



# Medu. Lo one faculty one UWI

DECEMBER 2020



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### Year of COVID and Medical Education

#### DR AZIM MAJUMDER

Director of Medical Education, FMS, The UWI, Cave Hill, Barbados



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It has been over a year since the World Health Organization declared a pandemic caused by a new fast-spreading coronavirus. This pandemic has caused dramatic and disruptive changes to medical education and healthcare systems worldwide.

Medical schools have been closed in many parts of the world in an effort to alleviate the spread of COVID-19,

resulting in the suspension of face-toface teaching. Medical educators have embraced alternative technological and pedagogical strategies to teach tomorrow's doctors. Medical schools have faced the biggest challenge in training students within the limitations of social distancing especially due to the suspension of practical, lab, and clinical teaching as well as clinical research. Moreover, limited patient care due to the focus on COVID-19 patients have restricted the availability of bedside teaching opportunities for medical students. Other challenges include fears that medical students may contract the virus during their training or may transmit the virus to patients.

The effect of the current pandemic has transformed medical education and is likely to have long-lasting repercussions on student learning. Adaptability to home learning was a challenging task and this affected the performance of students and faculty. While COVID-19 has thrown many challenges for medical education, it has also created opportunities.

Medical schools have adopted several innovative strategies in response to the crisis; most notably a shift to online learning and assessment.

Medical schools require to adopt need- and evidence-based curricular innovations that will integrate the latest technologies such as artificial intelligence for adaptive learning and virtual reality in order to train future medical graduates during and after the pandemic. Online learning pedagogy needs to be effectively integrated into the curriculum to guide students through the difficult journey ahead and to help develop the competencies required to practice medicine.

In response to the pandemic, the Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS), the University of the West Indies initiated emergency measures to conduct online teaching for MBBS and other programmes. FMS moved preclinical teaching entirely online, suspended clinical training for clerkships, and conducted all in-course and final examinations remotely. In this MeduLink issue, some articles highlight the experiences and challenges of the FMS staff who have dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic to deliver academic activities and provide healthcare services.



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## Pinning Ceremony of Class 2023 at Cave Hill Campus

#### DR PAULA MICHELE LASHLEY

Deputy Dean (Clinical), FMS, The UWI, Cave Hill, Barbados

The class of 2023 (MBBS) had their pinning ceremony with COVID-19 protocols at the Cave Hill Campus on October 31st, 2020. The class chose the theme of "Rising above challenges, Seeking to change the world" for the event. The following is an abbreviated version of the address by the Dr Paula Michele Lashley, Deputy Dean (Clinical) at this event.

"Today as you officially start your new journey into the clinical phase I want to address you on two themes: (1) Travels, Transitions, Transformation and Tribulations, and (2) "A Tale of two cities".

#### **TRAVELS**

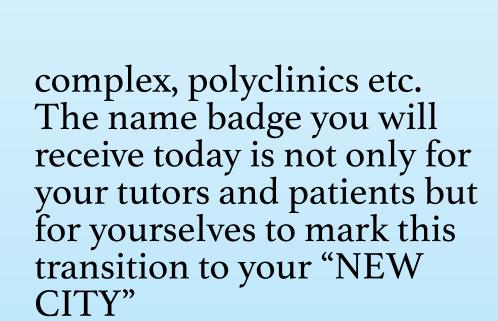
Charles Dickens' opening line in "A Tale of Two Cities" – "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness......" This describes the challenges of

practicing medicine today: Basically, it was just like the present, with experts of the time insisting on seeing its events only in terms of contrasting extremes.

Where are your two cities – your first Travels?

One is your virtual city – education in a changing world and the uncertainty of medical practice.

The second your physical city – your new "home" in the clinical environment – Hospital clinical skills



## Transitions and Transformation

Medical Education is in a New Era

Learners graduating into a changing environment with new demands:

• The cost, debt, and duration of education is

growing.

Diverging strategies of clinical and educational/ university missions are seen in the changing strategic plans of UWI.
 There is more contents, less time in curriculum.... and that was all pre-COVID.

Dr. Peter Adams,

Rapidly Changing Clinical Learning Environment

Covid-19 has changed every aspect of our learning environments. Our learning and working environments and our student's presence





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in the hospital and clinics have all changed. In addition, there has been an exponential increase in the new technology of telemedicine.

Although, insurmountable changes were happening in weeks if not days, it was the opportunity to embrace change. Of course, this has disrupted the status-quo and has even led to some degree of intellectual chaos. What we recognize is that there must now be NEW and EMERGING LEARNER COMPETENCY. The first of these to be developed from the "hidden curriculum" are Health Systems Science (HSS) and Technology for Education. These are quickly guiding our educational strategies.

## I. Health Systems Science (HSS)

The success and failures of COVID-19 and our hospital's responses were about systems-supply chain, systems thinking, integration with

the larger health care world, collaboration, and leadership.

## 2. Technology for Education

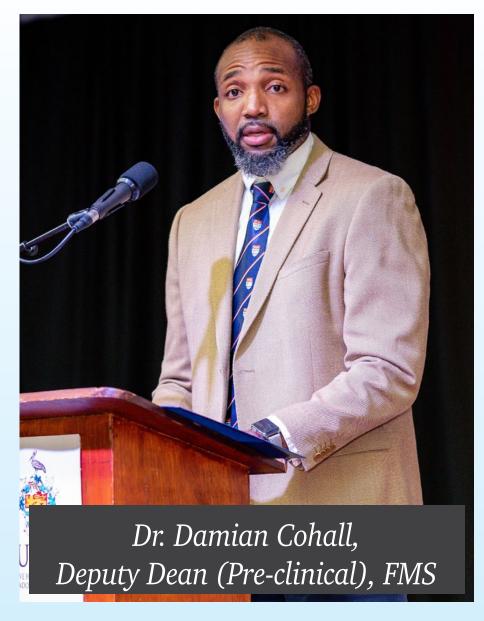
We have had to move beyond replicating traditional instruction and take advantage of the virtual tools. There is a whole new vocabulary associated with the new technology and even the digital natives are often unfamiliar. Faculty and student development are key to successful online instruction. Navigating New assessment modalities: Virtual Patients; Adaptive assessment; Online simulations; Interactive case-based problem solving, and virtual OSCEs are on the horizon.

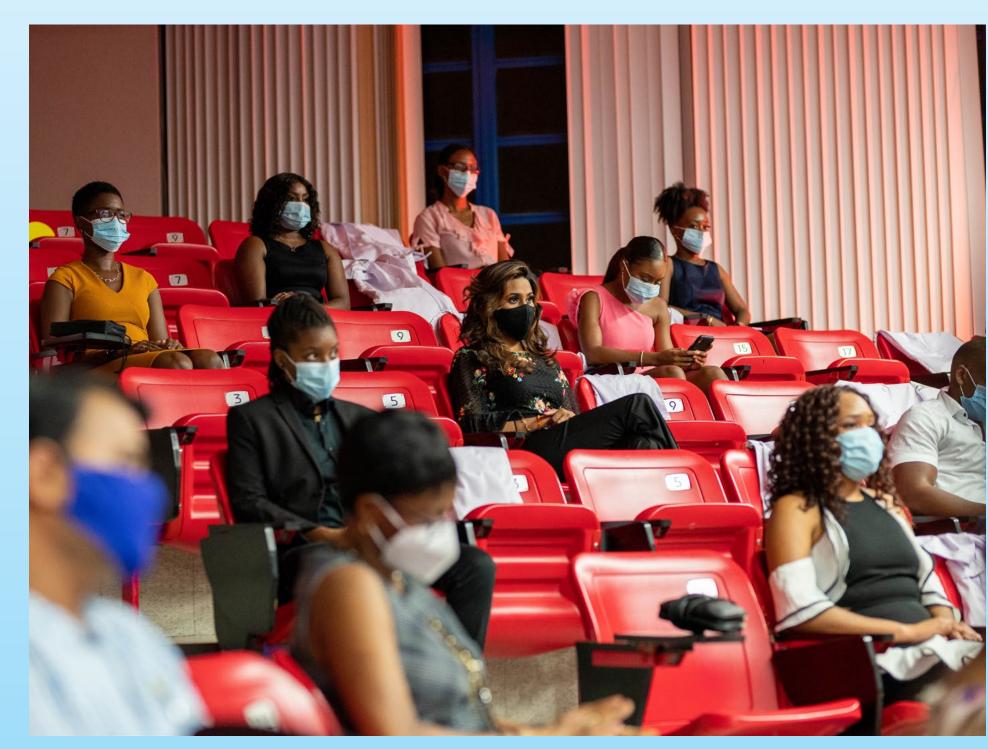
#### **TRIBULATIONS**

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times".

Disruption of teaching as we knew it is occurring – patient safety and national protocols now guide our

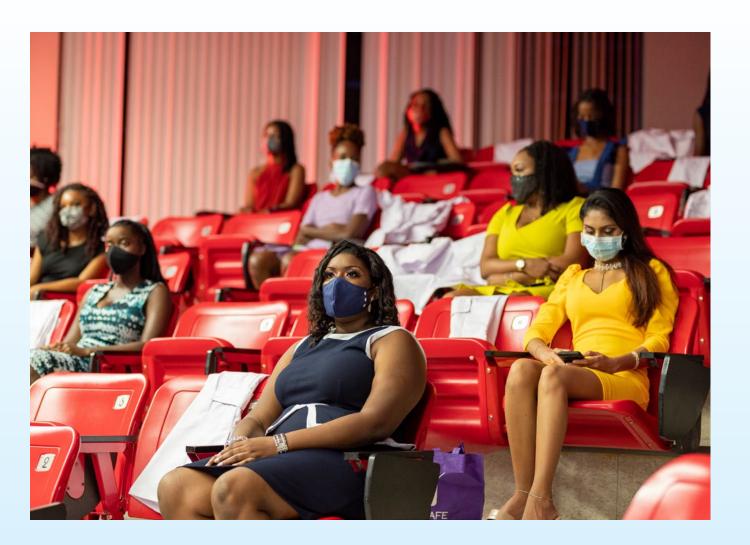








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methodologies. Tele health and simulation education are now gathering steam. Social disruption has brought out the best in people with cross-campus collaborations, but it has also brought out the worse in people – selfish behaviors and flaunting of protocols. In addition, the psychological well-being of students and faculty is often underestimated; uncertainty is often the underpinning reason for this. Medical students are also frequently exposed to human suffering and death experiences most have never encountered before. Whether you are brilliant or not is of little consequence on how you will cope in this new environment

BUT What about Bedside teaching and real patient encounters that we know will be now limited?

