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Developing the evidence base in the health professions: Students as Co-Researchers (SCoRe)

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Abstract

Historically undergraduate students in health programmes were precluded from engaging in primary research for governance and ethical reasons but this has changed. Anecdotally students also reported that they would rather be involved in meaningful research otherwise the dissertation module is just a process of 'jumping through hoops'. Many academics find it challenging to balance the demands of teaching and scholarship. A solution to both dilemmas is to involve students as co-researchers (SCoRe) in projects facilitated by academics.

At York St John University every undergraduate registered on a health programme has the opportunity to collaborate with a tutor, in a SCoRe project, to conduct meaningful research of publishable quality. The lead for each SCoRe project is an active researcher who mentors academic staff, who are novice or new to research, to support a group undergraduate students (e.g. 3 to 10). Of the 77 SCoRe projects conducted to date, eight papers and three posters have been presented, two have been published and several are being written up.

This presentation will present the SCoRe project, i.e. to explore the

- concept of students as knowledge creators,
- enhanced learning experience, in which students can develop transferable skills, e.g. teamwork, even if they choose not to pursue a research career,
- need to create an environment in which undergraduate students can engage in meaningful research alongside academics as co-researchers,
- opportunity to develop the evidence base within the health professions, and
- a model for student collaboration that can be adopted by other subjects and institutions.

Presenter details

Dr Katrina Bannigan

Dr Katrina Bannigan's approach to learning and teaching is influenced by her career as an occupational therapist. Her deep seated commitment to the principles of person-centred practice is translated into her student centred practice. She provides stimulating and safe learning environments to inspire and engage students in learning research skills through enquiry based learning. She is a Reader in Occupational Therapy and the Director of the Research Centre for Occupation & Mental Health at York St John University. For more information see her websites: www.yorks.ac.uk/RCOMH and www.yorks.ac.uk/MPT