CHEMISTRY IN YOUR KITCHEN: AT HOME CHEMISTRY PRACTICALS FOR FIRST YEAR HEALTH SCIENCE STUDENTS

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COVID-19 has permanently changed teaching and learning in higher education. There is an increased need for flexibility in learning activities for students. One innovation that provides flexibility for students is the use of take-home laboratory practicals. Take-home practicals provide a remote learning opportunity in a space where hands-on learning may not normally be possible. There are several examples of one-off take-home practicals (Andrews et al., 2020; Caruana et al., 2020; Orzolek & Kozlowski, 2021; Parel et al., 2021; Santiago et al., 2022) as well as semester-long integration of take-home practicals (Funnell et al., 2022; Burns et al., 2021). Our intervention is one of the first reported large-scale, semester-long trials of take-home practicals aligned with the curriculum. In semester 1 2022, we designed and delivered co-curricular take-home kits for 170 first-year chemistry students. Each kit included everything needed to conduct five experiments, adapted from the five assessed experiments conducted face-to-face in the unit. The kits were supplemented with self-led practical instructions and optional synchronous zoom sessions with support staff to conduct the experiments together. In this presentation, we will discuss student engagement and learning outcomes from this large-scale pilot as well as recommendations for future co-curricular kit development.

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