building a culture of health in our society and to work with people, families and communities to equip them to make informed choices and manage their own health. Increasingly the self-care agenda will be of significant importance as a key strategy in promoting health and wellness. Our future healthcare workforce needs to be fully aware of and able to engage in promoting person-centered care, self-care management and exposure opportunities will be key in nurturing a self-care culture.

The imperative for health professionals to develop health promotion and prevention skills are now captured in the expected competencies to be achieved during pre-registration healthcare training programmes (NMC, 2010; GMC, 2018). Furthermore, it is anticipated that new pre-registration standards for nursing in development will emphasise health promotion and prevention skills further. In addition, the new Strategic workforce framework for nursing, midwifery and care staff (NHS England, 2016) has signalled a key goal whereby the development of a workforce skilled, knowledgeable, confident in their ability to support health promotion and prevention is essential.

As part of education and workforce transformation initiatives, HEE in the North West has been supporting several initiatives which seek to promote increased knowledge and understanding of health and well-being and promoting future and current workforce skills development. The development of the [North West Population Health & Prevention Network](#) provides a platform for information sharing, networking and promotion of education developments designed to increase health promotion and prevention skills capability.

HEE working across the North West is supporting other project activity designed to increase health and well-being developments and linking this to workforce capability and collaboration. For example, the [Healthy Futures project](#), which is being hosted by the University of Chester is seeking to evaluate through a collaborative network of schools and partners the process, benefits, challenges and impact of establishing, co-designing between partners and implementing a range of interventions designed to increase health and wellbeing of a targeted group(s) of pupils within schools and increasing aspiration and awareness of potential careers within the NHS and wider health sector.



In part, these developments are being supported given the recognition that health status affects education outcomes and that schools can be key places for influencing and shaping general well-being (Public Health England, 2014) and there is opportunity to stimulate cross-sectoral collaboration between health and education sectors for mutual benefits (Suhrcke M, de Paz Nieves, 2011). They are also examples of developments which will increasingly typify the type of interactions needed to ensure a more holistic approach to how health and well-being is encouraged (HEE, 2015).

There is huge interest in schools in accessing planned and credible input to support their ability to maximise their contribution to supporting the health and well-being of their pupils, and in doing so maximise their learning potential, educational attainment and progression. Schools have a clear requirement to promote pupil health and well-being, with the need to design and integrate specific health and well-being focused education opportunities as part of curriculum delivery (Ofsted, 2013). Ofsted (2013) has identified that where this is most evident there was a strong correlation in these schools being graded outstanding for overall effectiveness. Although there is evidence that schools are somewhat effective in providing health and well-being as part of a broader approach to personal, social, health and economic education, there is substantial opportunity to build upon this further, particularly involving external contributions whereby a wide range of expertise and life experiences can be provided.

Key Aims

The universities that agreed to provide a community outreach learning opportunity for their respective healthcare learners agreed to meet the following objectives:

- Healthcare education students (medical and non-medical students) at particular points in their programme can access a development opportunity to participate in the delivery of a school-based health and well-being education session
- That participation in the programme and delivery of activity is recognised as part of the student's education and practice programme outcomes
- There is identification and appreciation of the factors, planning logistics and required resources needed to establish and maximise the contribution of healthcare students in supporting delivery of health and well-being education sessions which is appreciated by participating schools, the healthcare students themselves and can be sustained as a valuable channel of support
- Evidence-based resources are developed and made available to support both the preparation of healthcare education students interested in participating in the programme and the design of teaching sessions/resources that would be delivered within schools
- Appreciate how the potential contribution gained through this mobilisation could augment developments already in place, such as any locally supported Healthy Schools programmes currently in place