'Clinical teaching for the 21st century' is not so much about teaching as about helping students become capable doctors by supporting their participation in practice and helping them learn reflectively from each experience. Rote head to toe examination and presentation will now displaced by more focused examination, guided by the clinical scenarios and time at the bedside utilized for maximum information gathering. A good textbook will give you an overview of the topics, but an encounter with a real patient with remain in your memory for life.

At every opportunity you will need to Practice being professional

Develop the skills to communicate with your patients at a level of their understanding will serve you well. Come early, stay late and keep moving, use all opportunities to learn –

taking care of patients in the hospital is a team sport!

Finally Practice having a balanced life

The 4H way – Stay
Happy, healthy, hopeful,
and helpful – don't
underestimate your own
psychological well-being.
Unfortunately, the world as
we knew it will not be the
same during post-COVID;
however, with confidence
and resilience it can be a
better world!

Congratulations! You are well on your way to the privilege and joy of practicing medicine!



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## The future of Continuing Medical Education

#### **DR KIM QUIMBY**

Lecturer in Immunology, George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre (GA-CDRC), The UWI, Cave Hill, Barbados.



It has not been 'education Las usual' since the COVID-19 pandemic reached our region earlier this year. Instead of preparing for our face-toface The University of the West Indies / Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners (The UWI / BAMP) joint continuing medical education (CME) conference, we found ourselves racing against the clock to adjust into a socially distanced format which satisfied the edicts of the Ministry of Health of Barbados. Although initially seen as an inconvenience, we realised that this was an opportunity to expand

our reach, while ensuring that we still met the needs of local physicians who require CME credits for yearly reregistration. Our strategy was guided by the need to find an acceptable timeframe, a suitable format and a mechanism to assess learning.

An acceptable timeframe:

There is a wealth of discussion surrounding the optimal time limit for online activities. Following research with our stakeholders, it was determined that 2 hours (4x 30min talks) on a biweekly basis would be a reasonable balance for completing





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the requisite 20 hours of CME per annum whilst maintaining the attention of attendees online.

A suitable format: As our clients - as healthcare professionals - were already experiencing some degree of anxiety due to the pandemic, we wanted the registration, payment and attendance process to be as effortless as possible. The necessary infrastructure was already available on the Cave Hill Campus and this restructuring process called for a quick meeting of minds and efforts from the various departments. The Zoom Webinar license is held by the Cave Hill Information Technology Services (CITS). We chose this platform instead of Zoom meeting as it allows greater control over the production of the conference. TouchNet is an online registration and payment system housed

in the Bursary which seamlessly integrates payment and registration and automatically distributes the Zoom links to clients.

Mechanism to assess learning: Following each 2-hour block, a set of related questions were circulated to attendees. We are using RedCap which is administrated out of the George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre. The assessment has an instant feedback mechanism which has been shown to reinforce the learning process. To date we have completed 9 blocks; attendance and feedback have been encouraging. We have invited speakers from Trinidad, Jamaica, USA and the Netherlands; something that would have been unaffordable with the faceto-face format. There have also been attendees from

neighboring islands who have taken advantage of this opportunity.

So, what does this mean for the future of CMEs? The online version is probably here to stay. However, it does not adequately accommodate the human interaction, the camaraderie and the 'in the corridor' learning experiences that are synonymous with in-person meetings. In addition, although there are numerous threedimensional models and props to facilitate online skills development, these fall short in comparison to hands-on experiences. We therefore need to leverage what we have learnt in order to craft the model for the future. A hybrid of online didactic lectures supported by small group in-person practicals may be the way forward.





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## The Doctor of Medicine (DM) in Ophthalmology at Cave Hill – An Eye to the Future

#### DR. DAWN GROSVENOR

Lecturer in Ophthalmology, FMS, The UWI, Cave Hill, Barbados.

## Background & Rationale for Regional Training

The Barbados Eye Studies, a group of large collaborative population studies conducted from 1986 to 2003, revealed the significant burden of eye disease in Barbadosı, and exposed the need for a cadre of well-trained ophthalmologists. The custom of doctors migrating overseas for postgraduate training in Ophthalmology, as was occurring at that time, proved to be unsustainable due to changing immigration rules. In 2006, UK immigration rules shifted to prioritize

the European Union, while securing a training post in Ophthalmology in the USA and Canada was already a near impossibility for foreign medical graduates.

#### **Inception & Structure**

The DM Ophthalmology was introduced at Mona in 2004, followed by St. Augustine in 20072. The programme was approved at Cave Hill for the 2006/2007 academic year. However, without a Lecturer in Ophthalmology, little progress was made until December 2013 when the first Lecturer was appointed at Cave Hill.

All three DMs are identical in content and duration, varying only, of necessity, in delivery. The six years of the programme are divided into three parts (I, II and III) with the examinations after year 2, year 3 and year 6 accordingly. In addition, students conduct a major research project and produce a casebook of clinical case reports as part of the output at the end of the course. Input from the external examiners at Cross Campus meetings has been valuable in shaping the programme to international standards. The Lecturer, along with a hard-working group of Associate Lecturers administers the programme, supported by non-UWI Consultant Ophthalmology staff at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH).

#### The Modern Era

The programme has attracted applicants from around the Caribbean, reflecting a similar competitiveness to Ophthalmology programmes worldwide.

The first student at Cave Hill matriculated in July 2014, and thereafter candidates have been accepted whenever Ophthalmology posts at the QEH become available, to a total of four students as of 2020. All have been successful in examinations and are proceeding on schedule.

Securing a path to completion of postgraduate training has energized and motivated Ophthalmology trainees at the QEH. They have been active participants at local and



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regional conferences, regularly winning prizes for their research submissions at the annual Ophthalmological Society of the West Indies conferences (Figure 1). Students have utilised their skills to contribute to the annual national ophthalmic community outreach for the World Glaucoma Week of Activities (Figure 2) and World Sight Day.

An important collaboration has been established between the DM Ophthalmology and the University of Toronto, with students joining the postgraduate students in Toronto at the Resident Introductory Course (TORIC) in year I, and later in year 5, joining the staff there for a 6-month elective for sub-specialty training.

New surgical equipment at the QEH, with technology to facilitate improved surgical teaching (Figure 3), has been a major boost. This symbiotic relationship



Figure 1. DM
Ophthalmology student
Dr. Kendi Griffith
(second right) receives
a prize for her research
presentation at the
OSWI Conference
in 2019, while her
supervisor Dr. Dawn
Grosvenor (third left)
and consultant mentors
look on

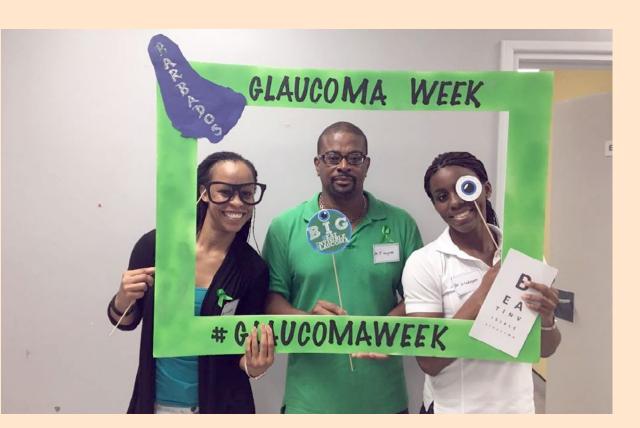


Figure 2. DM
Ophthalmology
students (Left-Dr. Kendi
Griffith and Right- Dr.
Shari Cadogan) with
Dr. John Haynes, take
a break from screening
patients during World
Glaucoma Week



Figure 3. New surgical equipment at QEH, with teaching arms and screens for viewing and recording surgical videos

between the QEH and the UWI is essential to continued quality improvement.

Rigorous self-reflection and evaluation within the programme, along with collaboration with stakeholders and mentors, continues to bear fruit, and we look forward to our first graduate at the end of this academic year.

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## Dr Azim Majumder joined International Health Professions Education (HPE) Journals Editors group

D ecently Dr Azim Majumder joined the International Health **Professions Education** (HPE) Journals Editors' group. This group has been established in 2007 to build a community of HPE journal editors to share and discuss ideas and experiences about operations and organizational structures of the medical education journals. The group typically meets in person at the annual AAMC meeting in the USA and the annual AMEE meeting in Europe. During the pandemic meetings have

been converted into online conference calls. The international editors group is being chaired by Dr Peter GM de Jong, Editor-in-Chief of Medical Science Educator.

At the 2020 November meeting more than 20 editors/journal representatives of leading HPE journals joined the meeting. These journals included: Medical Education, Academic Medicine, Canadian Medical Education Journal, Nurse Educator, Medical Science Educator, The Clinical Teacher, Journal

of Graduate Medical Education, Advances in Health Science Educator, Teaching Learning in Medicine, Education for Health, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education, Education for Primary Care, MedEdPORTAL, Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions, Advances in Medical Education and Practice, and Medical Education Online. Updates on journal development and policies on preprints were discussed.

Dr. Md. Anwarul Azim Majumder, Director of Medical Education, Faculty of Medical Sciences, The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados has been serving as the Editor-in-Chief of "Advances in Medical Education and Practice" (https://www.dovepress.com/advances-in-medical-education-and-practice-journal) since 2010.



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- UWI Virtual Public Symposium Chronic NCDs and the Eye Observance of World Sight Day

## MSA's Community Outreach Event - "The Body Works: Go the Medico Way"

#### **JOETTE FERNANDER**

Community Outreach Officer, Department of Events and Planning, The Medical Students Association (MSA), The UWI, Cave Hill, Barbados.

n the 21 of November, the Medical Students Association (MSA) of UWI Cave Hill in collaboration with the Optimist Club of Barbados North (OCBN) hosted an event called "The Body Works: Go the Medico way". This event would usually be a collaborative face-to-face event between The Faculty of Medical Science (FMS), Cave Hill and The Optimist Club of Barbados North where students would give community health talks, presentations, and perform free health checks at the St. Johns Baptist church as a part of Barbados Independence Day

celebrations. Currently, due to COVID-19, the event had to be adapted to a virtual platform, this time it was made special for all students of the Caribbean islands.

