

How do learners perceive near-peer Anatomy educators?

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Introduction: Interdisciplinary educational opportunities in healthcare curricula can take a near-peer format. Qualitative studies to discern the impact of being taught anatomy by interdisciplinary near-peer educators (INPE) are often low-powered, limiting inferences which can be drawn. Swansea University Medical School established an INPE initiative wherein graduate-entry medical students facilitate weekly practicals for a first-year human anatomy module within a medical sciences degree.

Aims: Extrapolate core concepts from feedback gathered post INPE teaching of anatomy to discern impacts to the learner. Explore effects of INPE practicals on learner confidence with anatomy.

Methods: Students completed surveys collating feedback for anatomy practicals over 10 weeks. Survey respondents rated their confidence (Likert scale, 1=very poor, 5=very good) with answering learning outcomes at the start and end of the practicals separately. They provided personalised feedback for their INPE, answering two questions: "what worked well?" and "what could be improved?". Data was processed in Microsoft Excel and analysed in SPSS. Conventional content analysis of feedback comments was undertaken.

Results: Total survey respondents n=240. Respondents reported increased confidence after practicals (pre-session $\bar{X}$ =2.45/5, post-session $\bar{X}$ =4.13/5, paired t-test $p<0.001$). Learners described enhanced understanding (n=81) from high calibre INPE engagement with them (n=39), cadaveric specimens (n=16) and anatomical models (n=52) alongside using bespoke resources INPE's created (n=41). Most respondents identified no scope for improvement (n=126). Critical comments focused on differing levels of engagement by INPE's (n=33) alongside session time constraints (n=28) which impaired learner understanding (n=23).

Conclusions: Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. This programme provided learners opportunities to develop professional relationships with medical students, benefitting those keen to enter graduate medicine. Learners state that medical students possess sufficient knowledge to deliver meaningful teaching which improved confidence in anatomy. A longitudinal paired approach matching INPE's, and learners is preferred. Our findings recommend including INPE initiatives in all human anatomy curricula.

