

The Impact of a Well-structured Family Medicine Placement Programme on Hong Kong's Medical Student's Skills, Understanding of Primary Care and their Career Aspiration

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Introduction

The Hong Kong's Primary Healthcare Blueprint aims to provide accessible and comprehensive healthcare, increasing the demand for well-trained family physicians. The Hospital Authority is the primary site for Family Medicine (FM) training, with medical students from the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong participating in a one-week placement programme. This includes supervised consultations and exposure to nursing and allied-health clinics. This study evaluates whether the programme enhances students' skills, their understanding of primary care, and aspirations to pursue FM as their career.



Methods

From January to November 2024, 49 medical students completed a 5-point scale six questions identical pre- and post-programme surveys. The survey assessed consultation skills, understanding of nursing and allied-health roles, inter-professional collaboration, comfort in managing mood disorders, patient-centred care, and their interest in FM as a career. Pre- and post-programme scores were compared to identify significant differences.



Results

The survey results demonstrated significant improvements in all areas ($p < 0.001$). Consultation skills improved from 3.39 to 4.12, understanding of allied-health roles from 3.37 to 4.35, and inter-professional collaboration from 3.31 to 4.29. Comfort in managing mood problems increased from 3.20 to 3.92, and understanding of patient-centred care rose from 3.69 to 4.41. Consideration of FM as a career increased from 3.08 to 3.50. (Figure 1)



Conclusions

The study highlights the value of a well-structured FM placement programme in improving medical students' skills, understanding of primary care, and encouraging career aspirations in FM. These findings underscore the importance of such programmes in addressing the growing need for family physicians in Hong Kong.

Figure 1

