5 A Day Keeps The Stress At Bay: Using A ‘5 A Day’ Initiative To Increase Confidence, Satisfaction And Learning Outcomes of Undergraduate Medical Students in Paediatrics

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Background

• Short Paediatric Exposure in undergraduate curriculum
• Paediatrics less familiar to medical students and can be daunting
• In current climate there is a need to maximise recruitment to paediatrics hence maximising experience and enjoyment at undergraduate level essential

Aims & Measures

• Improve medical student learning, confidence & engagement in paediatrics by encouraging clinical encounters
• Encourage all medical students to have at least 5 clinical encounters every day
• Overall aim to make better doctors and promote paediatrics as a specialty

Clinical Encounters:
• History taking
• Examination
• Communicating with parents or patient (eg. explanation asthma wean plan)
• Prescribing (with doctor)
• Handing over a patient or presenting patient on ward round

Measures:
• Pre and post confidence levels and experience questionnaires by Medical students
• Overall assessment by Junior doctors and consultants
• Informal discussion of encounters with doctors at handover or end of shifts
• The medical students made notes of their experiences and were prepared to discuss with clinical staff each day but these were not formally recorded.

Results

• 30 students included in initiative
• Average number of daily interactions 3.42 (compared to 1.89 in pilot study without intervention)
• Students in initiative self-reported increased levels of confidence, communication with children and families, prescribing skill, and confidence in taking histories and examining children

Conclusions

• The ‘Five a day’ initiative is simple and can be implemented without increasing workload
• The ‘five a day’ initiative motivates and actively engages medical students in paediatrics and increases self-reported outcomes from their rotation
• The ‘five a day’ initiative also encourages better working relationships between medical students and medical staff
• Needs using with all 5th year medical students in paediatrics