Author’s response to reviews

Title: Evaluation of Constructing Care Collaboration - Nurturing Empathy and Peer-to-Peer Learning in Medical Students who participate in Voluntary Structured Service Learning Programmes for Migrant Workers

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Version: 3 Date: 22 Jul 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Date 1/5/19

Dr Maureen E Kelly

BMC Medical Education

Dear Editor

Re: Review of manuscript “Evaluation of Constructing Care Collaboration - Nurturing Empathy and Peer-to-Peer Learning in Medical Students who participate in Voluntary Structured Service Learning Programmes for Migrant Workers”

On behalf of the co-authors, we are grateful to you and the reviewers for their kind review and critique of our revised manuscript. We have made revisions as per the comments given. Our responses to each of the comments are indicated in purple. Non-edited text is left in black.

Editor’s Comments
Thank you for your suggestions in the wording of the manuscript. We have made the various amendments as shown below.

Line 66 – replace “Results from 38 volunteers’ quantitative questionnaires were encouraging” with

“Quantitative data were collated from 38 completed student volunteers’ questionnaires.” Line 66

Line 97
Replace “effective in nurturing empathy, cultural competence, communication skills and improve” with “effective in nurturing participants’ self-reported empathy, cultural competence, communication skills and improved”

“From the quantitative and qualitative information gathered, CCC has been shown to be effective in nurturing participants’ self-reported empathy, cultural competence, communication skills and improved attitude towards peer-to-peer teaching.” Lines 76-78

Line 119
Remove “mere”

“Several reports on service learning programs attribute these benefits to the exposure to a culturally different community that they otherwise would not have interacted with,[9] and to structured reflection of the experience.[10]” Lines 98-101

Line 180
Replace “would then present his medical” with “would then present the patient’s medical”
“Volunteers, who have the benefit of spending more time with the patient, would then present the patient’s medical history to volunteer doctors and help to clarify any issues raised during the consultation.” Lines 135-138

Line 187
Remove “with a memo”

“Patients requiring more complex procedures, expensive medication, biochemical investigations or imaging are referred to the hospital.” Lines 142-143

Line 190
Replace “Students” with “medical student volunteers”

“Medical student volunteers are placed into groups and attend a clinic session once a month for a total of 6 months.” Lines 146-147

Line 193
Replace “6” with “Six”

“Six sessions make up one cycle of CCC.” Line 149

Line 200
Replace “discussion on the sessions' focus, sharing on volunteers’ experiences as well as teach relevant” with “discussion on the sessions' focus, sharing volunteers’ experiences as well as teaching relevant”
“At the end of every session, group leaders lead a sit-down discussion on the sessions' focus, sharing volunteers’ experiences as well as teaching relevant medical knowledge.” Lines 155-157

Line 220

Replace “Volunteers” with “Medical Student Volunteers”

“Medical Student Volunteers are selected to achieve a clinical to pre-clinical student ratio of roughly 1:1-2 and are paired in such a ratio.” Lines 168-169

Line 241

Replace “This was aimed to maximize acknowledge the unique strengths and limitations of both qualitative and quantitative methods which are discussed below” with “Mixed methods was chosen to maximize the unique strengths and limitations of both qualitative and quantitative methods which are discussed below”.

“Mixed methods was chosen to maximize the unique strengths and limitations of both qualitative and quantitative methods which are discussed below.” Lines 188-190

Line 245

Remove “The quantitative questionnaire aimed to identify strengths of CCC program in various aspects.”

The above line has been removed.

Line 249

Replace “As” with “as”
“We adopted the Ability Scale which was designed for an Asian population in Taiwan [19] as it subjectively evaluates skills acquired from service learning projects and also allows for comparison with other projects previously studied.” Lines 194-196

Lines 256 – 257
Remove “We attempted to apply statistical analysis, but a lower than expected response rate made it difficult to do so. Nonetheless, it provided information which the authors felt meaningful to evaluate the program and share.”

