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228: Interventions to enhance the teaching status of parasitology

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Poster Talk 6 (Tue 27 Nov 17:00 - 18:00), Exhibition Hall, November 27, 2018, 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Recent surveys have highlighted an erosion of the teaching of parasitology in medical/veterinary schools across Europe and other developed countries, despite reports of increasing instances of food and water borne parasitic infections in these regions. To facilitate the teaching of this subject, essential to develop future health care professionals, we are performing different interventions at De Montfort University (DMU, UK). Briefly, these include: a) curriculum modifications to increase the time dedicated to the study of parasitology; and b) implementation of web-based resources in the curricula for enhancing teaching (e.g. through introduction of blended learning) and to encourage self-learning and participation among the students. Thus, DMU is leading the development of an on-line package for teaching and learning parasitology named DMU e-Parasitology in collaboration with different European academics and clinicians. This package has four sections: a theoretical section with mini e-learning modules to study major human parasitic diseases; virtual laboratory describing major techniques used in parasitology; a microscopy section with resources to enhance the study of parasites; a section with virtual clinical case studies to encourage self-learning. To assess the effectiveness of DMU e-Parasitology as a learning resource, we have done preliminary testing with final year BSc Biomedical Science students at DMU (n=194; 2017/18). 94.5% of students highlighted they gained appropriate knowledge of the pathology, prevention and treatment of some parasitic diseases; 93.1% indicated that they learnt basic skills to investigate parasitic disease. The interventions/resources described could be used to improve the teaching status of parasitology in human health degrees.