Helping medical students to get the career advice, information and guidance they want

Development of the Keele Medical Student Career Committee

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Background

- Major career decisions are required just over 1yr after graduation
- Only just “been there and done it” at medical school – limited career support
- Developing *The Medical Student Career Handbook* taught me how much I didn’t know/hadn’t considered
- Need for developing career decision making skills early
  - Getting to know yourself
  - Knowing from where to obtain relevant information
Preparation

- Director of Undergraduate Programmes – enthusiastic, encouraging and supportive
- Potential remit
- Emails sent to all students asking to express interest
Response

- Better than expected – 1st meeting 15/3/07
Structure of the committee

- Informal
- Open access
- Fortnightly meetings
- Regular email contact
- For students by students - non-student members restricted to FY1 and 1x Faculty member:
  - Facilitate meetings
  - Provide feedback to and from Faculty
  - Give senior perspectives
  - Help progress ideas
  - Tentatively suggest concepts
Outcome of first meeting

- Concerns, questions, uncertainties and suggestions used to develop a plan
- Students wanted to use the committee to create the following support mechanisms
  - Year representatives
  - Career fair
  - Link staff
  - Lectures
  - Booklet
  - Website
  - Email
Actions to date: Branding
Actions to date: raising profile

- Articles in local newsletter
  - Introducing committee and advertising career fair
  - Update from career fair and future ideas
Actions to date: website
www.keelemedicalcareers.co.uk
Actions to date: email

- Email medscce@hotmail.co.uk
- Email rota
- Questions, suggestions, feedback and comments
Actions to date: Career fair
Saturday 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2007
Actions to date: Career fair
Saturday 16th June 2007

- Free admission to all medical students
  - Local potential Keele Students invited

- Structured sessions
  - Diverse Medical Careers
  - Medical Career Structures and Application Advice
  - Medicine vs. Surgery vs. GP
  - Have you considered...

- Career-related organisation stalls
  - Local
  - National
  - Commercial

- Accompanying booklet
Actions to date: Career fair
Saturday 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2007

- 80 students attended
- 44 returned an evaluation form

Stage of medical school

![Stage in medical career](chart)
Actions to date: Career fair
Saturday 16th June 2007

Enjoyment of the day Rating

Has the career fair helped to highlight the career choices you will have to make in the future?

Would you be interested in attending another local career fair?

KEELE Medical Student Career Committee
Actions to date: Leaflet series

- Introducing Keele Medical Student Career Committee
- Volunteering: why you should do it
- Career books for students
- Worried about money? How to earn cash and boost your career
Lessons learnt to date

- Get things done – students liked to see quick results from their ideas
- Be consistent with times of meetings
- Students don’t know what they don’t know – some senior input required
- Supportive Faculty is incredibly useful
  - Advertising Committee and events
  - Inviting potential students to career fair
  - Use of Medical School buildings out of hours
  - Assistance with administrative tasks and general organisation of events
Problems

- Medical student exams and holidays are staggered
- Numbers have dwindled to a solid group of ~12
  - Not yet fully met the requirements of all students
  - Not meeting differing needs of early and later years
  - Career decisions not a priority so not able to maintain engagement of early years
  - Just a reflection of increased time on holiday in early years
Profile of the committee
Why do you need to know about the committee?

- What are you thinking?

  “we already provide career advice”

  “our medical students know all this”

  “this is not relevant, we already have established career services”
What we have learnt from the committee?

- Mismatch of expected and actual situation
  - Career structures
  - Reflective practice
- Active involvement of students results in engagement
- Students successful in engaging peers
- Students often have a somewhat passive approach to gaining experiences
- A lot of importance on “the job application form” and unaware of importance and usefulness of learning about self in order to make informed decisions
- Exactly what students want
The Future

- Already planning a further Career Fair for the end of the year
- Website continues to develop
- Engaging new medical students early
- Expansion of leaflet series
- Further involvement with university career services
- Formal evaluation of students’ career knowledge
With Thanks To...

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ALL THE STUDENTS WHO COMMITTEE A S