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Biography

Ianna is a Specialised Foundation Doctor, with a BSc in Clinical Bioscience, training in London. In final year of medical school, she was awarded the Healthcare Leadership Academy Scholarship. Through this, Ianna designed and delivered "Bridging the Gap" - a peer-led teaching initiative to support students transitioning into clinical training.

Bridging The Gap: Evaluating The Effects Of Near Peer Teaching On Students' Confidence

Abstract:

The transition from pre-clinical education to first clinical placement is a vulnerable period for medical students and may contribute to stress and reduced confidence, particularly in paediatrics where communication with children and families requires additional skill and sensitivity. Baseline data demonstrated that 59.9% of students rated their confidence for clinical placement between 1–3 on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = least confident). Additionally, 53.5% rated university preparation between 1–3, highlighting a perceived gap in readiness. To address this, a structured four-session near-peer communication skills programme was developed focusing on respiratory, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and neurological history-taking. Sessions incorporated structured frameworks, common paediatric differentials, appropriate investigations, and case presentation guidance. Senior medical students facilitated interactive role-play scenarios to create a psychologically safe learning environment. Post-intervention results demonstrated marked improvement: 100% of participants rated their confidence above 4, with 56.5% rating 6–7. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test confirmed a statistically significant increase in confidence scores ($W = 0$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, 78.2% reported that senior medical student teaching improved their confidence for placement (rating 6–7) compared with university preparation. Qualitative feedback described a "warm, engaging environment" where students "felt comfortable to participate," and teaching was perceived as "focused" and "well-explained in easy-to-understand language." This sustainable, low-cost intervention demonstrates that near-peer communication skills teaching can significantly enhance student confidence before first clinical placements, translating into more prepared and confident future paediatricians.