

## **Free Paper Presentation I (Health and Mental Health) (2/6)**

### **A "Humanism in Ageing" Workshop for Cultivating Awareness of Ageism and for Promoting Medical Students' Professional Interest in Working with Older Adults**

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**Background** With the increased exposure to frail and vulnerable older patients, medical students may develop the tendency to view ageing negatively. Age-related biases in healthcare include seeing ageing as a frustrating process of decline, infirmity, and decay. In mainland China, a recent cross-sectional survey reported that first-year medical students held more favorable attitudes toward older adults than senior students did, suggesting that attitudes on ageing might have been affected by knowledge in the medical school. (Zhao et al., 2011) This phenomenon is worrisome at a time when COVID-19 has exacerbated intergenerational tension.

Visual images evoke emotions, abstract ideas and our shared human experience. For instance, images of senile and frail older adults could elicit learners' apprehension of and feelings toward geriatric care, thereby enabling dialogue about stereotypes and in turn facilitating empathy, insight, and perspective-taking. (Linz, 2011)

In HKUMed's Medical Humanities Programme, we sought to harness the potential of photo-elicitation and design thinking for improving MBBS students' attitudes towards ageing and professional interest in working with older patients.

**Purposes** This study aims to assess the impact of a novel "Humanism in Ageing" Workshop in HKU's MBBS curriculum on student attitudes towards ageing and geriatric care. Our educational intervention is inspired by a pilot in Australia and developed in accordance with the PEACE (Positive Education about Aging and Contact Experience) Model.

**Methods** 33 year-2 MBBS students received the Workshop in 2021-22. Before and after class, we administered the UCLA Geriatrics Attitudes Scales (UCLA-GAS) and Reactions to Ageing Questionnaire (RAQ) to measure student attitudes towards older patient care and personal ageing.

**Results** 94% attendees completed the questionnaires. Mean age was 20.5. Our workshop had improved undergraduate medical students' attitudes towards older patient care ( $p < 0.001$ ) and self-views on ageing ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion** With reference to the technique of photo-elicitation and the PEACE Model published in Gerontologist, we devised a low-cost 2.5-hr interactive workshop with demonstrated efficacy in improving medical students' attitudes towards older patient care. Our project illustrates a creative response to the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030)'s international call for action to "change how we think, feel and act towards age and ageing".