Abstracts

P-258  EXTENDING THE CURRICULUM: BRINGING END OF LIFE CARE (EOLC) INTO THE CLASSROOM FOR YEAR 11 AND 13 STUDENTS
Katherine Birch, Compton Hospice, Wolverhampton, UK
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Background  In the past, death was such a part of everyday life it was simply and frankly discussed, but such opportunities for today’s young adults are more limited. Whilst encouraging people of all ages to talk more about death and dying is important, for those considering a health-related career, having a better understanding about life-limiting illnesses and end of life care is particularly important. With many of those entering the caring professions expressing feelings of anxiety and fear in relation to death and the dying patient (Dakin, 2003) and a recognition that student nurses/doctors find caring for dying patients stress-inducing (Arber, 2001; Timmins & Kaliszer, 2002), more needs to be done to engage young adults with topics such as complex, life-limiting illnesses, death and dying (Wardhere, 2014).

Project  Reflecting this, an innovative six-week programme, ‘Caring for Dave’, was designed by Compton Hospice for Health Futures University Technical College, West Bromwich – the first UTC in the country with healthcare and health sciences as its specialism. This challenging programme followed ‘Dave’ from an initial concern about his health through to care after death. Each week explored a different topic – such as lifestyles and health, breaking bad news, the dying process and caring for Dave after death. Students also completed work between sessions to enhance and consolidate their learning.

The aim of the project was to:
• Provide insight into eolc and related topics for students interested in a career in the care sector
• Explore death and dying from a range of perspectives
• Consider the personal competencies/attributes necessary to care for someone who is dying
• Encourage learners to think about a career in palliative/eolc.

Evaluations provided very positive feedback about the programme from staff and student perspectives and the hospice is currently working with UTC and other sixth forms to explore wider roll out.

P-259  INTRODUCTION OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS ON THEIR PLACEMENT IN A HOSPICE
Rebecca Avis, Sarah Parnacott. Ashgate Hospiscare, Chesterfield, UK
10.1136/bmjspcare-2017-hospice.284

Background  A recent study in postgraduate education found that reflection played a vital role in helping junior doctors to learn from clinical experience. All UK doctors are expected to undertake reflection and to make this an essential foundation for lifelong learning. Medical students have an attachment with the hospice for one week during their fourth year of medical training. During this time they work with our teams on the inpatient unit, the day hospice, and in the community. Following the EAPC conference (June, 2016) when Jason Boland looked at the themes of written reflection amongst medical students in Hull, we implemented the use of a reflective piece for all our students. We sought consent from the students that their reflection be anonymised and be used to educate other professionals.

Aims  To introduce reflection as a beneficial practice to students for lifelong learning.

Methods  The students were asked to submit a 300-word article at the end of the week to the speciality doctor, in which they reflected upon a situation encountered during their week at the hospice that they felt had impacted upon them.

Results  The range of topics was diverse and included ‘The impact of certifying a patient’, ‘Being present when a patient or relative has been given bad news’, ‘A patient who wished to go to Dignitas’ and ‘Caring for young patients’. The medical students valued the opportunity in a supportive environment to carefully review, reflect and discuss different emotive situations that they had found surprising, distressing or inspiring during their placement. This in itself was cathartic and enabled them to receive appropriate emotional support and signposting if required to other support services before finishing the attachment.

Conclusion  Reflection is a valuable tool in experiential learning, we hope this experience will endorse the value of reflective practice in their future careers.

P-260  A ‘CAN DO ATTITUDE’ ENABLES LEARNING DISABILITIES STUDENTS TO EXPERIENCE WORK
1Tricia Wilcock, 2Fay Elliot. 1Ellenor Gravesend, UK; 2Ifield 19+ College, Gravesend, UK
10.1136/bmjspcare-2017-hospice.285

Background  Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) are encouraged to continue in education or training to the age of 25 (Department for Education, 2016). Moving from education into work requires a supportive and structured approach. An innovative programme was established by the 19+college to secure supported work placements for this cohort of students. When approached the hospice was initially cautious, however, we were encouraged by the level of support on offer.

Aim  To support adults with learning disabilities towards independent employment.

Method  Job Coaches from the college accompanied each student with LD, ensuring they understood instructions and carried out tasks to a good standard. Placements were sought where routine tasks could be allocated for the student to learn and master and were monitored by the college. Each placement was offered initially for one academic year. Job Coaches were to pull back and observe from a distance encouraging and supporting the student to undertake tasks independently when ready. When agreed, the student would begin to attend on their own for part or a full day, working towards independence.

Results  Two students attended placements all year; one in retail and he has been working towards independence; another one in the gardening and catering teams and he has been
THROWN IN AT THE DEEP END – SCHOOL STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCES ON A SIX-MONTH INPATIENT WORK PLACEMENT

Tricia Wilcock, Sue Marshall, Ellenor Gravesend, UK
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Background Healthcare providers need to reach out to school students to attract entrants (NHS England, 2014), to bridge the growing gap between rapidly increasing demand and the shortfall in workforce supply (NHS Improvement, 2016). Student career choices need to be influenced as early as possible (National Careers Service) through diverse and positive experiences in order to improve recruitment and retention (NHS England, 2014). The quality of work experience offered in hospices varies widely (Barnard, 2016) with some hospices daring to invite school students to directly experience patient care in a supportive manner.

Aim To provide school students with direct access to patient care in a supportive environment.

Method School students aged 17+ were invited to undertake a supported six-month work experience placement on a hospice inpatient ward, gaining a care certificate. Student feedback, plus pre- and post-placement questionnaires were evaluated.

Results 24 placements offered over 12 months to students from a range of academic ability. Ten completed; two left for personal reasons; twelve are currently on placement; 22 currently plan to work in care. All students embraced opportunities to learn, surprising staff with their initiative, resilience and willingness to care. Students provided assistance with personal care, feeding patients, emptying catheter bags. They were exposed to death, coping remarkably well with the emotional aspect, utilising support of review meetings to share their feelings. A wealth of qualitative was collected demonstrating overall positive experiences:

• ‘I used images on Ipad to understand he wanted jelly and soft pears. He was ecstatic, and gave a thumbs up.’
• Commenting on a patient photo: ‘Nice to see the person behind the illness.’
• After witnessing a death, one student told her grandparent, ‘You’ll be in safe hands Nan, don’t worry.’
• All recognised the experience helped them to appreciate life even more.

Conclusion Valuable life skills, communication techniques and insight were gained by students.