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Background

As medical student numbers rise, clinicians are under pressure to provide high quality teaching. To increase geriatric medicine representation within the undergraduate curriculum, fourth-year students from the University of Glasgow attending Glasgow Royal Infirmary (GRI) are given the opportunity to participate in an ‘Older People’s Services Float (OPS) week’.

Clinical Teaching Fellows (CTFs) and Clinical Development Fellows (CDFs) support students to undertake a condensed version of **Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA)**. Students assess patients from the perspective of Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) members. The ‘CGA’ is then presented in a simulated ‘MDT meeting’. This promotes self-directed learning and teamwork while alleviating pressure on clinical teams to deliver teaching.

Aims

Increase student exposure to geriatric medicine

Develop student 'understanding of the different roles involved within an MDT

Introduce students to the process of a CGA

Minimise pressure on clinical departments

METHODS

The ‘OPS Float week’ was integrated into the medical student timetable, over 15 weeks. Anonymised qualitative feedback was collected using a questionnaire. This included a combination of Likert scales and free text boxes.

Layout of the OPS Float Week

Tutors meets with students - explains tasks and provides CGA worksheet

Students identify a patient on a DME ward

Students review patient from different MDT perspectives: Medical, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy or Pharmacy

Students present CGA at a simulated ‘MDT meeting’

Tutor encourages group discussion and provides feedback

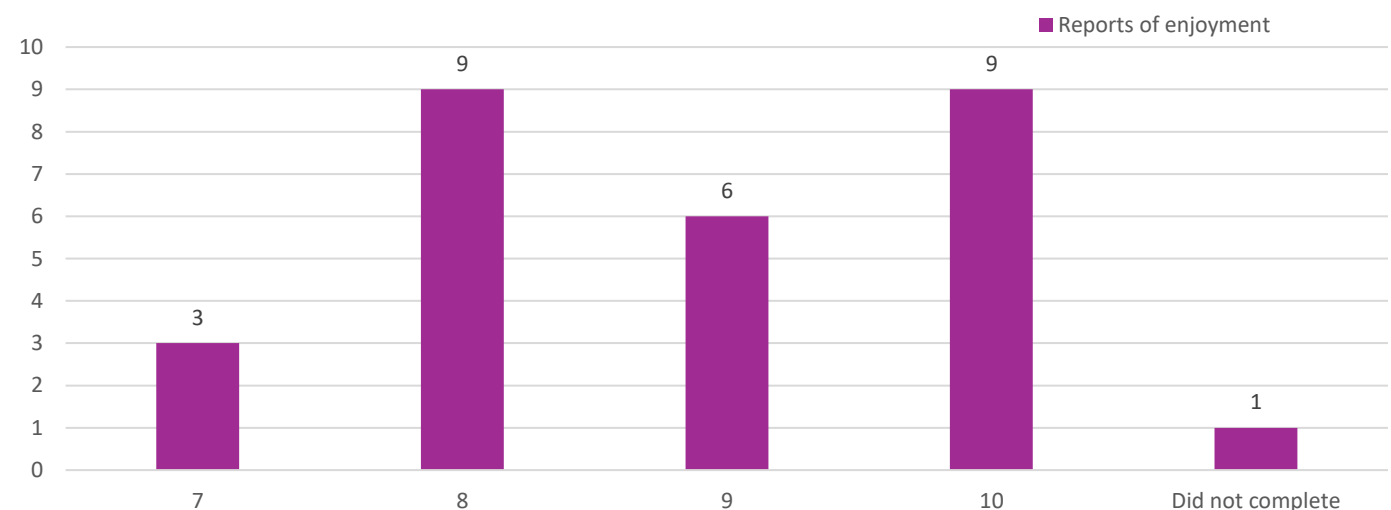
Results

Number of students = 28

75% of students reported that they ‘**strongly agree**’ the exercise improved their knowledge of how to undertake a CGA.

82% reported that they ‘**strongly agree**’ the exercise has improved their understanding of the different roles within the MDT.

Enjoyment of exercise using numerical scale 1-10



Student feedback

‘Really good week and good to raise awareness of MDT in the care of a patient’

“I think it would be useful to get teaching on how TEPs and DNACPR etc are put in place so we’re familiar with them for the week”

‘Provided with all the info you need so what you get out is what the student puts in’

‘Really enjoyed – I felt I learned more about MDT role of PT/OT, frailty score, and where to find polypharmacy guidelines for elderly’

‘Great week, beneficial exercise’

‘Really good ...made me think more holistically about the patient and identify areas in a patient’s life that could make a real difference to their care’

‘a teaching session on geriatrics content would be useful during the week’

Limitations

Sample size – small number of students

Potential response bias – feedback survey completed at end of task

Outcome measure – Did not assess student’s prior knowledge. Results based on student’s self-assessment.

This exercise also does not reflect all members of the multidisciplinary team, and it represents a condensed version of comprehensive geriatric assessment.

Discussion

We have had encouraging feedback from the CGA exercise. Students enjoy the ‘OPS Float week’ and believe it enhances their learning experience by offering valuable insights into the CGA process and working within an MDT.

This exercise promotes learning through clinical experience, active participation and collaboration with peers. It also requires minimal direct clinician contact thus alleviating pressure within hospital departments while promoting self directed learning.

The model presents a practical approach to addressing the challenges of increasing student numbers while continuing to provide high quality medical education.

1) How many Medical Students are there in Scotland? - Scotland Deanery [Internet]. Nhs.scot. 2023 [cited 2025 Jan 6]. Available from: <https://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/medical-act/allocation-of-medical-act-funds/how-many-medical-students-are-there-in-scotland/> 2) Macdonald J. A survey of staff attitudes to increasing medical undergraduate education in a district general hospital. Medical Education. 2005 Jul;39(7):688–95. 3) Barrett J, Scott K. Pedagogical and professional compromises by medical teachers in hospitals. The Clinical Teacher. 2014 Jul 14;11(5):340–4. 4) British Geriatrics Society. 1. CGA in Primary Care Settings: Introduction [Internet]. British Geriatrics Society. 2019. Available from: <https://www.bgs.org.uk/cgatoolkit> 5) Stuck AE, Illife S. Comprehensive geriatric assessment for older adults. BMJ. 2011 Oct 27;343(Oct 27 1):d6799–9. 6) Perera D, Jones A. 31 Understanding of Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment Among Fifth Year Medical Students. Age and Ageing. 2020 Feb;49(Supplement_1):i1–8. 7) Gordon AL, Blundell A, Dhesi JK, Forrester-Paton C, Forrester-Paton J, Mitchell HK, et al. UK medical teaching about ageing is improving but there is still work to be done: the Second National Survey of Undergraduate Teaching in Ageing and Geriatric Medicine. Age and Ageing. 2013 Dec 29;43(2):293–7. 8) CHAROKAR K, DULLOO P. Self-directed Learning Theory to Practice: A Footstep towards the Path of being a Life-long Learner. Journal of Advances in Medical Education & Professionalism [Internet]. 2022 Jul 1;10(3). Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9309162/>