Dr. Keerti Singh (President elect of the Optimist Club of Barbados North, Lecturer at the FMS) assisted in the planning and coordinating especially with the health presentations made by the students. This event was geared towards senior secondary school students within Form 5 or 6/ Grade II and I2 who were interested in science and medicine. The event consisted of speakers

talking about the MBBS and BHSc programs at FMS Cave Hill, life in college and health presentations about the various systems of the human body, normal functioning and some common diseases affecting these systems.

All presentations were tailored to match CAPE, CSEC standards. We had many student volunteers within the FMS that assisted with the success of this event. The event was transmitted using the zoom teleconferencing platform and within the zoom meeting we had approximately 65-70

students on call mainly from The Bahamas, Trinidad, and Barbados. The students were very interactive and interested in all the information that we had to offer. They curiously asked many questions about our programs, experiences in college and the human body systems presentations.

The event was quite a success and went the way we all wanted it to go. We are confident that we garnered some interest in the programs and UWI Cave hill as a whole and cannot wait to host another event like this very soon in the future.



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## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Bioethics Forum 2020 -"COVID-19: BIOETHICAL PERSPECTIVES"

#### **PROF SEETHARAMAN HARIHARAN**

Professor of Anaesthesia & Critical Care Medicine, FMS, The UWI, St Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago

The 11th Annual ■ Bioethics Forum 2020 of the Bioethics Society of the English-Speaking Caribbean (BSEC) was held via Zoom teleconferencing mode on Sunday, 25th October 2020. The Forum was organized to discuss the multifarious ethical dimensions of the pandemic. The forum focused specifically on the ethical implications related to the Cpoivd-19 pandemic in the region as well as in the global perspectives.

The Opening Remarks were delivered by Professor S Hariharan, President of the BSEC.

Dr. Carla Saenz, Regional Bioethics Advisor of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) delivered the Key-Note address entitled "Ethical Dimensions of the Covid-19 Pandemic"

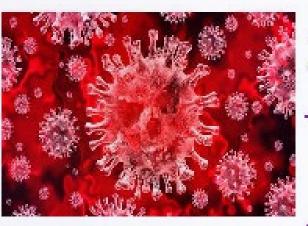
The sessions were moderated by Dr Derrick Aarons and Prof Cheryl



#### BIOETHICS SOCIETY OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN - BSEC

### Programme

#### COVID-19 BIOETHICAL PERSPECTIVES



25<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.

Start Time: 1:30 p.m. ECT

#### Opening - 1:30 p.m.

- Opening Remarks
  - Professor S. Hariharan
- Intro. of Keynote Speaker
   Dr. S. Henson
- - "Ethical Dimensions of the COVID-19 Pandemic"

#### Session 1 - 1:55 p.m.

→ Discussion – 2:45 p.m. [10 minutes]

#### Session 2 - 2:55 p.m.

Discussion – 3:45 p.m. [10 minutes]

Vote of Thanks – 3:55 p.m. – Dr. G. Charran



Professor S. Hariharan

– President of BSEC



Dr. S. Henson

– Chair of BSEC Forum

Planning Committee



Dr. C. Saenz

– Regional Bioethics
Advisor (PAHO)



Dr. D. Aarons
- Moderator 1



Professor C. Macpherson
– Moderator 2



Dr. G. Charran

– Vice President of BSEC

#### **BSEC VIRTUAL FORUM 2020**



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## Macpherson. The topics presented were as follows:

- I. Covid-19 responsive Research Ethics by Dr Mike Campbell, Barbados
- 2. Ethical Aspects of Managing Non-Covid-19 Illnesses by Prof S Hariharan, T&T
- 3. Discounted Citizenship for Sale by Ms. Susan Andrews, T&T
- 4. Ethical challenges faced by Pharmacists during Covid-19 by Ms. Shereen Dawkins-Cox, Jamaica
- 5. Government Response and Citizens to Management of the Crisis with Focus on Behaviors and Cultural Attitudes by Ms. Melanie Smith, Belize
- 6. Ethical Allocation of Resources during the Covid-19 pandemic by Ms. Gia Mukherjee, USA
- 7. Herbal therapies by Prof R C Jagessar, Guyana
- 8. Mental Health Effects of Quarantine by Dr Shakel Henson, St. Vincent & Grenadines

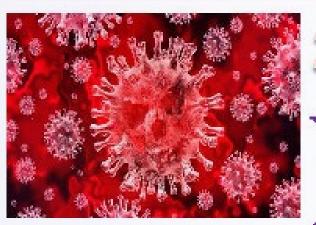
9. Assessing Online
Readiness for Learning
and Assessment of
Medical and Allied
Health Professional
Students by Dr Azim
Majumder, Barbados

The presentations were followed by a discussion on the Ethical Issues of Covid-19 pandemic with questions and answers moderated by the Organizing Committee. The Organizing Committee, chaired by Dr. Shakel Henson, put together a successful virtual event with publication of the abstracts on the BSEC website. The event was open to BSEC members and invited audience, and a total of 72 people attended. The attendees actively participated by sharing viewpoints and thoughts. Dr Grace Sirju-Charran, Vice-President of BSEC proposed a Vote of Thanks.

BIOETHICS SOCIETY OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN - BSEC

Register: https://forms.gle/RnJa1EjTAg5nj1QVA

#### COVID-19 BIOETHICAL PERSPECTIVES



### 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.

Start Time: 1:30 p.m. ECT

#### Session 1

- COVID-responsive Research Ethics Review in Caribbean Small Island Developing States – 1:55 p.m.
  - M. Campbell & K. Bryant
- Ethical Implications of Social Media (Infodemic, Conspiracy Theories) and some Recommendations for the Caribbean – 2:05 p.m.
  - S. Muir
- Ethical Aspects of Managing Non-COVID-19 Illnesses – 2:15 p.m.
   S. Hariharan
- Ethical Implications 2:25 p.m.
  - S. Andrews
- To Dispense or Not to Dispense:
  Lessons to be learnt from Ethical
  Challenges faced by Pharmacists in
  the COVID-19 Pandemic 2:35 p.m.
  - S. Cox

#### Session 2

- Response of Government and Citizens to Management of the Crisis with Focus on Behaviours and Cultural Attitudes 2:55 p.m. M. Smith
- Allocation of Resources during the COVID-19 Pandemic — 3:05 p.m.
  - G. Mukherjee
- Well-known Information on Origin, Spread, Symptoms and Measures of Herbal Therapy – 3:15 p.m. – R. Jagessar
- Mental and Health Effects of Quarantine – 3:25 p.m. – S. Henson
- Assessing Online Readiness for Learning and Assessment of Medical and Allied Health Professional Students during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A multi-campus study 3:35 p.m.

A. Majumder et al.

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## From "Quo Vadis?" to Clinical Teaching

#### **DR. THAON JONES**

Head, School of Dentistry FMS, The UWI, Mona, Jamaica

The transition of educating and training dental students at the Mona School of Dentistry to the "new normal" has continued with the start of the new Academic Year. Preparatory steps involved consultations with staff and students and a review of research publications, leading to the drafting and circulation of protocols. The prevailing uncertainty with no defined path for moving forward amidst the pandemic imply that the protocols would be in a continual draft stage. The pre-Covid-19 approach to teaching and instruction across the three traditional platforms of lectures, laboratories and clinicals will never return.

Lecture and laboratory teaching have been the least challenging to modify. Clinical teaching has been the most challenging, but the following protocols have provided a good framework for students treating patients.

#### Protocol 1: Standard

Temperature, Sanitizing and Social Distancing Protocols. Students have their temperature recorded by the Security Guard daily. Staff record their oxygen saturation levels weekly.

## Protocol 2: Personal-PPE Pack

This P-PPE Pack lists a minimum number of face coverings, hand sanitizer

dispensers, gowns/coats, and hair and feet coverings for students to procure. With the global shortage of PPE's, the university may not be able to consistently supply the PPEs needed. This personal responsibility has been embraced by students, and has limited their down-time when treating patients.

#### Protocol 3: Signage

University and tailored school signage have been strategically placed to cover the three Covid-19 protocol areas. Floor stickers were placed at the Security Desk, on the walkway before the reception area, and in the waiting area to support the social distancing protocols.

## Protocol 4: Hand Sanitizing

Small hand sanitization spray bottles are issued to students to supplement the wall-mounted hand sanitizer dispensers. Additional wall-mounted hand sanitizer dispensers have been ordered.





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## Protocol 5: Managing Aerosol Production

The main challenge of clinical teaching was how to reduce/manage aerosol production. The following steps are followed:

- I. Aerosol procedures have been moved from the cubicles on the open clinical floor to the enclosed Surgical Rooms.
- 2. Students book the rooms through the staff dental assistants.
- 3. Students are mandated to have an assistant staff or student; and one student has invested in a High Volume Evacuator (HVE) system with a mouth mirror which can be supported for solo practice.
- 4. Before students start treating patients, the extractor fans and the air conditioning units are turned on for at least an hour with as many windows as possible opened. Hurricane shutters have been removed to allow for

- more direct air flow across the clinical floor.
- the rooms, and the doors are closed, and if needed the air conditioning units are turned on. The ideal Hepa filters do not fit the mini-split units, so UV-sterilization additions to the units are being sourced. The use of purifiers is also being considered.
- 6. Clinical PPE records were introduced to have patients complete a Covid-19 informed consent form, and document 2-week, I week, I-day record of their Covid-19 symptoms history. These are again checked upon arrival. Students also complete a screening form.
- 7. Preceptors move freely into and out of the room, with students being guided to wait 15 minutes after generating aerosols (through use of hand pieces and scaling units) before beginning their post-treatment infection

control procedures. The entire clinical floor is sprayed with a sanitizing solution at the end of the clinical day.

The dental profession has been the leader in PPE and infection control in treating patients. As clinicians in training, the students are aware that the risks of the Covid-19 pandemic, though unprecedented, can be handled by following the standard infection control procedures and optimising them, which these protocols aim to do. From a point of not knowing the answer to the question "Quo Vadis?" i.e. Where are you going? to resuming face-to-face clinical teaching, the School of Dentistry will have more questions to answer as the face of the pandemic continues to change. The school will address these questions and assure its students of the continuation of their education and training. We owe it to them, and to their patients!





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## My Journey to becoming a UWI Professor...

