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Title	Supporting the development of students in the pharmacy profession through stakeholder engagement and technology innovation
Authors	Ryan, Katie
Publication date	2019
Original Citation	Ryan, K. (2019) 'Supporting the development of students in the pharmacy profession through stakeholder engagement and technology innovation', Learning Connections 2019: Spaces, People, Practice, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland, 5-6 December, pp. 180-182. doi: 10.33178/LC.2019.37
Type of publication	Conference item
Link to publisher's version	10.33178/LC.2019.37
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Download date	2026-11-15 17:30:51
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/10698



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Supporting the development of students in the pharmacy profession through stakeholder engagement and technology innovation.

Dr. Katie Ryan
School of Pharmacy
University College Cork

Introduction

Pharmacists are experts in safe drug usage, and are uniquely placed to provide professional advice on a range of health related issues. It is crucial that pharmacy education embodies an emphasis on creating independent and responsible learners and prioritises life-long learning in the face of rapid change. Consequently, appropriate teaching and learning modalities are essential to prepare students. Changes in the way patient's access information and education of pharmacists call for new ways of teaching to prepare pharmacists for a changing profession. The aim of this body of work was to support pharmacy students' education as teachers and learners through their utilisation of technology to create short educational videos on a range of topics intended for different stakeholder groups including patients and allied healthcare professionals.

Method

In order to synthesise and integrate scientific and clinical principles from their pharmacy course, BPharm 4 students were tasked with developing a 3-minute educational videos on diverse topics e.g. smoking cessation and medicines usage using technology platforms. At the project initiation stage, students were introduced to a range of options to record the video (VideoScribe, Powtoon, whiteboard recording) and given pros and cons associated with each method.

Students were required to engage with a stakeholder to help develop skills in communication, learning with/from others and to highlight their wide impact on healthcare and the community. Stakeholders identified included qualified pharmacists, allied healthcare professionals and patients (adults, children). Pharmacy students were required to document their learning experience. Each group was required to present an oral presentation to their peers in the 4th year pharmacy class. Personal reflections were documented against the Irish Institute of Pharmacy's (https://iiop.ie) CPD template, which oversees the development and implementation of CPD for pharmacists in Ireland.

Findings

This project challenges teachers (academic staff) and future pharmacists as educators to look at collaboration and technology for greater impact. Through a structured, iterative approach, students were supported to investigate, synthesise and further refine the creation of their educational videos

based on feedback. They had to think about content, presentation, environment (Figure 1) and clear communication of the message for their target audience.

Through the process students show-cased their creativity and higher-order thinking skills. Students developed communication, team-work and technology skills using platforms like VideoScribe. In one example, students engaged with Smoking cessation, HSE, Cork. The smoking cessation working group were so impressed with the student's work and were invited to consider submitting their work to be displayed on the HSE, Quit website.

Engagement and feedback from stakeholders was pivotal. It helped teach students professionalism, good communication and how to seek and handle feedback.



Figure 1: Model Pharmacy, School of Pharmacy, UCC which was used to record videos.

Conclusions

Novel assessment methods, although resisted by some students, can give students an opportunity to demonstrate creativity and develop higher-order thinking skills.

We learn through engagement and collaboration - Stakeholder engagement in professional programmes helps students to frame their learning and develop new perspectives.

Novel assessment methods can be more time consuming for both students and staff.

References

https://iiop.ie