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The Effectiveness of Peer-Led Teaching for Medical Students

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Background

In recent years, peer-led teaching has come to the forefront of medical education demonstrating advantages for both medical students and peer-tutors. Moreover, the General Medical Council has highlighted the importance of teaching colleagues to meet the standards proposed in 'Tomorrow's Doctors'. This innovation in medical education has been reflected by a vast increase in the number of peer-led teaching societies at medical schools. However, the effectiveness of peer-led tutoring has been contested.

Aim

Our study aims to explore the perspectives of third-year medical students and student tutors to evaluate the effectiveness of peer-tutoring programs. We also aim to identify potential obstacles peer-tutors may encounter within this process.

Methods

In 2019, 120 third-year medical students were invited to attend an extra-curricular session delivered by two fourth-year students from a London University. The session focused on developing clinical reasoning skills. All content was approved by a senior member of

academic staff. Students and peer-tutors were invited to complete questionnaires following the session to evaluate their teaching and learning experience.

Results

In total, 102 students attended the session delivered by two peer tutors. Questionnaire responses were received from 95 students and both student-teachers. Of these students, 99% reported they would attend another session. Around 98% agreed the session benefited their learning. Both student-teachers stated they feel more confident and competent in clinical reasoning. However, they reported that preparing this session was time consuming.

Conclusions

Our results suggest that peer-led teaching complements medical school curricula and provides benefits to both students and student-teachers. However, the process revealed several obstacles. These include the limited clinical experience of peer-tutors and time spent preparing sessions. Despite this, we propose that peer-led teaching is an innovative concept allowing students a platform to exchange clinical knowledge.