Pharmacists Are from Mars, Nurses are from Venus: Nurse visits in the MPharm curriculum

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Background: Experiential learning and team working skills are encouraged by the General Pharmaceutical Council and pharmacy students have reported value and enjoyment from the various placements organised for them. A local Practice Education Facilitator offered, unsolicited, the opportunity to send Level 6 students on day visits with tutor District Nurses.

Visits were integrated into the curriculum with one aim being to improve Interprofessional working.

Aim of research: To investigate student perceived value and issues associated with Level 6 Nurse Visits

Description of work: Students helped develop learning outcomes and a workbook for the visits by brainstorming ideas when visits were proposed and discussing development not provided elsewhere on course. These were piloted in a small cohort of student in 2014. The workbook and process were developed further and used for a full cohort in 2014-15.

Students were briefed about the visits and asked to self-select suitable dates using Doodle® polls. Participants were allocated locations with nurse tutors. Feedback on the activity was gathered using tests via Blackboard® and was used to improve the sessions for the 2015-16 cohort.

Initial analysis indicated a wide variation in the perceived value of the visits with several students feeling associated tasks and discussions were not relevant to pharmacy undergraduates. Some students were surprised by the reality of some of the patient situations. Several students found the visits immensely valuable for improving their patient communication skills and developing approaches to work with other professionals.

Additional locations were included for 2015-16 and changes made to the briefing session with emphasis on the learning outcomes around patient experience, clinical decision making and Interprofessional collaboration. Feedback is being collected for these visits.

Proposed evaluation: Feedback responses to the 2015-16 visits will be analysed quantitatively to determine how comfortable students feel on placements, how appropriate they think the visits are and whether they would recommend the visits to other peers.

Free text responses about the visits will be analysed for emerging themes with the aim to improve the experience for the 2016-17 cohort.