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Co-Creating an audio podcast to promote nursing and midwifery student understanding about the United Nations Sustainable Development goals.

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Nurses and midwives have a crucial role to play in helping to achieve international goals to improve health and well-being and protect the environment (RCN, 2021). Despite this, many nurses and midwives are not aware about what the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are and how they can contribute (Rosa, 2017).

In January 2022, the School of Nursing and Midwifery established a new Special Interest Group (SIG) focused on the shared interest of enhancing education and awareness about sustainable development goals amongst the student population. The SIG comprises 28 people who represent current students, service users, clinicians and academics. Notably, more than 50% of the group membership is made up of students.

The flagship activity for this SIG was to co-create an audio podcast for Nursing and Midwifery students about SDGs. The aim was to provide explicit education about the UN's SDGs and how all 17 of these goals apply to nursing/midwifery students. The podcast would also inform students about the practical things they could do to help achieve SDGs. For example, for SDG1 (poverty) we provided students with a case-study about how nurse family partnerships in urban neighbourhoods can help support families with low income. For SDG5 (gender), we considered how nurses and midwives could reduce HIV stigma, for SDG7 (energy), we considered the impact of air pollution and rates of pneumonia and for SDG12 (Consumption/Production), we considered the implications of inappropriate disposal of syringes.

The SIG co-created this podcast throughout the summer of 2022. The audio podcast followed the following format:

1. An introduction to the podcast (Susan Carlisle)
2. An introduction to the SDGs (Laura Steele)
3. A synopsis of each of the 17 SDGs & how nurses and midwives are contributing to these (14 students, 2 clinicians, 1 service user discuss one SDG at a time).
4. An overview of the QUB contribution to sustainability (Sara Lynch)
5. Close (Gary Mitchell)

The audio podcast lasted approximately 60 minutes and has been designed to be listened to on-the-go (i.e. there is no requirement for students to make notes or complete tests/quizzes on content). A current link to the podcast can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/QUBSDGPod>

An evaluation of this podcast, using a pre-test/post-test methodology, was carried out amongst year one Nursing and Midwifery students in September 2022. Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences (MHLS22_113). The team adapted a previous questionnaire about SDG knowledge, attitude & self-efficacy amongst students in higher education (Zamora-Polo et al. 2019) and administered this to students before and after listening to the podcast. Permission to adapt the original questionnaire was also obtained.

258 Nursing and Midwifery year one students completed a 42-item questionnaire before and after listening to the podcast. The questionnaire measured three outcomes about Sustainable Development Goals: awareness of the 17 SDGs, understanding of the role of nurses and midwives in achieving the 17 SDGs and personal responsibility for achieving the 17 SDGs. After listening to the podcast, awareness of SDGs improved from an average of 50% to 86%, understanding of the role of nurses and midwives in achieving SDGs improved from 70% to 88% and personal responsibility for achieving SDGs improved from 66% to 82%. All three improvements were statistically significant as indicated by paired sample t-tests ($p < 0.001$).

These findings illustrate that after listening, students recognised that nurses and midwives, as the primary providers of healthcare to all communities in all settings, are key to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs are linked to everyday clinical issues; national public health emergencies; and other nursing issues, such as leadership, shared governance, and advocacy (Senor et al. 2021). According to the literature, SDGs are often not covered explicitly in nursing/midwifery curricula and there is a paucity of investigation on educational interventions to support student understanding in this area (Dossey et al. 2019).

This project demonstrates how students, service users, clinicians and academics

can work together to co-create innovative educational interventions about SDGs that are directly applicable to their profession. Nurses and midwives have long been leaders and agents of measurable change in the advancement of physiologic, social, environmental and economic health determinants. It has been noted that nurses and midwives have the potential to make vital contributions toward achieving the SDGs and we hope that the provision of this educational podcast could support our students to take their own steps to helping society achieve the goals.

The team would like to acknowledge the contribution of all members of our SIG who participated in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of this project. We would also like to thank the University for funding this project via their SDG Research Seed Fund.

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