



Leave No Doctor Behind:

A review of the newly launched Personal and Professional Development Programme for Duke-NUS Medical School

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Why launch the Personal and Professional Development (PPD) Programme?

Medical students navigate a rigorous curriculum and complex professional expectations, while training to be a doctor. In line with studies showing that advisory and remediation programmes in medical school help students achieve their potential^{1, 2}, the Student Affairs Department at Duke-NUS Medical School (Duke-NUS) launched a Personal and Professional Development (PPD) Programme to provide structure and resources for students dealing with academic, professional and personal challenges that affect performance in medical school. This story presents the reasoning, approach and outcomes of the implementation of the PPD Programme in AY18/19.



Results and Conclusion

Programme evaluation is ongoing, and preliminary data shows that the majority of students referred improved their academic performance. Outcome data for those students with personal and professional struggles are harder to define, yet students report improved sense of well-being and confidence. Having a team approach to remediation, improved coordination of remediation efforts and a greater awareness and empathy among faculty and staff are some of the programme's positive outcomes.

Challenges remain. Referral only at the point when a student's scores drop, hampers early intervention. Some faculty remain unaware of the programme and the resources available. Some students are reluctant to participate while students and faculty alike hesitate to refer students due to perceived stigma.

Duke-NUS' newly created advisory and remediation programme is on the right track to achieve its aims of providing more structured guidance and support to the student population. A review of the programme's format is being conducted to improve referral processes as well as the programme flow. Moving forward it will be important to get both student and faculty perspectives to ensure its relevance and success.



How the PPD Programme Functions

The PPD Programme brought together existing education resources and manpower into one team to improve holistic support for struggling students and provide peer support and development for those faculty working in remediation.

Students were referred for individualized support through self-referral, referrals from their peers, recommendations from course/ clerkship faculty, and directly by the curriculum department for a drop in academic scores. The Core PPD team diagnosed each referred student's remediation needs and arranged one-on-one meetings with the appropriate PPD team member for psychological coaching, academic coaching, and personal support. Students co-created an individual education plan (IEP), and these were reviewed in follow up one-on-ones by the team.

The IEP was organized around 12 behavioural domains³ (Professionalism, History-Taking, Physical Examination, Differential Diagnosis, Investigations/Diagnostic Studies, Assessment, Documentation, Oral Presentations and Interpersonal Skills and Communications, Learning, Probity and Health) adapted from the literature for local context.

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