The NICE Student Champion scheme – inspiring and developing medical students as future leaders in healthcare improvement


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Background

In 2011, the national NICE Student Champion scheme was introduced at Swansea medical school. The NICE website provides high quality information for health and social care professionals to enable evidence-based decision making, thus improving patient care and health outcomes. However, the site is not widely promoted in many medical schools and its use varies amongst clinicians.

Aims

To develop student leaders who would ‘champion’ NICE and the new NICE Evidence Search website. To raise awareness of the resources among medical student peers and to teach them to use this extensive resource effectively.

Methods

Six medical students (3 from each of the first and second years of the Programme) volunteered to act as champions. Following formal training at NICE “HQ”, they designed and delivered teaching sessions to their peers. Effectiveness of the teaching was measured by three surveys, taken by participants immediately before and after the teaching sessions, and following a three month reflective period.

‘I didn’t realise how useful NHS Evidence Search and NICE pathways could be to my everyday learning’

Results

92% (127) of Swansea students attended the sessions. The first anonymous online survey indicates encouraging early results with 90% of attendees finding the sessions to be useful/very useful. 96% said they would use the website to help inform their future studies and clinical practice.

Conclusions

The teaching was well received and enjoyed by the participants with the vast majority claiming they would use NICE Evidence Search to influence their future practice. In line with Tomorrow’s Doctors the NICE Student Champion scheme will help future doctors practice more safely and effectively. Through collaboration, training and reflection, these student leaders demonstrate that large changes can be made using near-peer teaching to improve the quality of healthcare.

References
1. NICE Evidence Search www.evidence.nhs.uk (accessed 07/10/12).