Open Access Full Text Article

LETTER

# How effective is team-based revision? An insight from medical students [Letter]

This article was published in the following Dove Press journal: Advances in Medical Education and Practice

Rameez Naqvi 🗊<sup>1</sup> Kiran Pillai 🗊<sup>2</sup> Muhammed Kermali 🗊<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Medical Sciences, University College London, London, UK; <sup>2</sup>Faculty of Medicine, St George's, University of London, London, UK

Correspondence: Muhammed Kermali St George's, University of London, Cranmer Terrace, Tooting, SW17 0RE London, UK Email m1602031@sgul.ac.uk



# **Dear editor**

We read with great interest the study by Field et al<sup>1</sup> regarding the use of team-based revision (TBR) for final year medical students in preparation for their Prescribing Safety Assessment. The results seemed to be encouraging for the wider implementation of TBR in medical schools, particularly for students who may benefit from an increase in confidence levels. Although TBR is inspired from the idea of team-based learning, this is the first study of its kind exploring its effectiveness.<sup>1</sup>

We commend Field et al for the innovation of this study. However, we would like to raise some potential considerations. Firstly, we note that the sample was obtained from only one university. This makes the study's conclusions difficult to extrapolate on a larger scale and consequently makes any inferences relevant to the university itself. Furthermore, there is no direct comparator that TBR is compared against. This may mean that the positive results observed only reflect students' liking for additional teaching sessions, particularly for a competency which many medical students complain of a lack of preparedness.<sup>2,3</sup> Comparing this tool to other teaching methods with participating universities may be helpful in validating the effectiveness of TBR.

We also noted that the TBR sessions were optional. Although this certainly made the study easier to conduct, we wonder whether this would have preferentially attracted students who feel more comfortable in team-based situations. This could potentially skew the results when students were asked about their attitudes toward "team experience" or "team impact on quality of learning".<sup>1</sup> This effect may have been further compounded when taking into account that only 98 of the 201 students completed both questionnaires. For example, those who completed the feedback may have a shared interest in teamwork or team-based activities. Ensuring all participants complete the feedback could mean that there is more of a representation of the entire cohort.

Furthermore, we found that the TBR sessions were facilitated by three faculty members. This lack of standardization would result in each group having different experiences. There may also be an element of facilitator bias if the faculty members were involved in the writing up of the study and therefore have a vested interest in the results. This was unclear in the methods section. Adapting the study to have a single, external facilitator who would be briefed by the project team beforehand and would lead all the groups on the day would be ideal.

Interestingly, although results are positive, they are measured immediately after the TBR session. There are data to suggest that team-based learning does not differ greatly with lecture-based learning in short-term retention; however, it does

815

© 2019 Naqvi et al. This work is published and licensed by Dove Medical Press Limited. The full terms of this license are available at https://www.dovepress.com/terms. work you hereby accept the Terms. Non-commercial uses of the work are permitted without any further permission from Dove Medical Press Limited, provided the work is properly attributed. For permission for commercial use of this work, please see paragraphs 42 and 5 d our Terms (https://www.dovepress.com/terms.php). manifest in greater longer-term retention.<sup>4</sup> Long-term retention data for TBR would be useful in ascertaining whether it is a method that can be of benefit to medical students in their academic pursuits. Should data from these studies prove positive, it suggests that TBR certainly has the potential to alter the medical curriculum toward a more engaging and effective format.

## Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

### References

- Field S, Burstow N, Owen D, Sam A. Using team-based revision to prepare medical students for the prescribing safety assessment. *Adv Med Educ Pract*. 2019;10:501–506. doi:10.2147/AMEP.S204435
- Brinkman DJ, Tichelaar J, Graaf S, Otten RHJ, Richir MC, van Agtmael MA. Do final-year medical students have sufficient prescribing competencies? A systematic literature review. *Br J Clin Pharmacol.* 2018;84:615–635. doi:10.1111/bcp.13491
- 3. Wise J. Medical students are to be tested on prescribing. *BMJ*. 2009;339(dec16 2):b5504–b5504. doi:10.1136/bmj.b5504
- Ozgonul L, Alimoglu M. Comparison of lecture and team-based learning in medical ethics education. *Nurs Ethics*. 2017;26(3):903–913. doi:10.1177/0969733017731916

Dove Medical Press encourages responsible, free and frank academic debate. The content of the Advances in Medical Education and Practice 'letters to the editor' section does not necessarily represent the views of Dove Medical Press, its officers, agents, employees, related entities or the Advances in Medical Education and Practice editors. While all reasonable steps have been taken to confirm the content of each letter, Dove Medical Press accepts no liability in respect of the content of any letter, nor is it responsible for the content and accuracy of any letter to the editor.

#### **Advances in Medical Education and Practice**

#### **Dove**press

#### Publish your work in this journal

Advances in Medical Education and Practice is an international, peerreviewed, open access journal that aims to present and publish research on Medical Education covering medical, dental, nursing and allied health care professional education. The journal covers undergraduate education, postgraduate training and continuing medical education including emerging trends and innovative models linking education, research, and health care services. The manuscript management system is completely online and includes a very quick and fair peer-review system. Visit http://www.dovepress.com/testimonials.php to read real quotes from published authors.

Submit your manuscript here: http://www.dovepress.com/advances-in-medical-education-and-practice-journal