

# HealthSteps® – Providing UBC Students with Curriculum to Support Their Skills in Lifestyle Counseling for Prevention of Chronic Disease

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TLEF Project

## HealthSteps® Background

Healthy lifestyle habits are key in the prevention of chronic disease, but medical and allied health students don't always receive opportunities to engage in hands-on training in lifestyle counseling.

HealthSteps® is a program run out of the UBC Department of Family Practice that supports the learning needs of students, while also supporting the health of the local community.

## How Does it Work?

Students complete an e-learning and synchronous training session to become certified in delivering the HealthSteps® program. They are then paired with a participant, and work with them virtually over the course of 6 months to guide them through the program and set goals in the areas of **physical activity, exercise, healthy eating, mindfulness, and time in nature.**

The program is free for participants, and is designed to help meet them where they are at, and achieve personalized goals through incremental, sustainable changes.

By becoming certified and coaching participants, students gain skills in motivational interviewing and co-active coaching. Students learn how to introduce healthy lifestyle concepts to participants, how to set SMART goals, and gain confidence practicing lifestyle counseling skills that they can take into their future careers.

## TLEF Project Goals

With generous funding from TLEF, we aim to:

**Increase opportunities for UBC students to become HealthSteps® coaches**

We will do this by building connections with various departments and programs, including medicine, kinesiology, dietetics, psychology, physiotherapy, midwifery, social work and nursing. These opportunities include both for-credit and extracurricular options.

**Co-develop an Indigenous-HealthSteps® curriculum**

We are engaging in the co-developing of an Indigenous-HealthSteps® curriculum in order to meet the needs of Indigenous participants and to provide UBC students with hands-on training in culturally safe lifestyle counseling.

## Current Work

1. Increasing recruitment efforts to engage students from medicine, kinesiology, dietetics, psychology and social work
2. Developing new connections with the departments of physiotherapy, social work, midwifery and nursing to expand training opportunities for UBC students
3. Reaching out and developing partnerships with various Indigenous organizations, communities and individuals for the co-development of the Indigenous-HealthSteps® program

## Ongoing Results

To date:

**77 UBC students** from **6 programs** have been certified and participated as a HealthSteps® coach

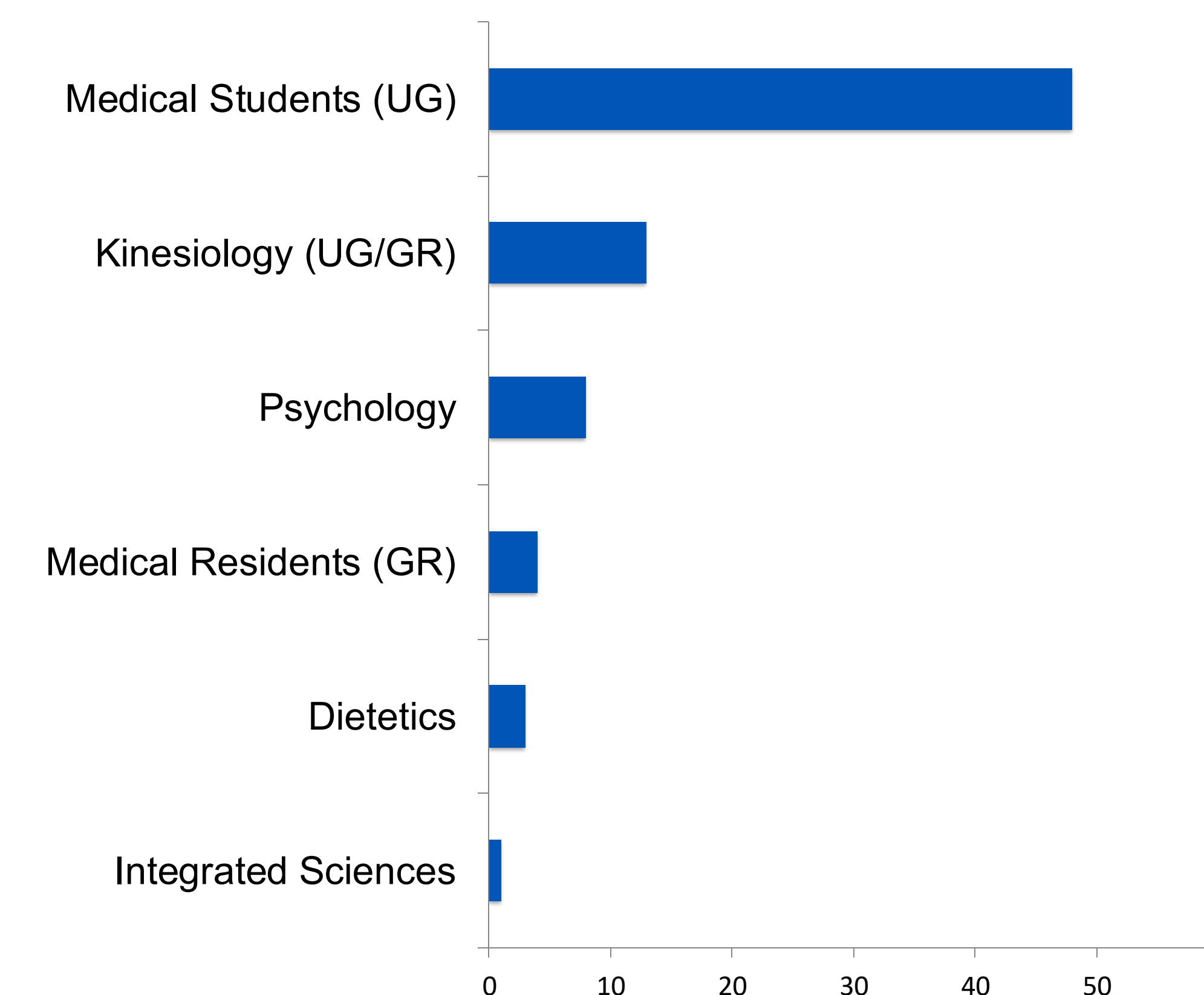
**44 students** (57.1%) have engaged through **for-credit options**, such as an elective, practicum or placement, while **33 students** (42.9%) have participated in an **extracurricular capacity**

For credit options include **FP-Sports-Med-Vancouver-VFMP, KIN 598, KIN530A and KIN483B-D**

**764 coaching hours** have been completed by UBC students

**197 participants** have partaken in the program under UBC student guidance

## Student Breakdown By Program



## Student and Participant Feedback

*"[I]t has been a fabulous experience being a coach in HealthSteps and I truly feel that program is filling a gap that exists in primary care" – UBC Medical Student*

*"My coach [...] was amazing, helpful, and a good listener. She helped me develop ideas on how to overcome obstacles (such as a broken ankle) to exercise, and that being healthy is not only about food and exercise: it is also about feeling happy and being mindful." – Participant on experience with UBC student coach*

## Next Steps

Continue to expand opportunities for UBC students to become HealthSteps® coaches

Continue to develop connections with Indigenous organizations, communities and individuals

Engage in the co-development of the Indigenous-HealthSteps® curriculum

Launch and evaluate the Indigenous-HealthSteps® curriculum

## Acknowledgement

*We gratefully acknowledge the financial support for this project provided by UBC Vancouver (or UBC Okanagan) students via the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund*