Developing and consolidating changes to a psychiatry teaching programme using a quality improvement approach

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AIM

To improve the delivery of mental health teaching to Foundation and GP trainees on psychiatry placement

BACKGROUND

- Foundation and GP trainees on Psychiatry placements in Kent and Medway attend a 4-month teaching programme.

- This needs to tailor core content for a diverse group of trainees with distinct training curricula.

- Trainees work at different sites across Kent and Medway.

- Following the change to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, we reviewed the programme using a quality improvement approach.

METHOD

- QIP team included medical education team members, teaching faculty and trainee representative.

- During the first QIP cycle, teaching content was reviewed to ensure alignment with GP and Foundation curricula. Content which was duplicated in other training settings was removed.

- We evaluated trainee feedback for teaching between December 2020 and April 2022.

- Second QIP cycle (from August 2022) re-evaluated trainee feedback following the first cycle changes.

- During the second cycle we also consulted with stakeholders including local trust medical education teams

- Changes, including shortening sessions, were discussed with all presenters on the programme and clinical staff involved in education

RESULTS

Initial format of teaching was one full day, fortnightly, face to face 1 day fortnightly

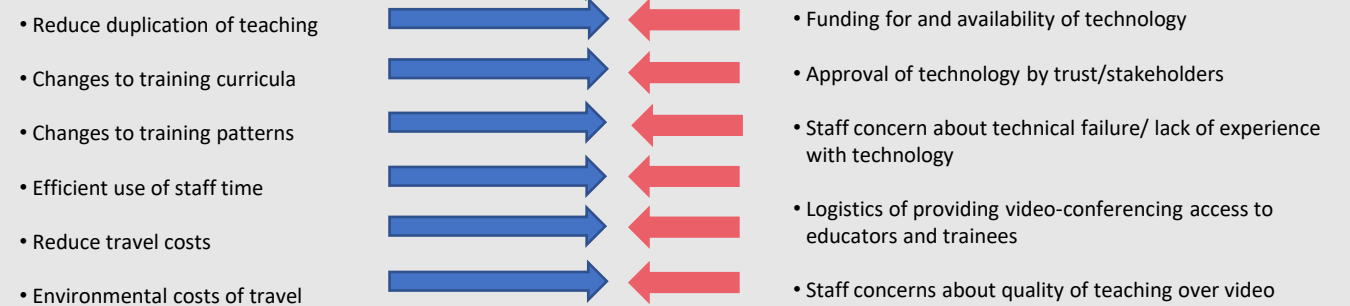Changes due to COVID meant that in 2020 teaching moved online

Regular qualitative feedback from trainees regarding teaching found:

Cycle 1:

- Online teaching accepted by trainees
- Need for interactivity
- Need for appropriate technology use
- Hard to maintain focus with virtual teaching and long presentations

Cycle 2:

- Positive response from trainees
- Changes acceptable to teaching faculty and organising departments
- Teaching to be recorded and available online
- Potential to expand to other trainee groups

Drivers for change

COVID crisis accelerated drivers for transforming the programme and reduced forces restraining change to online delivery

- Reduce duplication of teaching
- Changes to training curricula
- Changes to training patterns
- Efficient use of staff time
- Reduce travel costs
- Environmental costs of travel

- Funding for and availability of technology
- Approval of technology by trust/stakeholders
- Staff concern about technical failure/ lack of experience with technology
- Logistics of providing video-conferencing access to educators and trainees
- Staff concerns about quality of teaching over video

KEY MESSAGES

- Virtual teaching can provide an accessible learning environment for a diverse trainee group and promote efficient and effective delivery of teaching

- Ensuring acceptability of longer-term change requires reflection, analysis of feedback and modification, with flexible and collaborative leadership

- A quality improvement approach can be used to embed change and build further improvements through co-working with trainees and teaching staff