

## The Use Of Coaching as a Novel Tool in Medical Education to Support Psychiatry Trainees in Developing Leadership Skills

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**Aims.** In recent years, there has been an increasing recognition of the importance of leadership skills to doctors. However, these skills are not usually formally taught or assessed. This study aims to evaluate the impact of using coaching as a novel technique to support Psychiatry trainees in developing leadership skills.

**Methods.** This poster summarises a primary research study which evaluated an educational intervention using a mixed-method approach.

All Higher Psychiatry Trainees at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trusts were given an opportunity to enrol on the *Coaching for Consultant Psychiatrist Leadership Pilot Programme*. Those who enrolled (coachees) were offered five 90-minute one-to-one sessions with Psychiatry consultants (coaches) who received training in *Coaching for Leadership*. Coachees completed a self-assessment questionnaire examining their views on their own leadership skills before and after completing the programme. Questions used were adopted from the High-Performance People Skills questionnaire (HPPS) – a tool used to collect 360° feedback as part of leadership training. Coachees and coaches also attended separate focus groups to discuss their subjective experiences of receiving and providing coaching. Thematic analysis was carried out.

**Results.** Eight coaches and seven coachees participated in the study. Most HPPS self-assessment scores post-intervention have increased after completion of the course. Overall coachees' satisfaction with their leadership skills increased from 3.4/5.0 to 4.0/5.0 after completing the programme.

Focus groups yielded rich qualitative data. The themes identified were: a broad range of reasons for Trainees and Consultants to join the programme, positive impact on coaches' coaching skills, positive impact on coachees' leadership skills and ideas on how to improve the programme to inform future curriculum design or improve implementation of any educational interventions.

**Conclusion.** Psychiatry Trainees' self-perception of leadership skills can improve after receiving coaching. They find coaching helpful due to its individualised nature and the fact that it promotes the application of skills in real-life settings. Coaches also benefit by gaining new skills in coaching and leadership. Coachees and coaches share similar motivations for joining, including the desire to learn new skills, support others and be supported. More research is needed to evaluate the practical aspects of delivering coaching for leadership programmes as part of speciality training, but its potential is promising.

Abstracts were reviewed by the RCPsych Academic Faculty rather than by the standard *BJPsych Open* peer review process and should not be quoted as peer-reviewed by *BJPsych Open* in any subsequent publication.

## Communication in Education – Improving Student Engagement With Mental Health Online Learning

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**Aims.** Our mental health placement has a longitudinal design and students spend one day per week in psychiatry throughout their academic year, attending clinical placement and academic days on alternate weeks. Academic days include a small group tutorial, Balint group and self-directed learning, during which students are expected to complete a 'virtual patient' (VP) e-learning module. VPs align with the topic of their small group tutorial and are intended to facilitate their learning. Despite this, only a minority of students complete them. Our aim is to investigate and iteratively design interventions to improve uptake of learning.

**Methods.** Using an iterative process, we explored potential reasons for low student uptake by reviewing routine feedback from faculty and students; most tutors and students were unaware of the e-learning. We hypothesised that increased faculty awareness and promotion of VP could lead to an increase in student access numbers. The intervention was therefore of improved communication amongst faculty by fortnightly newsletter emails which include the topic of the academic day, explanation around what is expected of students with the website link to the VP, and other useful resources tutors may wish to use. Emails are sent by medical education administrators in the week before the academic day to all tutors. Access logs for the previous (2022–2023) and current (2023–2024) academic year were obtained so comparison could be made pre- and post-intervention.

**Results.** Results are available for 4 modules; thus far we are yet to see significant differences in engagement. There was a technical glitch for one module and for the other modules the difference in student access has been minimal (<5%). We also have qualitative feedback from 5/28 tutors. One was confused and thought they were being asked to do additional work, one requested for information about the VP without realising it was included in the newsletter email, and three said they found it helpful.

**Conclusion.** Fortnightly email newsletters is a simple and cost-effective way to possibly improve communication within faculty. It is likely difficult to promote student engagement with activities that their tutor is unaware of or perceives as invaluable. However there remain real challenges of using email as a communication tool for busy clinicians and is unlikely to make a difference as a stand-alone intervention. For future development we plan to include medical students and clinical supervisors as recipients in the mailing-list and spend time on a faculty development day to further explore this issue.

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## Assessing the Impact of the 2024 National Student Psychiatry Conference on Medical Student Career Aspirations and Subspecialty Interest

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