

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) SCIENTIFIC REPORT

This report is submitted for approval by the STSM applicant to the STSM coordinator

Action number: CA17117 - Towards an International Network for Evidence-based Research in Clinical Health Research

STSM title: The importance of Evidence-based Research for students of Bachelor's degree in Health Professions

STSM start and end date: 08/12/2019 to 22/12/2019

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PURPOSE OF THE STSM:

The Short Scientific Term Mission was carried out at the University of East Anglia, Faculty of Health Sciences under the supervision of prof. Sally Hardy, Faculty dean. The purpose of the Short Scientific Term Mission was to: 1) define the contexts in which Evidence Based Medicine is taught (Degree Courses, Teachings, Laboratories, Exercises session, etc.); 2) explore the current methods adopted in teaching Evidence Based Medicine in the Health Professions Degree Courses; 3) verify the main criticalities associated with teaching Evidence Based Medicine; 4) define possible new ways for the transfer of knowledge associated with Evidence based Medicine.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE STSMS

The information about the use of EBM in university teaching setting was collected through semi-structured interviews (about 1 hour) with teaching staff and researchers from the University of East Anglia who agreed to participate in this project:

- Nicky Hadlett (Course Director-DipHE/BSc Midwifery, School of Health Sciences);
- Elisabeth Blowers (Associate Professor, School of Health Sciences);
- Kenda Crozier (Professor of Midwifery, School of Health Sciences);
- Jackie Buck (Lecturer in Adult Nursing, School of Health Sciences and Research Group Member, Health Promotion);
- Paul Linsley (Senior Lecturer in Nursing Sciences, School of Health Sciences);
- Sheri Oduola (Lecturer in Nursing Sciences, School of Health Sciences and Research Group Member, Health Promotion);
- Lawrence Hill (Associate Professor in Paramedic Science, School of Health Sciences and Professional Doctorate, School of Health Sciences).

During STSM I also attended a seminar entitled "Implementing digital interventions: my 13 year journey" (Tuesday 10 December 12 – 1pm; Zarnie Khadjesari, Senior Lecturer in Health Promotion, School of Health Sciences). Furthermore, as indicated by Malgorzata Bala – team leader of the activity group WG2-A5 "Delphi study related to Training Schools", I provided the complete transcription of the audio recording of the focus group played in Tartu and of which I had been conductor. Finally, I had the opportunity to have three supervisions with the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Sally Hardy, during which we had the opportunity to check the progress of the STSM, define and create new research actions in the context of using EBM in university education setting.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

The semi-structured interviews allowed to study how the principles of EBM are transmitted to the students of the three-year degree courses:

- frontal teaching on the main theoretical knowledge of EBM (history and definition);
- teaching in small groups to discuss how to use EBM in the application of clinical techniques (how to use a guideline in a clinical context);
- discussion groups (e.g. journal club) for the growth of a critical sense in students;
- frontal teaching and practical laboratories for the research of the guiding lines, systematic reviews and meta-analyses;
- first rudiments about the design of research projects and hints of statistical analysis.

As regards the training activities aimed at students of the specialist degree, it was possible to highlight:

- lectures and small group workshops for greater student autonomy in designing a research project according to the indications of EBM;
- frontal lessons for the development of skills associated with qualitative and quantitative analysis in a clinical context;
- lectures and discussion groups on ethical issues associated with clinical research with particular reference to the treatises that regulate clinical trials;
- lessons and publishing and editing workshops for the creation of documents (papers, abstracts, posters, etc.) useful for the dissemination of the evidence obtained.

I also found extremely interesting how the EBM approach is also interpreted from a philosophical perspective: in particular the principles of EBM are not considered as a list of sterile and static notions but rather as a precious compass that can guide the work of the researcher and clinician in full respect of the patient. I believe this is a necessary humanistic approach in particular when the context of work is Mental Health: if the evidence-based technique is fundamental for the patient's healing process, in the same way it is essential to listen from patient (his objectives, his life history, his residual abilities, etc.) to build a truly recovery-oriented therapeutic rehabilitation process.

Finally, I had the opportunity to study some extremely interesting programmatic documents in defining the training courses of the health professions:

- Becoming research confident: research in pre-registration curricula for nursing, midwifery and allied health programmes in the UK (Council of Deans of Health);
- Nursing, midwifery and allied health clinical academic research careers in the UK (Council of Deans of Health).

FUTURE COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)

At the end of the STSM, together with the supervisor Prof. Sally Hardy, we agreed on the following collaborations:

- create a summer school on EBM for graduate students from degree courses in the health professions of the European Union;
- proceed with the drafting of a paper on the main technological tools used for the training of healthcare professionals;
- creating a "Manifesto" for Evidence Based Mental Health Practice and Research that can be respectful of patients and relatives perspective.