

# Feasibility of Online Compassion Training in Final Year Medical Student Curriculum

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## Abstract

### Background

Psychological distress among medical students and junior doctors is a significant concern. Compassion training has shown promise in improving psychological well-being among healthcare workers, including medical students. However, the feasibility and student perceptions of compassion training in medical curriculum are understudied.

### Summary of work

This study assessed the feasibility of an online compassion training course as part of medical student curriculum. We used a mixed-methods approach to assess survey results from final-year medical students participating in the Compassion Training for Healthcare Workers course. We conducted descriptive and inductive content analyses on quantitative data from Likert scale responses and qualitative data from open-ended responses.

### Results

Most of the 306 participants responded positively to the training, appreciating the content, variety of teaching mediums, discussion forums, and practical strategies learnt. Students emphasised the importance of compassion in healthcare and reported a positive shift in attitude towards compassion. Although some students suggested a face-to-face component, the online asynchronous format was well-received for its flexibility and self-paced learning.

### Discussion

This study demonstrates the feasibility and positive reception of incorporating an online compassion training course in medical curriculum, supporting the growing interest in compassion training for healthcare professionals. Acknowledging the limitations, including lack of demographics and objective measures, it provides proof of concept, and a valuable understanding of what learners want from a compassion training curriculum.

### Conclusions

This study demonstrates the feasibility and positive reception of incorporating an online compassion training course into final year medical student curriculum.

## Take-home messages

Medical students' and junior doctors' psychological wellbeing is a growing problem and compassion training shows promise in addressing it. This study serves as a proof of concept for a scalable medical education intervention, laying the groundwork for future research to assess the long-term impact and efficacy of compassion training in medical education.

## References (maximum three)

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