# SPHPM Teaching, Challenges and Innovation Symposium

## Workshop Discussion Notes and Results

| UNDER-GRADUATE PROGRAM | |
|---|---|
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| • Direct entry applicants may not have a clear idea of what vocation is suited to them/what they would like to pursue;<br>• Limited understanding of career opportunities within public health/health sciences. | • Increase exposure to alternative career opportunities within HSc/Biomed/Med;<br>• Application of learning is guided by lecturers/tutors – important to have the right people in the right roles;<br>• Develop/demonstrate links between health and other specialty areas (engineering, IT, humanities, bioethics, law);<br>• Develop undergraduate forensic medicine elective unit;<br>• Focus on students' skills in relation to career prospects;<br>• Credit from previous subjects (e.g. BMS3052) as pathways from MD/BBiomed/BHSc to Honours/Masters. |

| Bachelor of Health Science | |
|---|---|
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| • Changes to course<br>• New 'Public Health Stream'<br>• Student numbers<br>• What is 'public health' and its careers | • General course introduction provides students with time to develop an understanding of themselves, their situation, and their options;<br>• Provides good foundation for students to pursue interests in public health or clinical health vocations;<br>• Provides students with internationally sought-after skills in administration and management of health issues. |

| Bachelor of Biomedical Science / Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery | |
|---|---|
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| • Limited understanding of career prospects other than medicine.<br>• No streams or clear pathways | • BBMed Sci<br>• Scholarly Intensive Project<br>• BMS/MPH<br>• Summer Vac Program |

| Honours | |
|---|---|
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| • Limited understanding among prospective students and supervisors of what is involved (e.g. structure, assessment, workload, expectations);<br>• Timeframe limits project options, and creates high workload;<br>• Lack of supervisors;<br>• Lack of incentive for supervisors (solution?: no undergrad connection);<br>• Cultural concerns for international students (language barriers, vulnerability);<br>• Competing offers;<br>• Lack of support/pastoral care;<br>• Lack of practical skill development;<br>• Conference funding (due to $$). | • Improve clarity of information provided to students and supervisors;<br>• Introduction/preparation during year prior to commencement so that projects are established and ready;<br>• Recognition/research metric for supervisors;<br>• New building/space for Honours students (desks, student lounge, meeting spaces, mental health first aid officers);<br>• Connections/referrals to student services;<br>• Scholarships;<br>• Establish peer support program/increase access to counselling services;<br>• Training opportunities for supervisors and students (e.g. ethics application);<br>• Promote Honours opportunities in undergraduate classes;<br>• Introductory session to bring students/supervisors together;<br>• Research/workshops to obtain student perspective of what works well in Honours program. |

## UNDER-GRADUATE OVERARCHING THEMES / IDEAS

- Limited understanding about breadth of career opportunities within the health sciences, interactions between health and other sectors, and applicability of skills;
  - may influence prospective students' decision to apply or not;
- important to expose students to different areas (guest lecturers, placements);
  - suggestion to improve online engagement with careers counsellors / integrate Career Connect programs into courses;
  - equip students with diverse skills sets.
- Undergraduate outcomes
  - BMS/MPH
  - MD/MPH
  - Career guidance and e-books
  - Honours challenges – community of shared resources

## POST-GRADUATE PROGRAM

| Challenges | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Complexity of having three entry points → different profile of students;</li><li>Determining most suitable mode of delivery and course structure to incorporate new and effective ways of learning;</li><li>Preventing drop-out;</li><li>Maintaining reputable status.</li></ul> | <ul><li>Follow up people who make contact to enquire about courses;</li><li>International profile for postgraduate students (marketing/recruitment);</li><li>Focus on promoting an enjoyable and rewarding experience;</li><li>Learn from overseas postgraduate programs and other teaching platforms to make Monash the most appealing choice;</li><li>Mentorship programs;</li><li>Enhance clarity of skill sets / how these are desirable and will be applicable for students.</li></ul> |

### Master of Public Health / Master of Health Services

| Challenges | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Need to differentiate Monash from other institutions, and MPH from other courses;</li><li>Website and Moodle time-consuming to maintain;</li><li>Lack of scholarships;</li><li>Domestic and international students have different interests/reasons for studying.</li></ul> | <ul><li>Identify scholarship funding options and increase number of scholarships offered;</li><li>Increase the profile of teaching within the Faculty/School;</li><li>Streamline Moodle to make more user-friendly for staff and students;</li><li>Surveying/market research to promote consumer participation in course development, operation, evaluation, and improvement;</li><li>Integrate a more comprehensive teaching/research career approach;</li><li>Harness social media platforms to advertise and deliver programs;</li><li>Innovative modes of delivery;</li><li>Differentiate Monash through cost, content, mode of delivery;</li><li>Credit from previous subjects/pathways from MD/BBiomed/BHSc to MPH.</li></ul> |

### Master of Clinical Research Methods / Master of Biostatistics

| Challenges | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Decreasing enrolments;</li><li>Marketing strategy involves the name of the program – what/who is it actually for?</li><li>Lack of clarity around the course objective/what is the point?;</li><li>Allied health left out;</li><li>Not competitive;</li><li>'Research methods' may be interpreted as quantitative only.</li></ul> | <ul><li>Find the consumer – who should be doing this course?</li><li>Increase advertising/more targeted advertising (international market, DHSS, physicians);</li><li>Award credit/develop pathways with other courses;</li><li>Teaching hospital staff;</li><li>Tap into internationally placed doctors program.</li></ul> |

| Master of Forensic Medicine / Master of Occupational & Environmental Health | |
|---|---|
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| <br>• Geographical separation of VIFM/DFM from rest of SPHPM – need for greater synergy;<br>• Lack of specific research training among forensic pathologists/forensic medicine specialists. | • Greater collaboration between SPHPM & VIFM to enhance teaching/learning opportunities (forensic medicine specialists have rich knowledge and experience, but generally lack research training. Accordingly, they publish in specialist journals);<br>• VIFM staff could offer valuable contributions in epidemiological research (e.g. thunderstorm asthma);<br>• With stronger research activity within VIFM, they would be well-placed to host (elective) research placements (e.g. students in new MD program);<br>• Forensic medicine favours the health administration/management skills developed through BHSc – more opportunity for collaboration between these courses?<br>• Involvement of DFM PhD students in teaching;<br>• Develop undergraduate forensic medicine elective unit. |
| **PhD** | |
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| <br>• Are students' expectations being met?<br>• Are graduates staying in academia?<br>• Limited awareness of career prospects beyond PhD completion;<br>• Limited time for PhD students to be involved in teaching. | • Increase emphasis on the development of translatable skill sets;<br>• Encourage transition from MPH → PhD;<br>• Assign an intermediate supervisor to guide students, particularly with drafts;<br>• Have three supervisors per student – different skill sets, more accessible to students;<br>• Provide incentive/benefits for ECRs to become PhD supervisors;<br>• Offer research-specific short courses to complement PhD work;<br>• Greater engagement in professional development;<br>• Greater involvement of PhD students in teaching. |
| **Short courses** | |
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| • Gauging market interest.<br>• Promotion | • Accreditation/assessment to complement degree (e.g. research courses for PhD students). |
| **POST-GRADUATE OVERACHING THEMES / IDEAS** | |
| • Limited understanding of the relevance of courses in relation to careers in health;<br>   - Who are these courses intended for? What is the benefit of undertaking postgraduate study in these areas?<br>   - lack of explicit connection between undergraduate and postgraduate SPHPM courses – may lose students for this reason;<br>   - suggestion to improve online engagement with careers counsellors;<br>• Improve and target promotion/advertisement of courses;<br>• Several concerns about modes of delivery – do we know what works best for students and staff? | |

| TEACHING | |
|---|---|
| **Challenges** | **Opportunities** |
| • Large cohort/class sizes and distance education present challenges in regard to engaging with students on a personal level (e.g. learning their names, remembering who is who);<br>• Flipped classroom is good in theory, but is time-intensive and lacks efficacy in practice (only a small proportion of students complete pre-readings – why? Time, repetition, irrelevance, necessity); | • Encourage students to upload a photo on their Moodle profile – assign extra marks to those who do?<br>• Name tags in class;<br>• Approach students you don't know well in class, acknowledge that you don't know their name and apologise → foster a connection this way and make them feel comfortable to contribute/approach you rather than leave them feeling unnoticed; |

| | |
|---|---|
| • Promote engagement/participation and better learning outcomes through positive reinforcement, rather than negative;<br>• Demand for placement opportunities exceeding available positions / practical experience only available to a portion of students (e.g. 6-week MD placements);<br>• How to deal with poor tutors<br>• SETU – survey fatigue, new/more effective ways to obtain feedback/enhance student engagement in program planning and delivery. | • Harness social media in teaching/pre-tute work;<br>• Combination of written and audio-visual material for pre-tute activities/activities;<br>• Short quiz (with allocated marks) at the start of each tutorial to encourage completion of pre-readings;<br>• Students marked as 'absent' from class if they have not completed the pre-tute work;<br>• Students who have not participated in one session expected to participate in the following session;<br>• Tutor bank / coordinator bank awareness;<br>• Scope for collaboration across/beyond School;<br>• Training/assistance for new tutors, ensure that tutors are well-suited to their role;<br>• Medical college programs – leadership/professionalism. |

**TEACHING OVERARCHING THEMES / IDEAS**

- Innovation in delivery of lessons to enhance student engagement and learning;
    - lectures, tutorials, seminars, labs, online, social media;
    - readings, worksheets, practical tasks, Youtube/TED talks, quizzes;
- Training, professional development, and incentives for staff and supervisors.