Key Stages of Set-up

- Non-recurrent funding was provided to a small group of participating HEIs in order to "test" the model and provide insight into the practicalities and implementation of the work
- Funds were allocated to HEIs November 2017 - March 2018 for implementation during the 2018 academic year
- All participants agreed to follow the principles outlined in the project brief and individual meetings between the commissioner and provider were arranged at the start of the project
- A light touch approach to project monitoring was taken to allow HEIs to establish individual approaches in the form of telephone calls / email contact at points throughout the project
- A summary workshop was arranged by HEE – arranged between the education transformation team and population health lead at HEE in the North West office
- Outputs from the workshop include a summary of work from each of the participating universities, a more detailed case study and ongoing support from the pilot project leads to inform a business case to expand across the North of England HEIs / FEs

Resources

All four participating HEIs (excluding Stockport as this was a different but related approach to the health and wellbeing role of the future healthcare workforce) received a small one off cash allocation to develop, implement and evaluate a school-based outreach programme led by undergraduates.

HEE in the North West has recently developed a [mapping tool](#) to help education providers assess the level of public health content and skills development as part of the delivery of their healthcare education pre-registrations programmes. Although the framework is in pilot mode early indications are that there is further significant opportunity to increase exposure to and development of public health knowledge and skills if the goal of a future workforce focused on health prevention is to be developed. It is anticipated that the tool, which was produced by HEE in the North West, will be made available at national level and its use encouraged.

Key Challenges

- HEE undertook to bring the participating universities together to share their experiences in a workshop session and to produce a case study and service specification for expansion of the programme
- All the universities took slightly different approaches regarding the process and application of the project – which has helped to define and structure a service specification for expanding the work across all HEIs across the North – should they be willing to participate
- All of the participating universities prepared their learners prior to going into schools or welcoming school children to the university
- Faculty staff were present and supportive during the lesson / workshop sessions
- Managing expectations of schools was a challenge for some of HEIs concerned – the lessons and workshops were aimed at raising awareness and allowing school children to consider how they might engage in health-related activities. There was no expectation that the HEIs would provide any ongoing or individual support to school children
- Psychological safety and safeguarding were a key priority for all participating universities – all learners worked within Caldicott guidelines and all lessons and workshops were delivered with school staff present
- All children had the opportunity to opt out of the sessions and discuss concerns with school staff in a safe environment

Key Learning

- Provided an opportunity for undergraduates to act as ambassadors for the university they represented and their chosen career pathway – thereby promoting NHS career choices and aspirations
- A valued way to support health and wellbeing in school settings that tapped into local support networks that has the potential to be expanded and sustained for future practice
- Introduces the concept and practice of preventive practice early on in an individual's career pathway
- Helped undergraduates to consider themselves as health educators of the future – provided insight and greater understanding of that function and role
- Provided undergraduate and postgraduate learners the opportunity to deliver structured and planned health and wellbeing lessons and workshops in school settings, was a valued experience as part of their education programme
- Provided a valued opportunity for schools and universities to collaborate for mutual benefits for their respective students
- A useful and practical approach towards preventive healthcare practice for our future healthcare workforce
- Raises the profile of self-care and positive lifestyle choices for young people

Sustainability

There are plans in place to expand the work across the North of England and offer a non-recurrent financial resource to establish outreach work that is integrated into undergraduate healthcare curricula.

A requirement of each of the participating HEIs will be to outline how this approach is integrated into the education programme offered and a commitment to sustain this approach for future cohorts of learners.

This is a multi-disciplinary opportunity to reflect the value that HEE places on all healthcare workers to integrate health improvement and prevention into their everyday practice with the public, colleagues and themselves.

Supporting Material

Appendix 1 – Health promotion in schools – engaging year 2 students with the local community (Lancaster University Medical School)

Appendix 2 - All Learner's Public Health Conference (Stockport NHS Foundation Trust)

Appendix 3 - The Wellness Project (Manchester Metropolitan University - MMU)

Appendix 4 - Peer-Education: Putting our healthcare future in their hands (University of Manchester)

Appendix 5 - Helping you to help yourself (University of Chester)

Relevant Websites

North West Population Health & Prevention Network
<https://www.nwcpwd.nhs.uk/nwphpn/nwphpn-home>

Healthy Futures project
<https://www.chester.ac.uk/node/40453>

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Published November 2018

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