

Undergraduate Medical Education at Cardiff University: Early introduction of the Mental Capacity Act in a contextual manner via Case based Learning

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Project method

We aimed to raise the profile of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) within undergraduate medical education. The new C21 curriculum at Cardiff follows a patient focused, case based learning approach. One of the six patient cases that students encounter during their first year focuses on Cognitive Health and introduces students to the MCA at this early stage in the five year programme. During this case students attend a plenary focused on MCA, small group sessions where issues surrounding the MCA are discussed and a clinical placement where students are encouraged to consider the ethics of decision-making and capacity in relation to the people and situations they encounter during their placement. Students continue to revisit the issues surrounding Mental Capacity throughout all five years of the new spiral curriculum, with increasing depth in later years for example: In year four, MCA learning is integrated across the psychiatry and geriatric medicine placements: In year five, further small group learning focuses on issues surrounding vulnerable adults.

Project results/evaluation

Feedback from first year students in relation to the Mental Capacity elements of the Cognitive Health Case indicated that students found these valuable learning experiences.

“The Mental Capacity elements of the case were particularly engaging and memorable”

“Teaching on Mental Capacity was very informative and thought provoking”

Project area classification

Hospital care		Dementia	
GP care		Learning disability	
Social care		Other mental health	
Voluntary sector		Palliative care	
Financial services		Advance planning, LPAs	
Police		Commissioning	
Legal		Training	x
Community health care		For professionals?	
Nursing and care home		For public and service users?	
Acute care			