

Movement for Movement: a practical insight into embedding physical activity into the undergraduate medical curriculum exemplified by Lancaster Medical School

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Background

Getting people active and staying active is a major implementation challenge[1]. Despite international and national strategic intent; most countries fall woefully short on delivery[2]. The objectives of the 2018 WHO Global Action Plan for Physical Activity (GAPPA) clearly require improved education and communication to patients, communities and society on the benefits of physical activity (PA).

The Movement For Movement “community of practice” (CoP) was specifically created to deliver this complex, interrelated, system change[3].

What is The Movement For Movement?

Movement For Movement[3] embeds PA into the undergraduate healthcare curriculum[4, 5] and provides current, clinically valuable, evidence-based resources developed by: curators, authors, peer reviewers, student reviewers, and endorsed by the UK Council of Deans of Health. These resources are free to providers of undergraduate medical and healthcare education to support capacity building in the healthcare workforce. An implementation plan in a sample of English medical schools (funded by Public Health England/Sport England in 2017/18) is complete[6].

This work is recognised as a UK best practice exemplar by the 2018 WHO Europe Physical Activity Fact Sheets[7] and the 2018 WHO Europe Physical Activity in the Health Sector report[8]. There is also considerable ongoing collaboration to deliver further strategic support and leadership focussing on the valuable “social capital” that health care professionals provide across all the GAPPA objectives and specifically the social determinants of health.

Lancaster University Medical School’s novel approach to embedding PA in the curricula

Lancaster Medical School pioneered the full implementation of the Movement for Movement resources and is empowering future doctors with the knowledge and skills to positively impact individual and population health. Each student can and should make every contact count and make every influence matter across their future career. This amounts to half a million opportunities to improve physical activity, per doctor, per medical school.

Sharing good practice – a practical guide from Lancaster

The first step to embedding PA into an undergraduate curriculum is to **access the Movement for Movement resources (sent to all UK medical schools each year)**. These are fully integrated into the existing virtual learning environment/s for staff and students. **Engaging the Dean and curricula leads** supports successful implementation. **With students** - provide the generic resources in year 1 and specific resources in years 2/3 to enhance learning on noncommunicable diseases (NCD). **Assess and examine PA knowledge and communication skill** competencies, capabilities and confidence.

The provision of resources does not necessarily lead to engagement; instead students need to be directed to them by **including specific PA-related learning outcomes** and communication assessments. Practical insights recommend that links and references to the resources are embedded within lectures and workshops, or better still include one dedicated PA lecture per NCD or societally challenging issue (Supplementary file). As an example, modules at Lancaster Medical School adopt problem-based learning (PBL) scenarios, each focusing on a major NCD or age-related condition, whilst addressing associated co-morbidities and psycho-social challenges.

Lessons learnt at Lancaster Medical School

Leadership and action were fundamental to successful implementation. Lancaster were strongly commended in the commission report[6] for embedding the resources at all levels of the curriculum and achieving all framework criteria.

Lessons learnt across the English sample of Medical Schools

12 out of a sample of 16 medical schools have provided evidence that there is now access to resources and teaching on PA. Knowledge transfer, assessment and examination of key clinical skills regarding brief intervention on PA and the wider public health determinants are also being explored by each University (and collectively by the UK Medical Schools Assessment Alliance). The lesson is that direct contact with each curricula team and skilled implementation support, works.

Future for the Movement for Movement

Empowering medical schools, schools of health, and students to access and engage with the resources is an ongoing priority. With many English medical schools now teaching, assessing and examining on PA in the curriculum: the future is indeed bright. We thank the Lancaster University Medical School for their example and all the other English medical schools and UK schools of health for their leadership and work.

There is increasing access to the resources world-wide for example in the USA, Canada, Australia and low and middle-income continents such as Africa and South America through a variety of online educational tools and student courses.

Undergraduate medical and health education on making every contact count and every influence matter for PA is happening in England[7, 8]. 120,000 healthcare students across the UK: competent, capable and confident of delivering physical activity influence is our goal.

But the future for embedding PA in the curriculum is very bright: and going global!

For access to the Movement for Movement resources, contact Ann Gates.

Supplementary file Infographic

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Programme Card

Country	An England wide educational initiative targeting medical schools and UK schools of health
Target population	Undergraduate students on medicine and healthcare degree programmes
PA promotion	The Movement for Movement (M4M) curriculum promotes physical activity (PA) through medical education, with specific guidance provided for various noncommunicable diseases
Investments for PA	Encourages communication and public education (investment 1), healthcare and health education (investment 4), and education (investment 5)
Sectors	Available to Universities and undergraduate students in UK medical and healthcare education
Estimated programme reach	M4M resources have been offered to all UK Medical Schools and Schools of Health with a reach of 120,000 students. This set of presentations and associated resources are planned for dissemination into Europe with future ambition to reach a global audience.
What is special about the program?	Embedding PA in the undergraduate healthcare curriculum is an important step to building capacity in the future workforce to promote PA, with every contact. This is the first development of PA for health resources that can be implemented into UK undergraduate medical and health programmes.
Key contact	Michelle Swainson m.swainson1@lancaster.ac.uk Ann Gates annbgates@googlemail.com for access to the resources
Programme website/twitter/facebook	Council of Deans https://councilofdeans.org.uk/2017/11/updated-resources-launched-to-support-teaching-of-physical-activity-for-undergraduate-health-care-students/ Blog editorials https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/50/6/322 https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/49/4/207 https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/early/2018/06/26/bjsports-2018-099587

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ACTIVITY INTO
UNDERGRADUATE
MEDICAL PROGRAMMES**

**Top
TIPS**

Sharing Good Practice

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Medical School



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in" from
students**

Share facts and figures
about inactivity

DON'T MAKE WORK FOR YOURSELF

Use the resources

Assess their
knowledge

"Include
specific
physical activity
learning
outcomes to
enhance
engagement
with resources"

Offer physical
activity topics
for student
literature
reviews

Include one
physical activity
lecture for each
relevant medical
condition being
taught e.g. obesity,
osteoporosis,
diabetes



"At Lancaster ... the inclusion of physical activity into our curriculum was deemed highly important and valuable to ensure we are generating excellent future doctors who can appropriately deal with the challenges of modern medicine"

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DID YOU KNOW?

All the M4M resources are **free and available** to education providers and have been written by clinical and academic experts, and also reviewed by students



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