

The MakeItFit Campaign: A student-led health promotion initiative

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Rational

The recent onset of Covid-19 has led to a shortfall in Physiotherapy student clinical hours due to cancelled placements and reduced patient services. This project describes the development and evaluation of a student-led health promotion initiative as a means of supplementing clinical placement hours. Health promotion is an integral part of the Physiotherapy undergraduate curriculum and a key learning objective of practice placement.

Methods

Three Physiotherapy student volunteers were recruited by the Healthy Trinity committee to design and implement a six-week social media campaign promoting physical activity to staff and students of Trinity College Dublin. Working in partnership with Healthy Trinity, students created a programme of evidence-based digital content that was suitable for delivery across all college social media channels. Each post involved curation of a concept-layout-caption format, was tailored specifically to the target population and included institution-specific materials to encourage engagement. Campaign posts were ordered firstly to promote an increase in activity levels with follow up posts centred around overcoming common exercise barriers, the beneficial outcomes of exercise and reducing sedentary behaviour. Following implementation, students compiled a report outlining their key learnings from the project and making recommendations for future project expansion.

Evaluation

The campaign took three weeks to design with each student completing 10 hours of project work that can directly contribute to practice education hours. Post analytics were reviewed after campaign completion indicating a high level of engagement amongst the Trinity community. Students advanced their skills in areas such as teamwork and workload organisation, but also developed skills in areas traditionally underrepresented in physiotherapy programmes including visual communication, digital literacy and social media marketing. Students felt it was a feasible and meaningful way of supplementing clinical hours. Recommendations for future implementation centred around workload scheduling, creating a structured format to guide content and recruiting more students to the project.