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"PRIMARY HEALTH CARE: A PATH TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE"

SYSTEMS AND COMMUNITY BASED RESPONSES TO COVID-19

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Title	**Model World Health Organization (ModelWHO) simulations: innovative, student-led experiential learning models for engaging the current and future health workforce in the wake of COVID-19**
Type	Oral Presentation *Building the Capacity of Future Leaders in a Socially Accountable World*
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Content	Background The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted normal routines of training and participation for students and young professionals (SYPs), demanding that novel methods be developed. Simultaneously, the crisis has exposed the fragility of health systems globally, demanding that future health professionals develop a more holistic and interdisciplinary understanding of health and the necessary skills of policy-making and negotiation. One such initiative which provides this cadre of proficiencies is student-led Model World Health Organization (WHO) simulations. Methods Between Oct.2017–Nov.2019, we engaged n=395 SYPs in 3 successive London ModelWHO (LonWHO) simulations, the annual international conference of UK ModelWHO (UKWHO). Through in-depth surveys and focus group sessions, we aimed to assess and increase the competency of SYPs in understanding and engaging in the decision-making processes that govern global public health and to find out if participation in ModelWHO simulations can increase this. Results Participants reported gaining a better understanding of various aspects of global health governance and positive self-rated improvements in all soft skills of interest. 98.9% of delegates would recommend ModelWHO simulations to their peers for global health skills development. Conclusion ModelWHO simulations exist worldwide, are highly adaptable, and can be organised online. By monitoring and evaluating 3 successive LonWHO simulations, we have shown the benefits of such immersive experiences, for which alternative versions are being adopted into curricula. We advocate for such interactive learning to be integrated into global public health teachings to adequately empower the current and future health workforce to face the next pandemic.

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