

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

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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 living 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

Adapt and co-develop HealthSteps® curriculum based on Indigenous perspectives of health and ways of knowing

Current Work

1. Increasing recruitment efforts to engage students from medicine, kinesiology, dietetics, psychology, social work and nursing
2. Co-developing curricular and training changes with Indigenous experts to ensure HealthSteps® meets the needs of Indigenous participants and that students have opportunities to engage in culturally safe lifestyle counseling.

Ongoing Results

132 UBC students from **6 programs** have been certified as a HealthSteps® coach

78 students (59.1%) have engaged through **for-credit options**, such as an elective, practicum or placement, while **54 students** (40.9%) have participated in an **extracurricular capacity**

For credit options include **FP-Sports-Med-Vancouver-VFMP, KIN 598, KIN530A, KIN483B-D, and LFS496**

Student and Participant Feedback

"I'm aiming to become a Family Physician so this program helps me practice my lifestyle counselling skills." – HealthSteps® Student Coach

"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

Curriculum Developments

We have engaged in consulting and co-creation activities with Indigenous dietitians, Elders and program managers. Changes to the HealthSteps® curriculum following these discussions include:

Holistic Framing

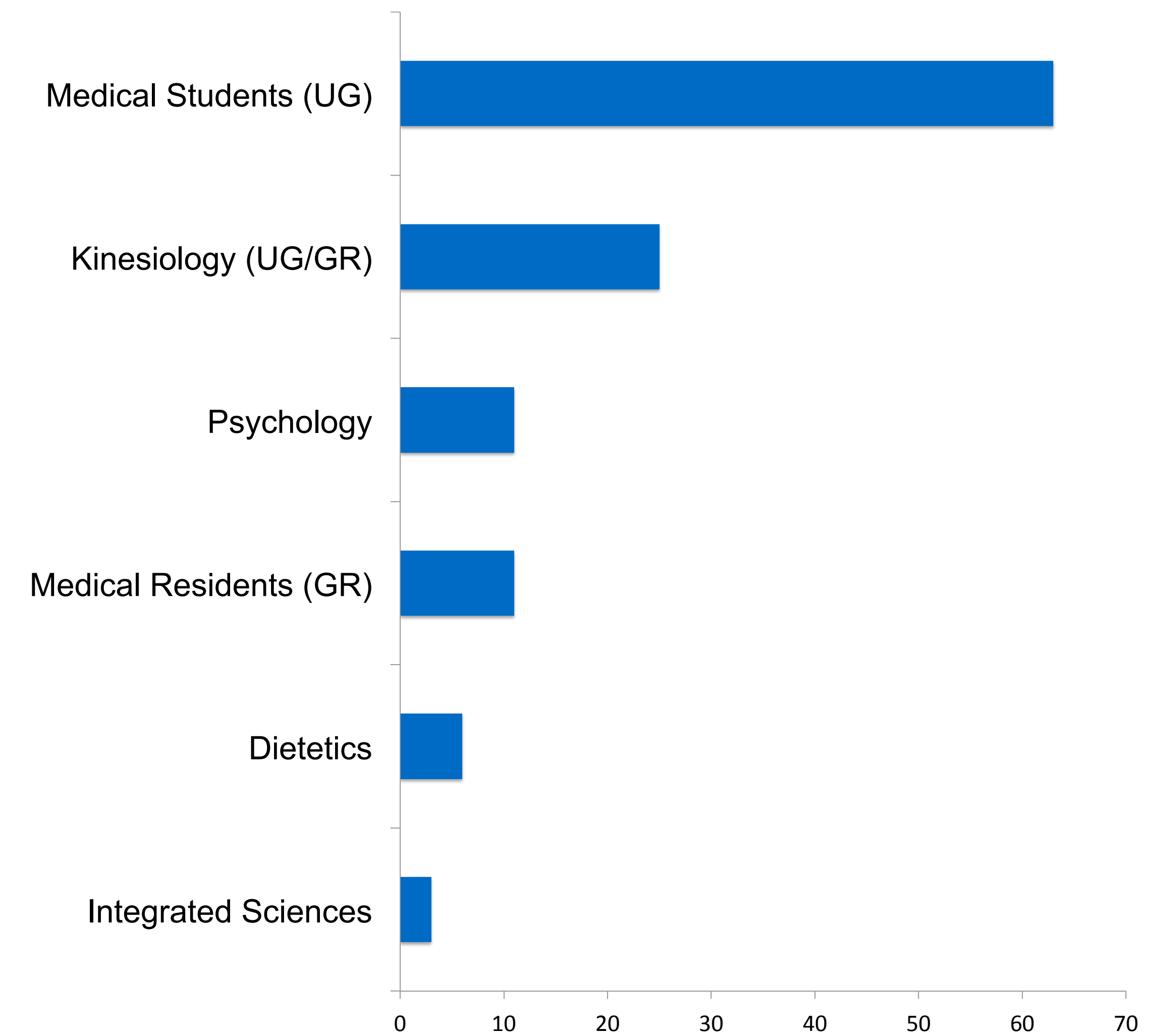
Emphasized patient-centered focus

Addition of components on Sleep & Rest and Social Connectedness

Adaptation of nutrition content to remove Western focus

Reframing 'prescription' language and presentation

Student Breakdown By Program



Next Steps

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

Finalize the co-development of the Indigenous-HealthSteps® curriculum

Launch and evaluate the updated 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