

# Should Schwartz Centre Rounds be incorporated into the medical school curriculum? A qualitative and quantitative exploration of students' views

Faye Gishen<sup>1\*</sup>, Sophia Whitman<sup>2</sup>, Deborah Gill<sup>1</sup>, Rhiannon Barker<sup>3</sup>, Steven Walker<sup>2</sup>

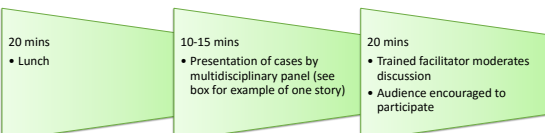
<sup>1</sup>University College London; <sup>2</sup>St Gilesmedical; <sup>3</sup>Point of Care Foundation

\*Correspondence: f.gishen@ucl.ac.uk

## What are Schwartz Centre Rounds (SCR)?

- ★ Forum for clinical and non clinical staff – all backgrounds and levels of organisation ★
- Explores the impact the job has on their **feelings** and **emotions**.
- Originally developed by the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare in Boston USA.
- Principal that in order to provide **compassion**, staff must feel **supported** and given opportunity to **reflect** on experiences of delivering care.<sup>1</sup>
- Now used in over 100 healthcare organisations around the UK.
- Studies show SCR have increased staffs' **empathy** with patients and confidence handling **sensitive issues**.<sup>2</sup>
- Francis Report and NHS England: SCR's impact positively on **patient experience** by helping to improve **team communication** and **continuity of care**.<sup>3</sup>

### Format of a SCR



## Why run SCR for medical students?

- 👁 Many newly qualified doctors report finding themselves under prepared for the role<sup>4</sup>
- 👁 Burnout is already prevalent among medical students<sup>5</sup>
- 👁 A significant decrease in empathy levels is reported to take place during medical school<sup>6</sup>

★ How can students be equipped with the appropriate values and habits necessary to protect their psychological wellbeing and that of their patients? ★

**Aim:** To explore views of medical students who attended SCR as to their potential benefit and future applicability into the curriculum.

## Methods

**Year 5 students:** invited to attend a SCR at the start of their academic year

Team of doctors and nurse presented personal stories along theme "A Patient I Will Never Forget"

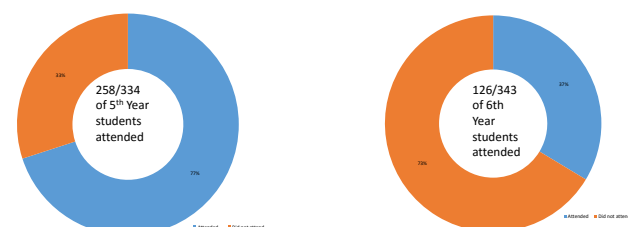


- Following the presentation of cases, a facilitator led an open discussion.
- Immediately after the SCR students were administered a questionnaire via an electronic reporting system.
- Students invited to take part in a focus group to further explore their views of the SCR.

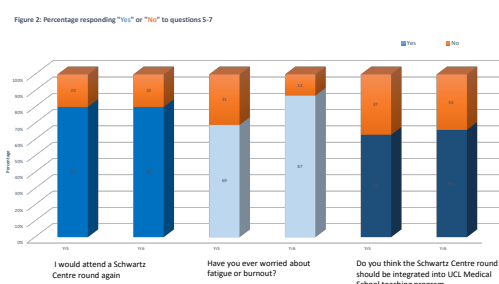
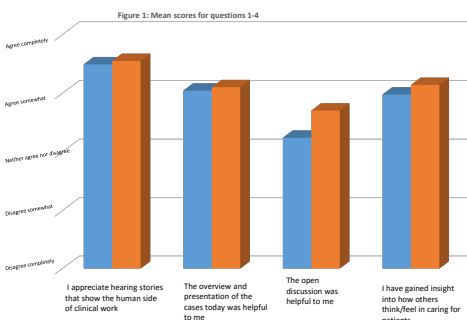
**Year 6 students:** invited to attend a SCR a few weeks prior to their final exams

- Format as above. Theme was "In at the Deep End"
- Immediately after the SCR, students were administered a questionnaire on paper

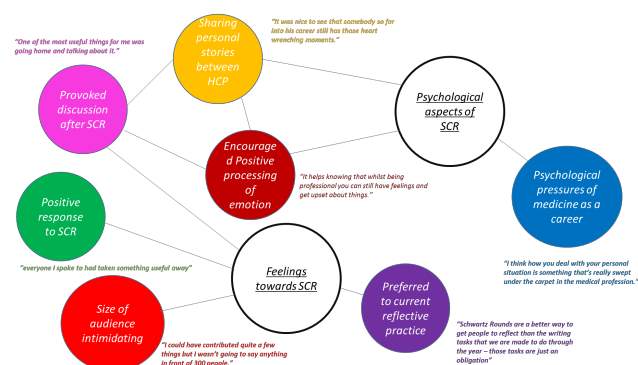
## Results



## Graphical representation of questionnaire responses for both years



## Schema of themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis of focus group



## Discussion

- ✗ Poor attendance at the SCR for the Year 6 students likely due to it taking place shortly before final exams
- Responses to the questionnaire were similar for year 5 and 6 students. Apart from:
  - More Year 6 students reported worry about compassion fatigue
  - More Year 6 students found the open discussion helpful
- ✗ Large size of audience was raised a negative factor, as many students were too intimidated to speak up during the discussion

## Conclusion

- SCR's have been taking place in hospitals in the US and UK for several years
  - ✓ credited with creating a culture that encourages interdisciplinary communication and fosters resilience among health care professionals.
- The first UK pilots of SCR's for medical students received positive feedback
  - ✓ majority would welcome their integration into the curriculum.
- Further consideration is required around timing and format to optimise participation and enhance benefits to students.
- Training of staff and costs present practical issues regarding embedding and sustaining SCR's into the medical school culture.

## References and Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the students at UCLMS who took part in the SCR's and the focus group.

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