PROFESSOR MONIKA R. ASNANI, MBBS, MSc (DISTINCTION) FAMILY MEDICINE, DM (FAMILY MEDICINE), PHD (EPIDEMIOLOGY)
Professor of Family Medicine and Epidemiology
Caribbean Institute for Health Research-Sickle Cell Unit,
The UWI, Mona, Jamaica



Dr. Monika Asnani promoted to Professor of Family Medicine and Epidemiology, September 30, 2020

rom as far back as my  $\Gamma$  memory can take me, my dream has been to be a doctor. In Hindu mythology, it is said that your thoughts can be influenced even when in utero, and my family has always laughingly told me that my father probably planted that seed in my mind during that period of my life! I worked hard and my happiest day growing up was when I received the letter from UWI offering me entry to medical school.

My second love has always been teaching - so along with being a doctor and the opportunity to engage in some teaching, the UWI has been the perfect place for me to call my second home. When your work is your passion, then really each day becomes fun and filled with eternal possibilities! My love for **ÚWI** though has other roots also as 40 years ago I landed here straight from India as a little girl when my father came to join FMS, Mona as a lecturer. The UWI has literally been my home! So, all in all, my personal relationship with UWI has allowed me to continue to seek excellence in everything I do here. There have never been aspirations for promotions, and the title of 'Professorship' was one I was always in awe of and never quite imagined for myself. But with this





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honour from UWI, my early teachings have come alive - the revered scripture 'Geeta' tells us that 'Man must work and leave the fruits of his labour to will of the Almighty'. And so, my personal mantra along my journey has been - Work hard, with ownership and passion for what you do.

I am a family physician by training. Family medicine has traditionally been an underdog in the list of medical specialties and not usually considered very exciting or attractive financially by young doctors. However, it is one of the most rewarding specialities in the medical field connecting you to thousands of families as you provide care for them over decades and across generations many times. I have always viewed good health and illness through a 'family medicine lens' and this has also guided my research endeavours - especially in the field of

sickle cell disease - with a mission to improving quality of life of persons living with this disorder. Clinicians will do well to embrace the need to gain further understanding of diseases and thereafter test relevant interventions through rigorous research. The need for a greater cadre of committed clinicianscientists in the region is great.

One of the most critical factors contributing to my success has been the selfless mentoring I have been fortunate to receive from many brilliant leaders at UWI I have worked with! The countless hours learning and receiving their skilled guidance and ultimately gaining their confidence has allowed me to forge my own path. The other factor undoubtedly is blessings from God and my loved ones. My belief is that positive mentoring of young (and even the not so young) academics is a critical

strategy in enhancing their personal and professional development as well as the growth of the UWI and the wider society. Faculty that are motivated, satisfied and driven will continually improve their productivity as well as create lasting collegial relationships within the academy.





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## Journey to Professorship: Beyond the CV

PROFESSOR HELEN TROTMAN-EDWARDS, MBBS, DCH, DM PAEDIATRICS, MPH, MS BIOETHICS Professor of Paediatrics and Neonatology, Department of Child and Adolescent Health, FMS, The UWI, Mona, Jamaica



Dr. Helen Trotman-Edwards promoted to Professor of Paediatrics and Neonatology, September 30, 2020 A wise colleague once told me that my curriculum vitae must stand on its own, it should require no explanations, no apologies. It should be clear, crisp, comprehensive and effectively depict my academic journey. Over the years, although adhering to this ethos, I have come to terms with the reality that there is a story to be told beyond the CV.

My journey started innocuously with a stirring interest in caring for newborns, teaching & learning and eventually research. These three evolved into passions that became intricately intertwined and defined my journey travelled to professorship.

It was during my paediatric residency I developed and nurtured a love for taking care of newborn infants, especially the very low birth weight infant (VLBW) (<1500g or < 3lbs). Post residency I joined the Department of Child Health at the UHWI and the UWI as Consultant Paediatrician and Lecturer respectively. I recognized the need for specialized training to optimize my competency to take care of these vulnerable babies, and embarked on an overseas clinical fellowship in Neonatology at Oregon Health and Science University, Oregon, USA. Upon my return I determined that decreasing mortality in very low birth weight infants in a resource

limited setting would be my niche focus. I went on to pursue a Masters of Public Health to acquire the requisite research skills to inform clinical practice.

I embarked on my clinical research journey to define the determinants of mortality in neonates and the VLBW infant in a resource limited setting and develop evidence based interventions to improve survival. I embraced tutoring and mentoring paediatric residents to care for the newborn and VLBW infants. Training them in evidence based medicine led to teaching of research methods and supervision of research projects which generated a body of work that informed clinical

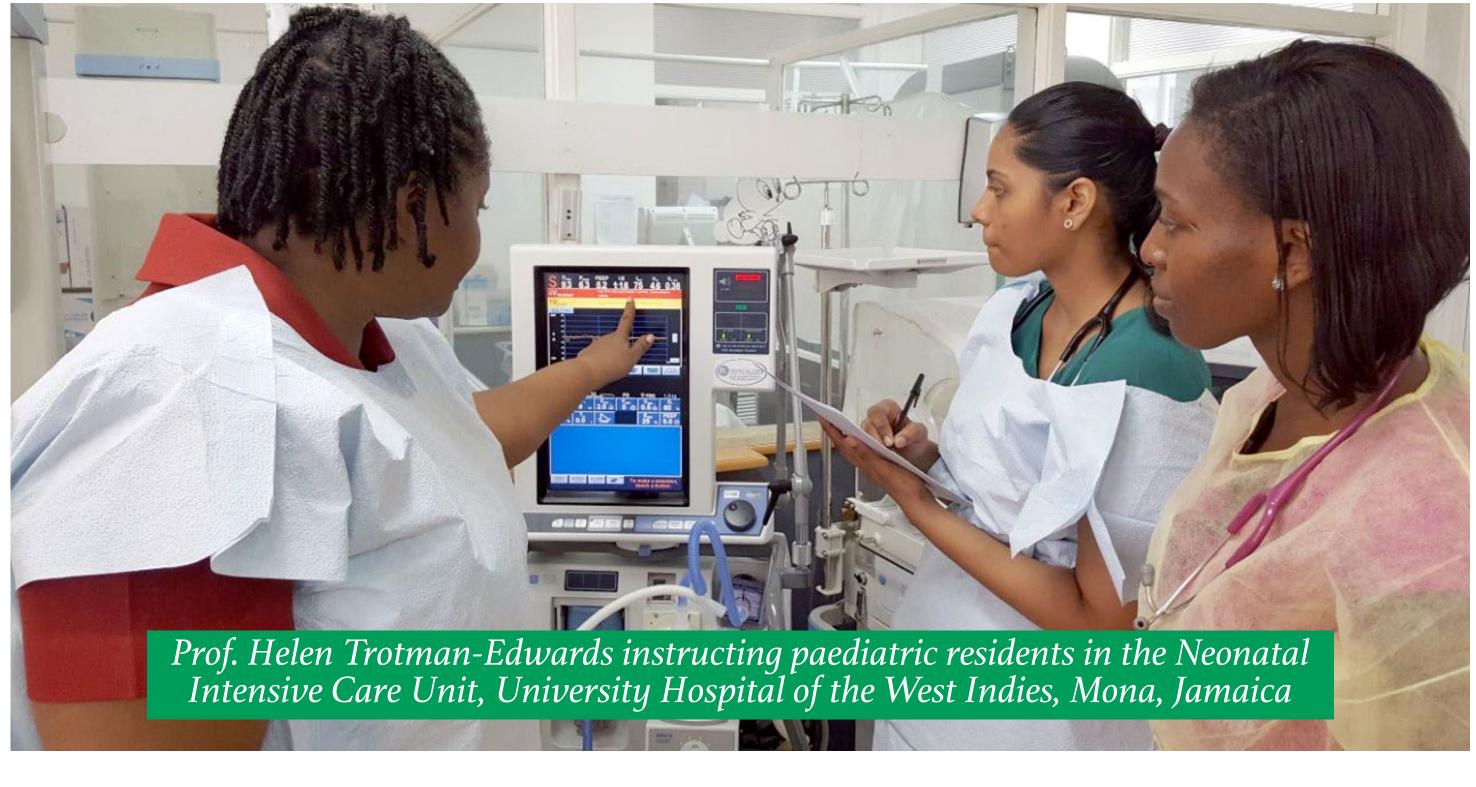


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practice. Clinically relevant research became a critical teaching and learning tool for postgraduate students to gain hands on experience in practicing evidence based medicine.

As part of strengthening my research skills I volunteered to serve on the UWI Mona Research Ethics Committee. While on the committee I pursued formal training in research ethics and completed an MSc in Bioethics (Clarkson University/Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai).

Three years ago I accepted the opportunity to assume the role of the MBBS Programme Director and the Deputy Dean Teaching and Learning in the Faculty. This proved to be a steep learning curve but it was a challenge I was open to embrace. This opportunity built my administrative and leadership skills and continues to contribute substantially in service to the University.



The journey has been challenging but rewarding, it has taught me how to balance (academic, family, social, spiritual life) and how to pivot. It has taught me gratitude, gratitude for every person who has stretched out a hand and pulled me up. Gratitude for every opportunity that presented itself, and the vision to embrace opportunity no matter how it was disguised.

Gratitude for a family who unequivocally gave me room to grow. Gratitude for the sufficiency of God's Grace.

So what advice can I offer colleagues based on my journey? Be passionate and focused about what you do, find your niche, be resilient and determined to persevere (you will need it when you get that first ego bruising journal article

rejection). Always be open to embrace new challenges, you never know where it may lead. Continuously assess your weaknesses and take corrective action, learn to balance and pivot but most importantly, humbly enjoy the journey while staying true to yourself.



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## The UWI FMS/MOHW Health Corps COVID-19 Volunteer Programme

a shining example of social accountability in face of a public health crisis

#### DR. TANA RICKETTS-ROOMES

Lecturer, Department of Community Health & Psychiatry, FMS, The UWI, Mona, Jamaica

#### **UWI FMS/MOHW HEALTH CORPS STUDENT LEADERS**<sup>1</sup>

#### DR. TOMLIN PAUL

Dean, Faculty of Medical Sciences, The UWI, Mona, Jamaica

#### Background

The Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS), The University of the West Indies (The UWI), through its leadership of Dean Tomlin Paul, has as one of its strategic objectives, the concept of "social accountability". While a concept for many in the FMS, the opportunity to operationalize came with

the arrival of COVID-19 to Jamaica's shores. March 10, 2020 marked the beginning of an unprecedented period in Jamaica's history when the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed.

