Community based clinical teaching in dental school programmes: current trends

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Background...

- Community based clinical teaching (CBCT) programmes are an established part of dental school programmes in many UK and worldwide dental schools.

- CBCT programmes are very popular amongst current and graduated dental students, as well as student DCPs (Lynch et al 2009, Lynch et al 2010a, 2010b, 2010c).

- The nature and extent of these programmes vary from school to school.
The Cardiff Experience

- Primary care CBCT established in 2002
- Directed by Consultant in Primary Care Dentistry
- Very popular

**Aim**

... to investigate current and future trends in relation to community based clinical teaching programmes in UK and Irish dental schools...
**Method**

In late 2010/ early 2011, a questionnaire was distributed by email to the 18 UK and Irish dental schools with undergraduate dental school programmes.

We requested that the questionnaire be completed by Dental School Dean or Director of CBCT programme

Topics:
- Current nature and extent of CBCT programme
- Current issues/challenges for CBCT programmes
- Future and anticipated trends

**Results**

Responses received 14 schools (78%)

Responses completed by:
- Dental School Dean 6 (35%)
- Director of Outreach 9 (53%)
- Director of Education 2 (12%)

All 14 respondent schools indicated that they had a community based clinical teaching programme.
Results

Nature of community based clinical teaching programme:

- Purpose built unit/ clinic 12 schools
- Located across a number of practices 3 schools
- 'other' 1 school

'Other'
- 'in reach' facility while outreach clinic is being built.

Results – Programme Style

Style of community-based clinical teaching programme

- Discipline specific (e.g. Paeds/ restorative) 3 schools
- Total patient care (all disciplines, incl. Paeds) 10 schools
- Total patient care with limits (e.g. No Paeds) 1 school
Results – Programme Directors

Who directs your community-based clinical teaching programme?

- Senior Clinical Academic (Restorative) 9 schools
- Senior Clinical Academic (Paeds) 3 schools
- Senior Clinical Academic (Dental Public Health) 2 schools
- NHS Consultant (Primary Care Dentistry) 1 school

Results – Involvement of GDPs in teaching

Do GDPs who work in practices outside your outreach centre contribute to teaching?

- Yes 4 schools
- No 3 schools
- No answer 7 schools

If ‘yes’, what is the overall approximate % of GDP contribution to teaching within your CBCT programme?

- 1 school = 10%
- 1 school = 20%
- 1 school = 40%
Results – Involvement of Vocational Trainers in teaching

Do Vocational Trainers/ Vocational Training Advisors routinely teach in your community based clinical teaching programme?

- Yes 5 schools
- No 4 schools
- No answer 5 schools

Results – Student Experience

Organisation of CBCT programme?

- Blocks 3 schools
- Linear 11 schools

Do all your students participate in the CBCT programme?

- Yes 13 schools
- No 1 school – top performing and volunteers
Results – Student Experience

In which year(s) do your students undertake clinical treatments within the CBCT programme?

- Year 1: 1 school
- Year 2: 1 school
- Year 3: 3 schools
- Year 4: 9 schools
- Year 5: 9 schools

Results – DCP student education?

Does your CBCT programme also include DCP student education?

- Dental Nurses: 4 schools
- Dental Hygienists: 7 schools
- Dental Therapists: 10 schools
Results – Supervisory ratios & assistance

What is the staff: student supervisory ratio for teaching within the CBCT programme? Median: 1:5 (1:1 – 1:8)

Who provides nursing assistance for the students on the CBCT programme?
- qualified dental nurse 11 schools
- trainee dental nurse 5 schools
- other dental student 5 schools

Results – other considerations

Where is the lab work completed for patients treated by students within the CBCT programme?
- base dental school in house lab 4 schools
- external commercial lab 8 schools

Do students gain experience of clinical audit whilst in the CBCT programme?
- Yes 7 schools
- No 6 schools
Results – funding considerations

Are UDAs an issue for your CBCT?
- Yes: 2 schools
- No: 9 schools
- N/A: 2 schools

If you use external practices for your CBCT, where does the funding for this come from? (2 responses)
- Dental School: 1 school
- PCT: 1 school

How do you think CBCT will develop over the next 10 years within the UK?

…Impossible to predict given all uncertainties facing University Sector funding, proposed changes to the GDS contract and possible impacts on the level of DSfT…

…Primary care base of dental education and experience is the key to qualifying competent primary care practitioners. While secondary care opportunities and observation have a place it is vital that students undertake appropriate training in the environment in which 95% of dentists work…
How do you think CBCT will develop over the next 10 years within the UK?

…Provision will increase as more schools take up the concept. Also with the pattern established by the newer schools – Peninsula / UCln / Aberdeen, any rebuilding of existing schools will take on a different concept to the traditional as it provides more realistic clinical experience especially at the interface between academic and VT.…

…It will become an increasingly important way of delivering clinical practice teaching to the whole dental team.…

Discussion

- Varied experiences throughout respondent schools
- CBCT is emerging and developing in many schools
- Likely to develop further in the future – seen by many as “the future”
- However the impact of funding issues needs to be considered
References


References

**Coming soon:**

Lynch CD, Llewelyn J, Ash PJ, Chadwick BL. Preparing dental students for independent careers as dental professionals: clinical audit and community-based clinical teaching. *British Dental Journal* (accepted for publication)

Lynch CD, Ash PJ, Chadwick BL. Evaluation of a community-based clinical teaching/ outreach programme by current and former student dental therapists and hygienists: a pilot investigation. *British Dental Journal* (accepted for publication)
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