Line 269
Replace “The qualitative interviews allowed an in-depth exploration of the extent of how CCC was beneficial to participants.” With “The qualitative interviews allowed an in-depth exploration of participants’ views of CCC.”

“The qualitative interviews allowed an in-depth exploration of participants’ views of CCC.” Line 207

Line 275
Remove “Participants shared on their takeaways from CCC”

The above line has been removed.

Line 278 / 279
Replace “The interviews were then coded by the authors of this articles. Interviews were transcribed for later analysis” with “The interviews were transcribed for later analysis and coding, by the authors”.

“The interviews were transcribed for later analysis and coding, by the authors.” Lines 215-216
Line 285

Replace “recruited (n=38 for the quantitative survey of which 17 participated in the qualitative survey)” with “recruited to this study (n=38 for the quantitative survey of which 17 participated in the qualitative survey)”.

“A total of 38 participants were recruited to this study (n=38 for the quantitative survey of which 17 participated in the qualitative survey).” Lines 221-223

Line 289

Replace “This consisted of participants who volunteered in the programme for the first time, and those who had volunteered in previous cycles as well” with “This consisted of participants who were volunteering on the programme for the first time, and those who had also volunteered in previous cycles.”

“This consisted of participants who were volunteering on the programme for the first time, and those who had also volunteered in previous cycles.” Lines 227-228

Line 318

Replace “After which, they were coded using thematic analysis independently by 4 of the authors (SYE, TCLT, TCK, SJS)” with “After which, they were coded using thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke,[20] independently by 4 of the authors (SYE, TCLT, TCK, SJS),”

“After which, they were coded using thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke,[20] independently by 4 of the authors (SYE, TCLT, TCK, SJS).” Lines 247-249

Lines 365 to 370

Remove “In reference to the method of thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke,[20] we employed thematic analysis to make sense of our qualitative data set. We reviewed our transcribed interviews and generated codes for both the surface and underlying meanings
relevant to the role of service learning in volunteer development and medical education. We then derived broader themes based on these codes helping us to make sense of how a service learning project like ours could benefit our participants” from the results section as information was already provided in data analysis section of methods.

Replace with “Four themes were identified namely Empathy; Social Awareness & Cultural Competency; CCC Topics and Peer-to-Peer Teaching.

This paragraph has been removed and replaced with “Four themes were identified namely Empathy; Social Awareness & Cultural Competency; CCC Topics and Peer-to-Peer Teaching.” Lines 286-287

Line 671 /683

Replace “challenges migrant workers perceive they face simply because of their identity. For example, one participant reflected that some migrant workers feel that the medical care received from their company doctors” with “challenges migrant workers perceive they face simply because of their identity. For example our study identified that some migrant workers feel that the medical care received from their company doctors”

“In this study, CCC provided opportunities to develop an in-depth understanding of the unique challenges migrant workers perceive they face simply because of their identity. For example our study identified that some migrant workers feel that the medical care received from their company doctors tend to be of a lower standard, particularly as they perceive that these healthcare workers tend to have a view that they are merely seeking medical services to get time off work.” Lines 549-555

Line 691 Remove extra “to” in “able to to tailor”

The extra “to” has been removed.
Remove “on” in “By forming bonds on the ground and emphasizing on the similarities”

“By forming bonds on the ground and emphasizing the similarities rather than differences between the volunteers and the migrant workers, this could de-emphasize a sense of self-importance and build connection and understanding, which would greatly aid in developing empathy.” Lines 574-577

Remove extra taking from “real patient, and taking history taking”

The extra “taking” has been removed. “A study in Germany by Keifenheim of 42 medical students in a peer-assisted history-taking course showed that interaction with a real patient, and history taking resulted in marked improvement in identifying and dealing with their emotional and social issues.” Lines 588-591

Replace “the 2 factors” with “the two factors”

“Both Keifenheim’s paper and CCC has shown that the two factors of having an immersive experience with a real patient, and a focus on social history taking has led to a greater awareness of social issues in relation to health.” Lines 594-596

We look forward to your favourable decision upon the review of the revised manuscript.

Yours truly

Dr David Sin,
Lead author