

Developing Compassionate Leadership and Quality Improvement skills for healthcare students

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Introduction

An innovative approach to the development of compassionate leadership and quality improvement skills for healthcare students has been designed and implemented at Cardiff University. The initiative builds on the drive for culture change within healthcare in the UK, alongside policy and evidence which commit to developing compassionate and collective leadership within the healthcare workforce (West 2020). A spiral curriculum, developed in collaboration with stakeholders (from services and PPI) will closely align compassionate leadership with quality improvement, supported by commissioners of health and social care education.

Aims

The philosophy of this development is an extension of the idea that both leadership and quality improvement should be possible and valued regardless of an individuals' hierarchical status or position, in this case healthcare students. Key principles were developed based on the evidence that experiences of leadership have an emotional impact, influencing how leadership is viewed in self, and in others (James 2021, James et al 2022) and that Compassionate Leadership can improve wellbeing (West 2021). To make learning experience meaningful and emergent, reflection is encouraged to intellectualise and create learning with conceptualisation and analysis of cultural and social conditions to nurture meaningful learning (Clouston 2018, 2017). Project milestones are presented in table 1.

The aims are:

- To support the development of compassionate and quality focused professionals
- To encourage students to lead and influence cultural change within healthcare in Wales
- To support staff wellbeing and improve patient outcomes

Project development steps

- Task and finish group of curricular development to embed Compassionate Leadership and Quality Improvement in the curricular
- Set up an ongoing collaborative engagement group with healthcare partners, service users, commissioners, students, academics and professionals.
- Development and pilot of an Interprofessional Student Learning Academy (ISLA) for level 6 and 7 students
- Development of a website resource (www.caringpractitioner.co.uk)
- Development of an interprofessional learning package for students
- Implementation of a bespoke leadership development programme based on the principles of Compassionate Leadership: **Attending, Helping, Understanding, Empathising** (West 2021).
- Supportive reflection and conceptualisation for ISLA students through Action Learning Sets and individual Coaching sessions
- Evaluation of ISLA using Kirkpatrick's model (1994)
- Encourage an alumni of ISLA students to support students in practice and sustain and embed the programme .

Principles of leadership development



Table 1. Project Milestones	Stage	Timescales
Embed compassionate leadership and quality improvement across healthcare curricular	completed	June 21-Jan 22
Form a collaborative engagement group with stakeholders	Ongoing	Sept '22-ongoing
Develop materials and resources for academics and students. Develop website materials.	Completed	June 22-Sept '22
Recruit student participants for ISLA pilot	To be commenced	By April '23
Pilot ISLA programme Evaluation of pilot	To be commenced	September-Dec '23

Conclusions

- By developing an innovative approach to leadership and QI for healthcare students, we aim to support positive culture change.
- Implementing a Leadership Academy will inspire and embed future leaders throughout healthcare organisations, driving for improvements in patient care.
- Challenges include changing curricular design and ensuring Compassionate Leadership and QI is imbedded across Undergraduate healthcare programmes.
- Evaluation of the ISLA programme will support its development and sustain the aims of developing a compassionate workforce, leading healthcare in Wales.

References

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