

Choose your own MD adventure! Four-year Sexual Health Care Education for Medical Students at The University of Melbourne

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Background/Purpose:

An Australian first, The Centre for Excellence in Rural Sexual Health (CERSH) in the Department of Rural Health at The University of Melbourne have developed an elective subject for medical students titled: Sexual Health Across Clinical Contexts

Approach:

The University of Melbourne's Doctor of Medicine (MD) course has been re-designed to allow the students some choice in the subjects they study over the 4-year post-graduate degree, these subjects are named 'discovery subjects'. More than 70 discovery subjects were proposed. Seven, including our subject specifically designed for the MD, were included in the 2022 curriculum. An additional 22 existing Master level subjects were also offered to the first-year students in 2022.

Outcomes/Impact:

Sixty three of the 357 MD year 1 Medical students at the university of Melbourne have chosen to undertake our discovery subject.

Innovation and Significance:

CERSH academics have been teaching within the MD for >8 years and have an in-depth knowledge of the core curriculum and the areas that need to be addressed in Sexual and Reproductive Health. The four-year discovery subject we designed addresses the gaps in core of Sexual Health Care education and looks in-depth at the clinical and practical aspects that doctors require to provide good sexual health care. Content includes sexual history taking, STI management, vulval dermatology, genital anatomy variations, and health promotion. If the students choose to do all four years of our subject, they will graduate with the ability and skills in Long-Acting Reversible Contraception administration, Early Medical Abortion provision and an optimal understanding of STI management, broader sexual health and diversity which will be beneficial in multiple clinical contexts.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

No conflict of interest.