Similar to many countries before us that battled this unseen virus and had to find creative ways of responding to this biological threat, the collaboration of all stakeholders became paramount to address control of the epidemic. This included the participation of volunteers to bolster the fight. Jamaica, like so many other settings, would need "all hands on deck" to have a fighting chance.

The FMS, UWI responded to the call from the Jamaica Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) for volunteers to assist with the national response to the epidemic. The UWI FMS/MOHW Health Corps COVID-19 Volunteer *Programme* initiative was conceptualised and developed with the overall aim to improve the public health response to the Jamaican public in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic.

At the onset, the key objectives utilising student volunteers were as follows:

- I. To service the MOHW's quarantine app
- 2. To assist various public entities in

- carrying out important epidemiological functions in the context of COVID-19
- 3. Respond to members of the public who called the MOHW's COVID hotline regarding COVID concerns

#### Methodology

Jamaica's Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) extended a request to the UWI for use of its Call Centre to assist with the COVID-19 national response. This required student volunteers from the Faculty of Medical Sciences to man the UWI Call Centre for a period of 6 months initially. Volunteers were expected to follow-up and respond to queries by the public on the COVID hotline at the initial onset. This call to service was answered initially by students in the MBBS programme on March 20, 2020. As the need for more inclusive involvement was encouraged, the invitation was extended to students



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in all health profession programmes in the FMS. After much preparatory work, the UWI Call Centre engagement officially began operation on April 6, 2020 with approximately 70 volunteers, mainly consisting of students in the clinical years of the MBBS programme. The requisite training was done by the MOHW. Students manned the UWI Call Centre, but were also deployed to several other sites – health departments, regional health offices, National **Emergency Operations** Centre and the Surveillance Unit of the MOHW – in order to fulfil needs as they arose.

During the implementation of this programme, students' roles and activities evolved from the initial aim and objectives into assisting the public with a wide range of health and social issues. They fulfilled roles including call agents, floor/ shift supervisors, human resources personnel, data collectors and

handlers among others. All interactions with the public were entered into a spreadsheet primarily designed by the MOHW and improved for greater data capture by the team of student managers at the UWI Call Centre. The student-leaders also formulated several operating procedure documents in an effort to improve the efficiency at the Call Centre. Students who were deployed outside of the UWI Call Centre participated in vital surveillance tasks (including creating case reports; data entry; calls to members of the public regarding queries; organizing testing) along with the MOHW personnel.

There was a tiered system at the UWI Call Centre where the students carrying out the role as call agents were supervised on site by student leaders. The student leaders depending on the need, would liaise with the programme supervisor (a member of

Faculty), the Call Centre technical team, the MOHW and volunteer physicians. The students carried out their Call Centre duties on shifts to ensure that there was adequate coverage for responding to the public over a 12 hour-period each day, 7 days a week.

#### **Outcomes**

The programme began addressing the backlog of over 7000 calls which were brought up to date by the student volunteers in less than 2 months. During the 6 months of this initial engagement, over 130 volunteers were engaged, at one time or another, and contributed to over 16000 volunteer hours as they

handled in excess of 31000 calls.

The students garnered more hands-on experience than any medical school and health professions curriculum could ever hope to achieve, as well as the satisfaction that they contributed invaluable service to Jamaica's COVID 19 response. Another spinoff of this initiative for medical students was the activities accounted for the mandatory elective period under the auspices of the Department of Community Health & Psychiatry, through supervision of Dr Tana Ricketts-Roomes, lecturer and coordinator of the programme on behalf of the FMS.





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#### Lessons Learned

The importance of involving volunteers in any pandemic response cannot be understated especially in resource-limited settings. The significance of a multidisciplinary approach to managing public health threats was clearly demonstrated in this programme, along with the agility of the Faculty in responding to and supporting the national health system during this crisis.

The students expressed an appreciation for the wide scope of public health, and the first-hand application of how disease outbreaks and other health challenges are handled. They were also thrilled for the opportunity to apply some of their medical training to practice, while assisting the public in these unprecedented times. They felt honoured to assist Jamaica in its COVID-19 response.

This programme has been hailed as a flagship programme of The UWI, Mona while it fulfilled the FMS's commitment to social accountability. The MOHW has also branded the programme as a success which enabled them to respond to the

not yet available)

and the additional info google form.

general public in ways that they likely would not have been able to without the programme. As a result, negotiations are currently underway to explore the extension of the programme in light of the ongoing pandemic. The FMS and the UWI stand ready to continue supporting the national response to COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Twitter/Facebook:

Jamaica Observer. (2020, April 10). UWI and health minister reach agreement on COVID response [Tweet].

Twitter. https://twitter. com/JamaicaObserver/ status/1248782910175481856

#### **UWI Mona:**

Meeting with Principal, Registrar & Touring of COVID-19 Call Centre. (2020, April 10). [Facebook status update]. Facebook.

https://www.facebook. com/95746458800/ videos/2556859337861425/

#### **Video links:**

- https://www.facebook. com/95746458800/ videos/2556859337861425/
- https://twitter.com/ JamaicaObserver/ status/1248782910175481856

<sup>1</sup>The group has consisted of the following students over the 6 months:

- Mica Cunningham
- Marika Vernon
- Danielle Lester
- Kaedi Burke
- Kendra Lee
- Lauren Berry
- Sinovia Snow
- Tiffani Walters
- Janelle Smith
- Omarr Edwards
- Ava Robertson (2020 graduand)
- Nikolai Nunes (2020 graduand)
- Toni-Ann Mundle
- Kevoy Taylor



Must be a registered student in the Faculty of Medical Sciences.

Must be able to work at one of our on site locations. (Remote access

Must complete MOHW application form, volunteer confidentiality form

Completed documents must be sent to mbbsstudentleaders@gmail.com

N.B. Contact your department reps or any member of the COVID-19 student task force

to access the above mentioned documents and for further instructions.



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## AMEE ASPIRE Award for Excellence in Social Accountability at Mona

DR. TOMLIN PAUL

Dean, FMS, The UWI, Mona, Jamaica

**T**n September 2020, **⊥** the Faculty of Medical Sciences on the Mona Campus received the ASPIRE Award for Excellence in Social Accountability.<sup>1</sup> The ASPIRE to Excellence Programme administered by the Association for Medical Education in Europe (AMEE) has been established to go beyond the traditional accreditation process and to recognise that the education programme in a medical school can be subjected to peer review against an agreed set of standards or benchmarks that identify world-class excellence in education.

Social Accountability in the context of medical education, speaks to the "obligation of the medical school to respond to the priority health needs of the population which it serves".2 At the Mona Campus, Dean Tomlin Paul has championed the vision of social accountability making it a stated core value of the Faculty and finding a place for it in the mission of the Faculty. Dr. Paul has been crafting a model of social accountability that brings together all of the health professions under his watch, so as to express social obligation within a team framework. Over the past few years the

Faculty has seen growth in inter-professional social outreach and incentives for socially accountable actions. The Faculty has also seen stronger student engagement and growing advocacy on issues of social justice.

The ASPIRE Award was based not only on the current efforts of the Mona leadership to promote involvement of its health professions' students as change agents, but also on an appreciation of the impact of past initiatives such as the community contextualization of medical education by the late Professor Sir Kenneth

Standard former Head of the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine at Mona.

The Faculty is the 17th training institution worldwide to receive this Award and the First in Latin America and the Caribbean. Dean Paul was keen to point out the contribution of the Mona team in this achievement highlighting the excellent leadership of students and



Sir Kenneth Standard and workers in the field – social accountability in action



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the support by members of faculty for this vision. He was also grateful for the long standing support of the Pan American Health Organization. He noted that the award will help to stimulate ongoing efforts to build on the legacy of stalwarts such as Sir Kenneth Standard and will help to foster a regional movement for social accountability in health professions' education.

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Dean Paul meeting with student leaders and faulty – FMS Social Accountability Initiative



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## Standard Operating Procedures For Virtual Oral/Clinical Examinations in Doctor of Medicine FMS (COVID-19 Era)

#### MR DAMIEN BROWN

IT Administrator, FMS, The UWI, Mona, Jamaica

#### PROFESSOR RUSSELL PIERRE

Director of Medical Education, Health Professions Education Unit, FMS, The UWI, Mona, Jamaica

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Covid-19 pandemic has ushered a new paradigm in medical education. For the Doctor of Medicine Programmes the conduct of assessments is a significant challenge, since the modality of clinical assessments (e.g. Objective Structured Clinical Examinations) and oral examinations cannot be administered in the traditional manner. The safety of clients, candidates, examiners and administrators is paramount in the face of the pandemic. While written exams may easily be administered via

the Learning Management
System (branded OurVLE
at the Mona Campus),
an online solution to
administer the clinical/oral
exams must be identified.
This virtual model has
to enable examiners to
evaluate candidates'
competencies in clinical
skills (history taking,
counselling etc) within
the confines of COVID-19
precautions and restrictions.

The following are key
Practice Points which were
developed for implementing
virtual clinical/oral
examinations in the
prevailing at-risk settings.

#### ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

- Create an examination team
- Discuss and develop the virtual examination format and structure
- Modify the traditional examination structure, process and procedure
- Blueprint, determine content, standard set the examination
- Identify the virtual examination implementation team (Exam Administrator, IT Administrator, IT administrator, additional administrative support)

- Conduct simulations/ mock examinations using the virtual platform, including orientation of examiners, candidates, SPs to the process
- Establish effective communications to examiners, candidates, SPs

## TECHNICAL PROCEDURES

Use the online web conferencing application Zoom to create meetings that will be used for oral and/or OSCE examinations. For OSCE, multiple "breakout rooms" will



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be created as virtual examination rooms and patient care scenarios.

#### Equipment

- Laptops for examiner (as necessary)
- Laptops for simulated patient (if SPs are used)
- Laptops for student
- Internet access (wired Ethernet access preferred)
- Location with Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) and/or generator to ensure electricity backup
- Headset with microphone (preferably a USB headset with active noise cancelling feature)

#### **Laptop Specifications:**

- » Microsoft Windows 10Operating System
- » Intel Core i5 or greater processor
- » 8GB Memory or greater
- » 120 GB Hard Drive or greater
- » Camera
- » Microphone
- Ethernet port or USB to Ethernet adapter

## Internet (bandwidth) Specifications:

» Minimum of 10Mbps up/down per user

Recommendation is to perform a speed test to ascertain bandwidth provisioned to location using websites such as www.fast.com or www. speedtest.net

#### **Staffing Requirements**

- I person assigned to manage maximum of 5 breakout rooms\*
- 1-2 person assigned for onsite technical support (device or internet assistance) per examination floor
- 1-2 persons familiar with examination process should be assigned as exam overseer

#### **Device Configuration**

- Laptop setup with a generic account with only Zoom application visible for candidate
- Laptop setup with access to internet browser and Office applications for examiner

- Laptop setup with access to internet browser and Office applications for simulated patient
- Windows updates installed
- Power saver settings disabled ensuring that device does not go to sleep/hibernate or shut down
- Zoom updated to latest version

#### The Zoom Exam Process

- Zoom account is used to create a Zoom meeting with waiting room and breakout rooms\* (multiply Zoom accounts as needed to cover all candidate/examiner/ patient requirements)
- The Zoom breakout rooms will be named appropriately
- Person(s) assigned as Exam Administrator(s) signs in to the meeting. If they do not have the account credentials then the Zoom account holder can sign in and assign them the Host role.
- Examiners sign in to Zoom with their full

- names displayed
- Candidates sign in to Zoom with their display name as assigned by DM Coordinator
- If being used for the exam, simulated patients (SP) sign in to Zoom with their scenario name as assigned by DM Coordinator
- The exam administrator will admit the examiners into the Zoom meeting, have a brief discussion and then move them into pre-assigned breakout rooms
- The exam administrator will admit and move SPs into pre-assigned breakout rooms
- Exam administrator will admit the candidates into the Zoom main room and then move them into their respective breakout rooms after brief discussion
- Exam administrator will send a broadcast message informing examiners that candidates will soon arrive into their breakout rooms



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- As soon as each candidate is moved into their rooms the exam will start
- When the exam station is finished the candidate will be instructed to click leave and then leave breakout room to be returned to the Zoom main room. This should only be done by the candidate as once in a room the Exam administrator can only move persons across breakout rooms.
- When all candidates have returned to the main Zoom room the exam administrator will then move them to the next breakout room (exam station) and continue until the cycle is complete.

\*Each Zoom host (Exam Administrator) can comfortably manage 5 breakout rooms. Adding more breakout rooms to the Zoom host will extend the time between movements of persons between breakout rooms.

**Optional Exam Settings:** 

Automatically move persons into breakout rooms
It is possible to configure Zoom to move persons into their breakout rooms (without the Zoom attendee having to click to join the breakout room). This can be useful if the attendees may have difficulty seeing the Zoom prompt to join breakout rooms

Broadcast Message
It is possible for the host
to send a message to all
breakout rooms. Example:
When all participants are
in their respective breakout
rooms, a message can be
sent for examiners to start
their exams now.

Create additional Rooms
When creating the required breakout rooms as stations, it may be useful to create additional rooms to house candidates as they wait, or for examiners to meet.

Recording of Breakout
Rooms
It is possible to record the
Zoom session as well as

the breakout rooms. This is dependent on approval from the Board of Graduate Studies. With their approval a Zoom participant who will be constant in each breakout room (e.g. examiner, invigilator) will have to be assigned the role of co-host for them to be able to record the breakout room. This recording will be stored on their device (e.g. laptop). At the end of the exam process the recordings will

At the end of the exam process the recordings will have to be removed from the device and stored securely.

Assumptions of Solution
The solution assumes that
all participants are located
at a site with stable internet
connectivity, electrical
power redundancies,
and appropriate devices
available for use by all
parties (candidates,
examiners and simulated
patients).

#### **APPENDIX**

#### (i) Staff Roles

<u>Host</u>

A departmental/academic staff member will be responsible for the moving of students from room to room, recording of the exam session and the timing of the exam.

#### On-site technical support

1-2 ICT technicians are required to be available to troubleshoot and assist examiner, candidate and simulated patient as necessary with devices, internet/network connectivity during the exam. Prior to the start of each exam 5+ technical support staff are required to ensure that computing devices are setup in room and assigned to each exam participant ensuring that the exam can start on time.

#### Exam overseer

A department/academic staff member familiar with the exam processes and all parties involved should be available to oversee and ensure smooth flow of the exams.

#### (ii) Computer Configuration

Create an "Exam" standard user account on the UWI laptops to be used by the candidate, and simulated patient (where necessary).

Remove all internet browsers from the user account on the computer to be used by the candidate. The Zoom application should be the only application visible on the desktop/taskbar.

#### (iii) Redundancy

It is recommended in case of a device malfunction an extra Laptop/Tablet be configured for student use in case the primary device fails. The same is recommended for the Examiner/Departmental staff member/patient.

Internet redundancy would be facilitated by the use of portable Hot Spot (MiFi) Devices.

UPS and generator are required to ensure continuous supply of electricity.



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## UWI School of Clinical Medicine and Research, The Bahamas: Contact Tracing

## at the Forefront of Controlling COVID -19 in the Bahamas

CHARLES VIRGILL IV<sup>†</sup>, TERIA BAIN\*, AVERY CUNNINGHAM\*, RAEGEENE BROWN\*, PEDRO NEELY\*

<sup>†5th</sup> Yr. Medical Student, Class 2021; \*4th Yr. Medical Students, Class 2022 UWI School of Clinical Medicine and Research, The Bahamas.

Medical Students from The University of the West Indies were given the opportunity to participate in the Ministry of Health, Bahamas, COVID-19 Contact Tracing project. Students were challenged with a task that they did not expect to experience in their lifetime. Although the overall circumstance was dire, operating within the pandemic was unprecedented. The collaboration of students and health care officials from the Ministry of Health was truly remarkable. This entire opportunity had unfolded when the University Director, Dr.

Robin Roberts made the commitment that students can be impactful outside the hospital by combating the virus from a safer and meaningful way. Charles Virgill IV (final year medical student) was tasked with working with Dr. Phillip Swann (Ministry of Health collaborator) and Mrs. Marsha Bain (University Administrator) in assigning a flexible but practical schedule with which students could assist in Contact tracing at the Melia **Hotel Contact Tracing** Center and Sample Testing at the Laboratory Center, Rawson Square, Bay Street.

There were forty medical student volunteers and included students from Freeport, Abaco, Long Island, Eleuthera, Exuma and Andros. The uniqueness of students coming from various islands gave the Ministry of Health the opportunity to establish contact persons for when students returned home before the National Lockdown. Students described the experience as something out of a Stephen King novel when experiencing the formality at the Melia Hotel, that was now used for the COVID-19 Contact Tracing Center. The role of the students on





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each team was to transfer patients' information from the hospital physical forms to the combined excel sheet, calling patients who had tested positive to determine wellness, and contacting persons who may have come in contact with positive patients. A unique synergistic encounter. Students were equipped with medical literacy, student-patient professionalism and the experience of completing a Research/Ethics clerkship at the Princess Margaret Hospital, all of which made data input and analysis a simpler task.

These tasks were crucial.
A professionally organized contact tracing center

meant workers, particularly health care workers, would be equipped with the health status of the community and thus able to determine the effectiveness of nationwide protocols. Medical students conducted approximately 200-300 calls daily to persons who may have been in contact with a positive COVID-19 patient. This was a 'one of a time' and motivating experience combined with an unprecedented opportunity to learn. Student volunteers spent roughly 8-10 hours daily inclusive of weekends participating in activities. Engaging clients over the phone concerning their unique experiences augmented students' knowledge of

the symptomatology of the virus. The opportunity to work in the front-line combating the virus and helping to ensure safety on both a local and global scale was the greater reward.

The contact tracing is ongoing, but we say unequivocally that the medical students of the University of the West Indies made a dent in managing the COVID-19 epidemic in the Bahamas. Students were credited also with finding more effective ways to input data, and seeking information of symptoms experienced by COVID-19 positive patients, enabling them to educate and impact their own communities.



[Top Photos] Students volunteers with the PM of the Bahamas – The Hon Dr. Hubert Minnis (UWI MBBS '80; DM'86)





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### UWI Bahamas Women's Health Initiative

#### **JAN MONCUR**

4th Yr. Medical Student, Class 2022 UWI School of Clinical Medicine and Research, The Bahamas.

The UWI Bahamas ■ Women's Health Initiative was established in 2018 by its founders, Dr. Agatha Foulkes-Mackey, Dr. Nikechia Hall-Dennis and Dr. Janelle Osadebay-Brown, all recent UWI MBBS graduates. We have 264 members of which medical students and staff account for approximately 70%. The mission of this profound organization has been since its inception to improve women's health by bridging the gap between healthcare professionals and the community through education, outreach and research. This group's focus encompasses women of all ages and tailors its community outreach to meet their specific needs. This means improving the health for our younger

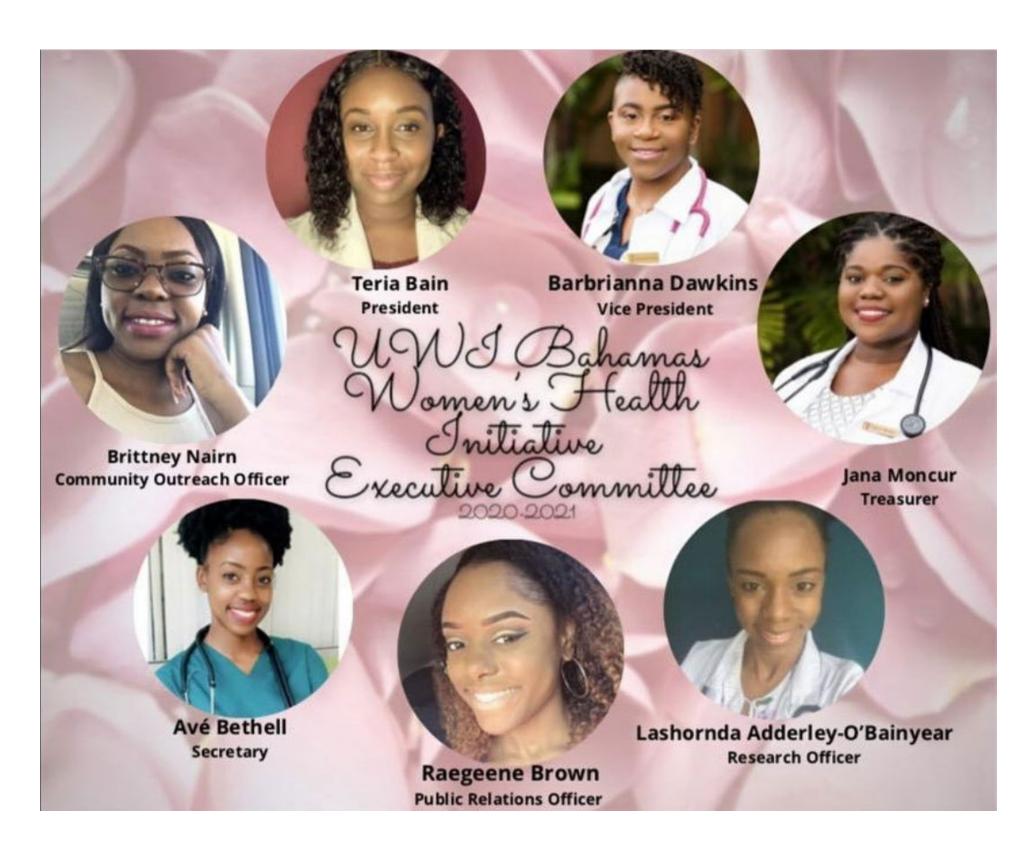
demographic of ladies

by educating them about pregnancy and STD prevention through safe sex practices, educating about cervical and breast screening in our older women and also improving health through research on risk factors, prevention, and early detection of serious health conditions, so that our postmenopausal women also thrive. It is without doubt that with the global spread of the Covid-19 virus this year, there were limitations in our community outreach, and like most of the world we too had to adjust and reframe our outreach.

For this academic year 2020/2021 in spite of the limitations, the UWI Women's Health Initiative has a calendar of events consisting of Educational

Webinar series, Charity events, and interactive web series. With the induction of the new executive team for the 2020/2021 calendar and in spite of the emergency

orders we kicked off with a Webinar Series in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month where we warmly welcomed our Guest speakers Dr. Alia Campbell (Clinical Psychologist), Dr. Wesley Francis (Surgical Oncologist), Ms. Judy Miller (Breast Cancer Survivor) and Ms. Duquesa Dean (Corporate Trainer and Motivational Speaker). There were





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approximately ninety (90) participants in attendance much more than was anticipated for our first event of the year. Following this tremendous success, we rolled into fall with a cupcake fundraiser where we were able to delight the sweet tooth lovers and garner the support of the **UWI** Medical community as well as patrons from the Bahamian community. One accomplishment that we can attest to so far was having tremendous success in meeting and surpassing our fundraiser goal for our Annual PACE Christmas Charity event. The Providing Access to Continued Education center also known as PACE is an institution designed to ensure the continued education of teenage parents. This event would normally be a sit-down luncheon affair with keynote motivational speakers, games and activities for the young mothers. This year due to the COVID-19 pandemic we adjusted our traditional

program to adhere to our local public safety protocols. However, with the support of our many sponsors we were able to deliver our prepared mother and infant, gift items along with neatly packaged festive dinner meals for the students and respective staff.

The remainder of the calendar events slated for the 2021 agenda will comprise a variety of educational outreach events, starting with our Cervical Cancer Awareness webinar and ending with our slated Practical Tips for the Working Mom webinar. This organization will continue to strive towards the ultimate mark of Women's Health in the Bahamas. It is our hope that we can continue to educate women and bring awareness throughout the entire archipelago by providing safe spaces for sharing, learning, continued health and interpersonal improvement.







## Animal Lovers & COVID-19: What you need to know?

#### DR. ANIL PERSAD

session.

Lecturer, School of Veterinary Medicine, FMS, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

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On July 28th 2020, in response to a deluge of questions by the general public, the School of Veterinary Medicine hosted a webinar on the role of pets and livestock in the epidemiology of COVID-19. The webinar, attended by 115 persons from 10 countries, comprised two presentations and a question-and-answer

In the first presentation, Professor Christopher Oura, Professor of Veterinary Virology, cautioned that increasing interactions between humans and animals, both domestic and wild, increases the risk of transmission of exotic zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19. He further stated that a cross-disciplinary One Health approach is needed to successfully prevent further zoonotic disease outbreaks such as COVID-19.

Dr Lisa Benjamin, Lecturer in Veterinary Public Health, delivered the second presentation. She advised that only a limited number of animals have tested positive for COVID-19 and reminded viewers the main route of transmission for the disease is via person to person. Dr Benjamin further recommended that persons reduce their pets' exposure to COVID-19 by using a leash when walking them and avoiding areas where large numbers of

people congregate. She also advised that masks should not be placed over the mouth and nostrils of animals, and owners should consult a veterinarian if their animals begin to show signs of illness.

A summary of the issues discussed in the webinar is available at UWI Today. For further information, please contact the School of Veterinary Medicine at (868) 645-3232 Ext 4242, or email: vetsch@tstt.net.tt



The Faculty of Medical Sciences

**School of Veterinary Medicine** 

Virtual Symposium

Animal Lovers & COVID-19: What you need to know.

**Tuesday 28 July, 2020 | 1:30pm** (AST)

**Moderators:** Dr. Anil Persad & Dr. Marc Driscoll

#### Speakers:

- Professor Christopher Oura, Professor Veterinary Virology
- Dr. Lisa Benjamin, Lecturer Veterinary Public Health

**CLICK HERE** to register





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## UWI-SVM AND UNDP GEF-SGP

## Embedding Aquatic 'One Health' into the Business of Aquaculture in Trinidad and Tobago

#### DR. A. CARLA N. PHILLIPS SAVAGE

Lecturer in Marine Mammal Medicine/Aquatic Animal Health Coordinator, Aquaculture/Aquatic Animal Health Unit, UWI-SVM and ENHSAS Project Lead, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago



Dr. Carla Phillips Savage, Coordinator of the Aquatic Animal Health Unit at the University of the West Indies School of Veterinary Medicine, is the Project Lead for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) GEF-SGP-funded project entitled:

"Enhancing National Health Standards in Aquaculture Systems (ENHSAS): Increasing Aquaculture Productivity, Improving Industry Sustainability, and Reducing Deleterious Aquatic Habitat Impacts."

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen the local aquatic animal health capacity in Trinidad and Tobago and to safeguard the sustainability of the aquaculture sector and marine environment from the detrimental effects of invasive species and diseases. This is being done through promoting

and supporting the development of sustainable intensive and semi-intensive aquatic animal production systems, with the goal of reducing the dependence on marine fishery stocks and supporting population rebound. For project highlights and photos from the various ENHSAS Project community outreach and training sessions. Have a look at the project's educational videos, produced by Sustain T&T,













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## **ENHANCING NATIONAL HEALTH STANDARDS** IN AQUACULTURE SYSTEMS (ENHSAS):

Increasing Aquaculture Productivity, Improving Industry Sustainability and Reducing Deleterious Aquatic Habitat Impacts.

geared toward helping the general public understand how they can help protect the health of our country's aquatic ecosystems. Check out the following video links:

ENHSAS- Proper Disposal of Wastewater https://youtu.be/\_ yAzmQPKIkQ

ENHSAS- Proper Disposal of Fish https://youtu.be/ Ah77Lg63NZk

**ENHSAS- Invasive Species** https://youtu.be/ rZŔNIŹSIvZQ

ENHSAS - Best Practices in Aquaculture https://youtu. be/60WhutsZRZI

**ENHSAS** - Antimicrobial Resistance https://youtu.be/aqi6h2fv-Mg

The ENHSAS project is in its final phases and is carded to be completed in December 2020. It is hoped that the lessons taught and the networks established throughout the course of the project would continue to strengthen the local aquaculture industry and that newly adopted responsible behaviours would serve to safeguard human, aquatic animal and aquatic environmental health and well-being for the generation to come.



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## Virtual PBL Workshop Evaluation, September 2020

#### DR. BIDYADHAR SA

Centre for Medical Sciences Education, FMS, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

The Centre for Medical Sciences Education (CMSE) hosted its annual Problem Based Learning (PBL) workshop virtually on Thursday, 3rd September, 2020. Professor Chidum Ezenwaka, Deputy Dean, Basic Health Sciences, delivered the opening remarks and the workshop was facilitated by Dr. Bidyadhar Sa and Dr. Pradeep Sahu.

The workshop was designed to introduce the novice tutor to the philosophy, practice and rationale of PBL, self-directed learning, the use of health scenarios as educational tools, and role of the PBL

tutor. About 51 members of staff participated in the workshop and were exposed to the following key topics:

- An Introduction to the Educational Philosophy of PBL: Tradition vs Online PBL
- Systemic Approach to Online PBL
- Encouraging Critical Thinking and Self-Directed Learning
- The Role of the E-tutor in PBL
- PBL Video
   Demonstration and
   Discussion
- Assessment: Synchronous vs Asynchronous
- PBL Assessment at FMS and Use of Rubrics

 Feedback: Giving Feedback Online to Enhance Learning

Dr. Junnet Mohan, Department of Preclinical Sciences was invited to share her experience with "Shifting Towards Online PBL".

Specially thanks to Ms Lindy Plaza, Ms Siobhan Bedau and Marlon Sampson from CMSE for extending technical support.





### Shelter Drive 2020

#### **KEZIA SOOKRAM**

VSATT President 2020/21, School of Veterinary Medicine, FMS, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago



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During a pandemic, it is easy to focus on your own needs and making sure they are met; however, the executive of the Veterinary Students' Association of Trinidad and Tobago chose to focus on the needs of the numerous shelter animals and wildlife that desperately required essential items for their survival.

The drive started off during the month of September, initially extended to the Faculty of Medical Sciences, nevertheless, due to the overwhelming support of the FMS family by highlighting our drive on social media- it managed to grasp the attention of a TV6 reporter, Ms Urvashi Roopnarine, who secured us an interview which was aired on the TV6 7pm news.





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Due to this development, people throughout the country began donating generously to our venture resulting in enough money to purchase hardware items which the El Socorro Center for Wildlife Conservation needed to start their first wildlife hospital in the Caribbean as well as enough food, cleaning items and toys donated for two shelters- the Trinidad

and Tobago Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (TTSPCA) as well as Animals Alive.

The drive lasted throughout the month of October and the items were presented to the shelters on the 31st October and 1st November, 2020. It was such a satisfying moment for the students of VSATT, seeing all their efforts being replaced by

gratitude not only by the owners of the shelters but on the faces of the animals which we had the pleasure of seeing via tours throughout the various shelters.

The executives of VSATT would like to thank the public – the people who made this drive possible as well as our administration at the School of Veterinary

Medicin, Dr Karla Georges and Dr Anil Persad, who gave us the support we needed. We would also like to encourage you to "Adopt - Don't Shop" as there are many vibrant and healthy animals in the shelters who would make exceptional companion animals if you just gave them and chance.







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## COVID -19 And its Influence On Orthopaedic Education: The Trinidad and Tobago Experience

#### DR. MARLON M. MENCIA

Lecturer (Orthopaedics), FMS, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

#### DR. RAAKESH GOALAN

Registrar, Sangre Grande Hospital, Trinidad and Tobago

#### DR. CAMILLE QUAN SOON

Lecturer (Orthopaedics), FMS, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

#### DR. ALLAN BEHARRY

Registrar, Port of Spain General Hospital, Trinidad and Tobago

The World Health **▲** Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020 and Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) reported its first case one day later. 1-3 The response by The University of the West Indies (UWI) was quick and decisive with migration of all teaching and assessments to an online platform. Medical education at The UWI was poised to undergo a radical transformation, with the redesign of clinical

clerkships concordant with remote learning, while simultaneously maintaining performance standards.

To effect such a fundamental change, the 4-week undergraduate orthopaedic clerkship was divided into an online and a proposed face to face clinical component, each lasting two weeks; with the latter scheduled to begin in January 2021. The online course content previously available on MyeLearning,

was migrated to Schoology as this platform was found to be more user friendly and versatile. Additional learning resources including videos and website links for physical examination and basic casting techniques, were also uploaded to the course now located on the Schoology platform. All remote teaching was conducted via Zoom®, with the use of didactic lectures, case discussions and student presentations. Notwithstanding the ease by which online classes could be scheduled, perhaps our greatest challenge was the impersonal nature of remote teaching, compounded by having the cameras turned off during teaching (a point of controversy).

However, despite the unfamiliar teaching strategies, most students were still able to adequately achieve the clerkship's learning objectives. Results from an anonymized survey performed after completion



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of the online component, revealed that more than 88% of students felt that their knowledge of orthopaedics was now satisfactory, very good or excellent (see Fig. 1).

Interestingly, online resident training was not affected by the same problems that plagued the undergraduates, and in fact there was lively discussion and interaction amongst the residents and lecturers. It was notable that attendance at online teaching sessions surpassed that of traditional in-person classes. This was mainly because residents no longer had to travel from their various hospitals to attend centralized classes, allowing fulfilment of both the service and educational aspects of their jobs.

There is arguably no other surgical specialty

than Orthopaedics in which the acquisition of well-developed clinical examination skills is more relevant. Despite the many advances in e-Learning, including the use of interactive 3D visualizations for surgery education, at The UWI we still utilise traditional methods of bedside clinical teaching. Undeniably, the absence of face to face clinical instruction poses a significant threat to the development of basic clinical skills. An intensive two-week clinical clerkship for the undergraduate students has been proposed to satisfy institutional matriculation standards. Unfortunately, the postgraduate educational experience has become vastly diluted because the COVID -19 restrictions have resulted in a significant

reduction in clinical opportunities. Residents have used the extra time to complete their research projects and case reports, but the overall effect on their clinical competence remains uncertain. These unique circumstances have led to feelings of anxiety in our students about their ability to graduate, and then to competently function within the healthcare system.

Orthopaedic education, in particular clinical teaching, has been significantly affected by COVID-19. The UWI, its staff and students have responded positively to this unprecedented challenge in the presence of much uncertainty. Many of the changes caused by COVID-19 are likely to become permanent and we anticipate increased

adoption of a wide range of e-Learning strategies. These new teaching methods will be used to enhance the acquisition of clinical skills, which has always been one of the strengths of medical education at The UWI.

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## World Diabetes Day 2020

### Promoting Diabetes Education

#### **DR RAJIV DAHIYA**

Director, School of Pharmacy, FMS, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

The School of Pharmacy **▲** hosted a webinar to commemorate World Diabetes Day on Sunday 15th November 2020. The first presenter, Mr. Andrew Dhanoo, President of the Diabetes Association of Trinidad and Tobago (DATT), focused on education for diabetics and those at risk of the disease. He shared some of the initiatives of the DATT such as "Know your AIC" campaign" and the "Teen Lifestyle Camp". He also outlined the activities of the DATT including the launch of their new DATT

Membership mobile app which assist with promoting health in people with diabetes.

Professor Subas Chandra
Dinda, Head, Department
of Pharmaceutics in the
College of Pharmacy at
Teerthanker Mahaveer
University located in India
was the second presenter.
Professor Dinda described
the goals of diabetes
therapy along with its
pharmacological and nonpharmacological treatment.
He elaborated on the role
of the pharmacist in the
management of the diabetic

patient and the changes in therapy that may be required as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The final presenter was Professor Surujpaul Teelucksingh, Professor of Medicine in the Department of Clinical Medical Sciences, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of the West Indies. Professor Teelucksingh highlighted the incidence and dangers of gestational diabetes. He described the method for diagnosis of the condition and the subtle difference between diabetes in

pregnancy and gestational diabetes. He discussed the treatment plans for gestational diabetes and the plans to implement national guidelines over the next few years.

The presentations were well received and there were a number of questions posed by the audience to the speakers regarding pharmacotherapy and use of herbal remedies in treatment of diabetes.



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## World Pharmacist Day 2020

## Transforming Global Health

#### **DR SATISH JANKIE**

Lecturer (Pharmacology), School of Pharmacy, The UWI, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

#### **DR. PATRICIA SEALY**

Senior Lecturer (Pharmacy Practice), School of Pharmacy, The UWI, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

World Pharmacist Day is observed globally on September 25th every year. This year marks the 10th anniversary in observing the event which was initiated by the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), a non-governmental organization which represents more than 4 million pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists.

The day is observed to highlight how pharmacists contribute to the health care of the world population, and the theme for this year, Transforming Global

Health, was relevant as we are faced with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. The new normal has placed a severe strain on hospital pharmacists, community pharmacists and pharmacy educators. The School of Pharmacy recognized the challenges faced by our colleagues and hence the webinar was conducted to bring together those in public and private practice along with the pharmacy educators in academia. It was deemed necessary for amicable solutions to be generated to the problems facing the

local pharmacy sector by engaging those in other countries who are faced with similar situations. Whilst the school is not a regulatory body, it provided the medium through which all stakeholders could connect and facilitated the presence of external experts to possibly guide decision making in the local sector.

The webinar included presentations by Professor Anantha Naik Nagappa, Director and Principal of Amity Institute of Pharmacy at the University of Madhya Pradesh. He discussed the role of pharmaceutical care plans along with the challenges of pre-Covid measures in Pharmacy Practice. He highlighted the role of robotics and automated dispensing, patient counselling via video chat and the implementation of e-pharmacy and e-prescriptions.





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Dr Sue Jones, a Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice at the University of Bradford, United Kingdom, discussed the population, health care and pharmacist perspectives while outlining the UK strategies for containing Covid-19 spread. She highlighted the fate of hospital and community pharmacists and the impact on their undergraduate students. She expounded on the role of the General Pharmaceutical Council [GPhC] with regard to the challenges the school encountered to execute clinical rotations, asynchronous assessment of examinations and the repurposing of learning objectives for effective delivery through e-learning. The success of the virtual delivery of the curriculum, with the approval of GPhC,

would not have occurred

without the support of all members the [non] academic staff working as a Team. Dr. Jones was quite impressed with the manner in which COVID was managed in Trinidad and Tobago, as expressed by Dr. Villaroel Stuart.

Dr Arlene Villaroel Stuart obtained her Pharmacy degree and PhD in Pharmacology from the UWI, St Augustine Campus. She is a senior Pharmacist at the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, Mt Hope Trinidad. She described the pharmacy structure and the impact of the parallel health care system. She discussed the major challenges faced and gave an in-depth analysis of the rotation of the staff and the management of the crash cart: i.e. sealing, waste management, medication

delivery and returns.

The Webinar was followed by a vibrant question and answer section with many expressing thanks to the School for putting together such as event and requesting further webinars for the development of Pharmacy Practice in Trinidad and Tobago. It was evident that the challenges faced locally was not different to those encountered in developed nations. The webinar provided a framework for expression and exchange of ideas to enhance the public, private and pharmacy academia.



Professor Anantha Naik Nagappa, Director and Principal of Amity, Institute of Pharmacy, University of Madhya Pradesh.



Dr Sue Jones, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice, University of Bradford, United Kingdom



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## UWI Virtual Public Symposium

## Chronic NCDs and the Eye Observance of World Sight Day

#### DR DESIRÉE MURRAY

Lecturer, Ophthalmology, Department of Surgery, FMS, The UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

World Sight Day was observed Thursday 8th October, 2020. It is the most important advocacy event in the international eye care calendar. This year, the global theme and call to action was "HOPE IN SIGHT". The Department of Clinical Surgical Sciences hosted a virtual public symposium on Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and the Eye.

The symposium focused on the NCDs because persons

at risk for vision loss from NCDs are also at increased risk of succumbing to the COVID-19 virus. The importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through diet and exercise in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic was also included as the forum raised awareness about the causes and prevention of avoidable blindness related to the NCDs.

This was a collaboration among the St. Augustine campus' Department of

Clinical Surgical Sciences (Ophthalmology) and Department of Paraclinical Sciences (Primary Care and Public Health Unit), the Cave Hill campus and external organizations such as the Board of Nutritionists and Dietitians and the Ministry of Sport and Community Development. The symposium was open to the public and registration was free.

The event was live-streamed at https://www.uwitv.org and facebook.com/UWITV and



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subsequently re-broadcast on UWItv Global, the university's channel on FLOW TV which is aired throughout the Caribbean. There were 96 unique viewers, 2,175 estimated reached, 90 engagements , 338 page views and 104 users. Corporate sponsorship was received from Alston Marketing Company (AMCO), Courts Optical, Ferreira Optical, The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago (NGC), Oscar Francois Limited and RBC Royal Bank.

Please view: World Sight Day Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and the Eye.



## WORLD SIGHT DAY

## CHRONIC NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND THE EYE

Presented by The Faculty of Medical Sciences Department of Clinical Surgical Sciences (Ophthalmology)



October 8, 2020

1:00pm (AST/EC) | 12noon (EST/JA)



### Informative and insightful presentations:

- Nutrition in the era of COVID-19
- Physical activity in the era of COVID-19
- · Primary eye care
- · How NCDs affect the eye and vision
- Treatment of eye diseases caused by NCDs

To Register CLICK HERE



Watch Live on www.uwitv.org or facebook.com/uwitv



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