Development and implementation of teledentistry to support clinical practice and structural competence among undergraduate dental and dental hygiene students

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Abstract

- Dental care is traditionally delivered in-person; however, teledentistry provides an option to access dental providers when access is challenging.\(^1,2\)
- Yet teledentistry is not widely taught in undergraduate dental education.
- A dental helpline service, called Dental Link (DL), was established within the faculty offering:
  - oral health information
  - referrals to suitable dental offices
  - aid navigating public dental insurances
  - virtual consultations
- This project will educate and train undergraduate dental and dental hygiene students in providing one modality of teledentistry to support the needs of underserved populations.

Objectives

1. To implement teledentistry curriculum and experiential training to increase awareness of telehealth services and structural barriers to care.
2. To foster more interprofessional education opportunities both within and outside of the Faculty of Dentistry.
3. To increase dental and dental hygiene students’ knowledge of teledentistry and structural barriers.

Implementation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Development of DL</th>
<th>Development of Curriculum</th>
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| Teledentistry services and resources informed by our 6 partnered community-based organizations. Accessible by phone, email, and video conference through Zoom software. | Developed 1 lecture to increase knowledge on:  
  - Teledentistry, its various applications, its relation to public health concepts, and important considerations for different applications  
  - Dental Link and conducting virtual care  
  
  Quality assurance through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. |

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<th>Academic year 2022/2023</th>
<th>Academic years 2023/2024, 2024/2025</th>
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| Dental hygiene 4\(^{th}\) year students  
  - Revised 1 introductory lecture on teledentistry  
  - Revised 1 lecture on being a virtual provider for DL  
  - Revised 1 experiential rotation with past case scenarios and role-playing cases  
  - Conducted surveys and interviews  
| Dental and dental hygiene students  
  - 1\(^{st}\) Years: Revise 1 introductory lecture on teledentistry with case scenarios  
  - 3\(^{rd}\) Years: Revise observations  
  - 4\(^{th}\) Years: Revise 2 lectures and 2 experiential rotations  
  - Conduct surveys and interviews or focus groups with students |

| Future implementation |

References


Acknowledgement

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support for this project provided by UBC Vancouver students via the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund.